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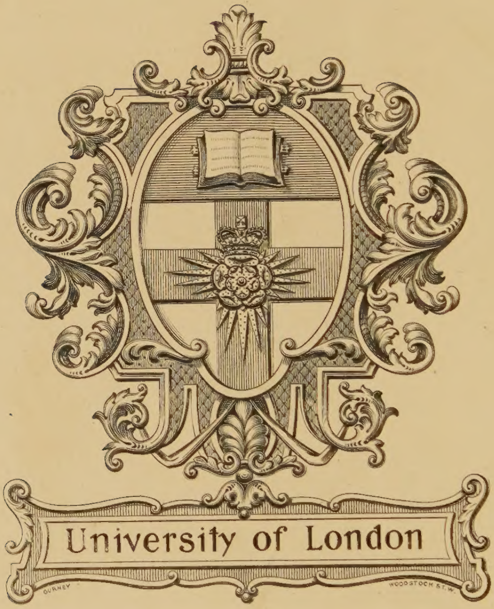
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HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

---

51 VICTORIÆ, 1888.

VOL. CCCXXVI.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE ELEVENTH DAY OF MAY, 1888,

TO

THE TWELFTH DAY OF JUNE, 1888.

Fifth Volume of the Session.

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The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

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Question proposed,

"That the words 'on a new Member presenting himself with his introducers below the Bar, at the time and under the conditions specified in the Standing Order 86, Mr. Speaker shall forthwith call such Member to the Table for the purpose of taking his seat,' be there added."

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

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Amendment proposed,

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COMMONS, MONDAY, MAY 14.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION—

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

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Motion *agreed to.*

Moved, "That the Lord Knutsford be appointed to take the Chair in the Committees of the Whole House, in the absence of the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos from illness,"—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

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The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill [*Lords*]—

Moved, "That the Order [14th May] for Committee be read and discharged, and that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee,"—(*Mr. T. M. Healy*) 291

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:—Ordered*, That the Committee do consist of Seven Members.

Ordered, That Four Members of the Committee be nominated by the House.

Ordered, That Three Members of the Committee be nominated by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (NOTICES OF MOTION)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That the Order of the Day for the Committee on Imperial Defence [Expenses] have precedence this day of the Notices of Motion and other Orders of the Day,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 334

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House is not prepared to surrender this day to the Government, in view of the fact that the Government has already pledged itself to arrange to enable the Member for the West Division of Nottingham to bring on this evening the Motion that stands in his name, and Her Majesty's Ministers yesterday devoted the time at their disposal to a stage of the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland Salary Bill, which time would otherwise have been at their disposal for the purposes for which they are now asking for the time of private Members,"—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved,* "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. Labouchere:*)—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 290, Noes 187; Majority 103.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 356

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

IMPERIAL DEFENCES [EXPENSES]—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Moved, "That it is expedient to ratify an Agreement for Naval Defence made between Her Majesty's Government and the Governments of Her Majesty's Australasian Colonies,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 359

After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 85, Noes 37; Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 111.)

Moved, "That it is expedient to authorise the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of such sums, not exceeding £850,000, as may be required for building, arming, and completing the vessels mentioned in the Agreement,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 399

After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 92, Noes 48; Majority 44.—(Div. List, No. 112.)

Moved, "That the sums so issued shall be repaid to the Consolidated Fund, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for Naval Services, by an annuity of such amount as will repay the same, with interest at three per cent per annum, within twelve years,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 411

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

(4.) *Resolved,* That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to raise such sums by means of terminable annuities charged on the Consolidated Fund.

Moved, "That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums not exceeding £2,600,000 as may be required for the defence of certain Ports and Coaling Stations, and making further provisions for Imperial Defence,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 412

After debate, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress.

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Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report 445

Report to lie upon the Table. [12.15.]

LORDS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 16.

Their Lordships met;—and having gone through the Business on the Paper without debate, [House adjourned] [2.15.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 16.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION—

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Small Holdings Bill [Bill 9]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Jesse Collings*) 447

After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Question be now put,"—(*Sir Walter Foster*:)—Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 135, Noes 194; Majority 59.—(Div. List, No. 113.)

Original Question again proposed 514

It being half-an-hour after Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 265] 515

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 267] 515

Municipal Boundaries (Dublin) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Murphy, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Chance*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 268] .. 515

[5.35.]

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COMMONS, THURSDAY, MAY 17.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION—

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

EAST INDIA (HYDERABAD DECCAN MINING COMPANY) (FIRST REPORT)—

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be *printed.* [No. 177.]

Moved, "That the Select Committee on East India (Hyderabad Deccan Mining Company) have leave to hear Counsel (to such extent as they shall think fit) upon the matters referred to them,"—(*Sir Henry James*) 517

Question put, and *agreed to.*

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

VOTE ON ACCOUNT, No. 2.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a further sum, not exceeding £4,205,300, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the following Charge for Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889," viz.:— [Then the several Services are set forth] 567

After debate, *Moved*, "That the Item of £1,000, for the Secretary for Scotland, be reduced by the sum of £100,"—(*Mr. Hunter*:)—After further debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 37, Noes 88; Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 114.)

Original Question again proposed 625

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr M'Innes*:)—Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 103, Noes 13; Majority 90.—(Div. List, No. 115.)

Original Question put accordingly, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Thursday* 31st May; Committee to sit again upon *Thursday* 31st May.

Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill [Bill 145]

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews*) 635

After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Fenwick*:)—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

National Debt (Supplemental) Bill [Bill 264]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time," —(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) 672

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed upon *Thursday* 31st May.

[*May* 17.] Page

National Defence Bill [Bill 235]—
Moved, "That the Committee be deferred till Monday 4th June,"—(*Mr. Jackson*) 673
Motion *agreed to*.

MOTIONS.

—o—

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS—
Moved, "That this House, at its rising To-morrow, do adjourn till Thursday 31st May,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) 673
[Question not put]

PRIVATE BILLS—
Ordered, That Standing Orders 39 and 129 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday, 31st May,—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

ULSTER CANAL AND TYRONE NAVIGATION BILL [*Lords*]—
Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Macartney, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and Colonel Saunderson *nominated* Members of the Select Committee (with Three Members to be added by the Committee of Selection).

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (SPECIAL RERORT)—
Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report 676
Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table.

Court of Session and Bill Chamber (Scotland) (Clerks) Bill—*Ordered* (*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 269] 676

Technical Instruction Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir William Hart Dyke, Mr. Jackson*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 270] 676
[12.15.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, MAY 18.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION—
The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—
Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACTS—BANDON BOARD OF GUARDIANS—Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 677
FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—ROSSCARBERY PIER—Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 678
TURKEY (ASIATIC PROVINCES) — ARMENIA — Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 679

Western Australia — Sir F. Napier Broome and Chief Justice Onslow—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 680

Post Office (Ireland)—Postal Delivery at Crookstown, Co. Cork—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 681

Prisons Department—Convict Labour at Dover—Mat-Making—Question, Mr. Quilter; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 681

Friendly Societies and Industrial Assurance Companies—A Select Committee—Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 681

Scotland—Grants in Aid of Local Taxation—Questions, Mr. Mark Stewart, Mr. Hunter; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 682

Metropolitan Police — Constable Alfred Watson, B. Division — Questions, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 683

The Royal Mint—Lease of the Refinery to Baron A. de Rothschild —Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 684

Torquay Harbour and District Act, 1886 — Town Council of Colchester—Religious Street Processions—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 684

War Office—Army Pensioners in Government Departments—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Brodrick) 685

Lotteries—Foreign Lotteries—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 686

The Royal College of Surgeons of England — Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 686

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill—Question, Sir Roper Lethbridge; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. 687

MOTION.

Sittings and Adjournment of the House—The Whitsuntide Recess—

Moved, "That this House, at its rising this day, do adjourn till Thursday 31st May,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 687

After debate, *Moved*, "That the Question be now put,"—(*Dr. Tanner*:) —Question put, and *agreed to*.

Question put accordingly, and *agreed to*:—*Resolved*, That this House, at its rising this day, do adjourn until Thursday 31st May.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill [Bill 145]—

Second Reading [Adjourned Debate]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [17th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 702

After debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 31st May.

MOTIONS.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 271] 745

Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 7) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 272] 745

[6.5].

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MAY 31.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (IMPRISONMENT OF MR. CONDON)—Letter received by Mr. Speaker 746

QUESTIONS.

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND)—ALLEGED REFUSAL OF A PUBLIC HALL AT NEWTOWNARDS TO MR. JOHN DILLON—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 746

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—IMPRISONMENT OF MR. THOMAS MORONEY, OF HERBERTSTOWN, FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT—Questions, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 747

BURMAH—THE IRRAWADDY FLOTILLA COMPANY AND THE STAMP DUTIES—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 748

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—LODGING AND MAINTENANCE OF CROWN WITNESSES—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 748

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER — ST. STEPHEN'S CHAPEL — VISITATION BY MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE AND FRIENDS—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) .. 749

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY FOR INJURIES TO WORKMEN BILL — Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 750

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—SUPERVISION OF THE BALLINASLOE BOARD OF GUARDIANS—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 750

METROPOLITAN POLICE—CASES OF ASSAULT ON THE PUBLIC — THE RETURN —Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 750

AUSTRALIA—NEW SOUTH WALES—CHINESE IMMIGRANTS—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 751

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF PUBLIC BUSINESS—Questions, Mr. Baumann, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Biggar; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 752

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolution [17th May] *reported* 752

Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution" 753

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£4,205,300," in order to insert "£4,195,300,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*,)—instead thereof.

SUPPLY—REPORT—*continued.*

Question proposed, "That '£4,205,300' stand part of the Resolution:" —After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £4,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Extension of Admiralty Buildings" 759

After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 144, Noes 85; Majority 59.—(Div. List, No. 116.)

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £46,073, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs" 792

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £45,573, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Sir George Campbell*:)—After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 55, Noes 103; Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 117.)

Original Question again proposed 808

After debate, *Moved,* "That a sum, not exceeding £45,073, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Anderson*:)—Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 62, Noes 111; Majority 49.—(Div. List, No. 118.)

Original Question again proposed 856

After debate, *Moved,* "That a sum, not exceeding £45,773, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*:)—Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 43, Noes 126; Majority 81.—(Div. List, No. 119.)

Original Question again proposed 872

Moved, "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*:)—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Original Question put accordingly, and *agreed to.*

It being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report the Resolutions to the House.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

Reformatory Schools Act (1866) Amendment Bill [Bill 161]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 873

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 233]

Bill *considered* in Committee 873

After short time spent therein, Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress:—Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Factory Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Brodrick, Mr. Secretary Stanhope*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 273] 877

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC [SALARIES, &c.]—

Resolution *considered* in Committee 877

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

[12.35.]

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COMMONS, FRIDAY, JUNE 1.

QUESTIONS.

British Guiana—Construction of a Railway from Guacipati to the Orinoco — Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 878

British Guiana—Protection of Indians—Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms) 878

British Guiana—Detention of Mr. M'Turk—Question, Mr. King; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 878

Post Office—Losses of Letters in the New Cross District—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 879

Metropolitan Parishes—Vestry Meeting in the Parish of St. Giles-in-the-Fields—Questions, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 880

East India (Contagious Diseases Acts)—Question, Mr. M'Laren; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 880

Army (Small Arms)—Removal of Manufactory from Sparkbrook, Birmingham, to Enfield—Question, Mr. Dugdale; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 881

Metropolis—The Fatal Fire in Edgware Road — Postponement of Question, Mr. Seager Hunt 882

High Court of Justice (Chancery Division)—Appointment of an Additional Judge — Question, Mr. Warmington; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 883

Lottery Acts—Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews), The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 883

Law and Justice (Ireland)—Increase of Sentences on Appeal—Question, Mr. John Morley; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 885

Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill—Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 886

Ways and Means — The Financial Resolutions — The Van and Wheel Tax—Questions, Mr. Causton; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 886

Ways and Means — The Financial Resolutions — The Duties on Bottled Wine—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 887

Law and Justice (Metropolis)—Molestation of Females—Case of Mr. Rowden—Questions, Mr. Darling; Answers, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 887

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Supply—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

Trustee Savings Banks—Resolution—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, the relationship subsisting between Trustee

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS—*continued.*

Savings Banks and the State is unsatisfactory, and ought to be revised; that Trustees and Managers should be restrained from using the words 'Government Security,' 'Government Savings Bank,' or other words implying more than the Law rightfully authorises, in connection with such Banks, the use of which is calculated to deceive depositors, create a false impression of security, and damage the cause of thrift; and that the Trustees and Managers of such Banks should, as formerly, be made responsible for the safe custody of the deposits committed to their care in connection with such Trustee Banks,"—(*Mr. Howell,*)—instead thereof 888

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed:—

PUBLIC HEALTH—SPREAD OF SMALL POX IN SHEFFIELD—Observations, Mr. Picton:—Debate thereon 928

SCOTLAND—SOUTH-EAST COAST FISHERMEN — RIGHTS AS TO MUSSEL BEDS—Observations, Mr. Anderson:—Debate thereon 953

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II:—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £27,968, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, including certain Expenses connected with Emigration" 974

After debate, *Moved,* "That a sum, not exceeding £22,968, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson:*)—Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 56, Noes 103; Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 120.)

Original Question again proposed 990

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £27,718, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Labouchere:*)—Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 59, Noes 114; Majority 55.—(Div. List, No. 121.)

Original Question again proposed 991

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £37,356, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council and Subordinate Departments" 995

After short debate, *Moved,* "That a sum, not exceeding £32,356, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh:*)—Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 34, Noes 130; Majority 96.—(Div. List, No. 122.)

Original Question again proposed 999

It being after Midnight, the Chairman rose to interrupt the Business, Whereupon *Moved,* "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith:*)—Question put;—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 121, Noes 40; Majority 81.—(Div. List, No. 123.)

Original Question put accordingly:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 128, Noes 32; Majority 96.—(Div. List, No. 124.)

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next; Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

[*June* 1.] *Page*

Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill [Bill 260]—
Order for Second Reading read 1000
Second Reading *deferred* till *Thursday* 21st June.

MOTIONS.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 274] 1001

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 275] 1001

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 276] 1001

[12.30.]

LORDS, MONDAY, JUNE 4.

PUBLIC BUSINESS—STANDING ORDERS—Postponement of Motion, The Lord Privy Seal (Earl Cadogan) 1001

Rochester Bishopric Bill (No. 98)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Bishop of Rochester*) 1002
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Tuesday* the 12*th instant*.

Clergy Discipline Bill (No. 118)—
Order of the Day for the Third Reading, read 1006
Third Reading *put off* to *Tuesday* the 12*th instant*.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL—Observations, The Secretary for Scotland (The Marquess of Lothian), The Earl of Camperdown 1006

West Loch Tarbert Oyster and Mussel Fisheries Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Ker, M. Lothian*); read 1ª, and *referred* to the Examiners (No. 126) 1007

[5.15.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, JUNE 4.

QUESTIONS.

BANKRUPTCY ACT—HORTICULTURAL COMPANY (JOHN WILLS, LIMITED)—Question, Mr. J. Chamberlain; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1007

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—COLONEL KING-HARMAN'S ESTATES—FAIR RENTS—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1008

EXCISE—LICENCES FOR SALE OF SWEET OR MADE WINES (SCOTLAND)—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1009

National Education (Ireland)—Training Colleges—Probationers—Question, Mr. P. M'Donald; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1009

Inland Revenue—Inhabited House Duty—Small Tenemented Houses—Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1010

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill—The Licensing and Compensation Clauses—Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1011

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill—Borrowing Powers of County Councils—Questions, Mr. Stephens, Mr. Firth; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. 1011

North American Fisheries — Behring's Straits — Questions, Mr. Gourley; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1013

Venezuela—Encroachments on British Guiana—Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1013

Depression of Trade—The Nailmakers of Worcester and Staffordshire—Question, Mr. Brooke Robinson; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1014

Truck Acts—Alleged Breaches—Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 1014

Egypt—Expenditure—Civil and Military—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) .. 1015

Army—The Queen's Regulations—Saluting Auxiliary Forces—Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1016

The Cape Colony—Offices of High Commissioner and Governor—Question, Mr. J. Chamberlain; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry De Worms) 1016

Colliery Explosions—The St. Helen's Colliery — The Inquest — Question, Mr. W. Crawford; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1017

Navy (Shipbuilding)—The "Barracouta" — Question, Lord Charles Beresford; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1017

Post Office (England and Wales)—First-Class Telegraphists—Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1018

Charity Commissioners—The Royal Holloway College—Question, Mr. Courtney Kenny; Answer, Mr. J. W. Lowther 1018

Law and Justice—Dr. Burke, Convicted of Murder—Commutation of Sentence—Question, Mr. Courtney Kenny; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1019

Land Courts (Ireland)—Fair Rents, Co. Wicklow—Question, Mr. Byrne; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1019

Army—The Royal Fusiliers—Promotion—Question, Sir John Colomb; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) .. 1020

Wales—The Tithe Agitation—Disturbances at Llanefydd—Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1021

Wales—The Tithe Agitation—The Denbighshire Magistrates—Questions, Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1022

Legacy and Succession Duties Act—The Colonies — Question, Sir George Baden-Powell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1022

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THE CHANNEL ISLANDS—THE MINQUIER ISLETS—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1024
IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPLICATION FOR LOANS—Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 1024
WAR OFFICE (AUXILIARY FORCES) — CINQUE PORTS DIVISION, ROYAL ARTILLERY—Question, Mr. Halley Stewart; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Brodrick) 1024
EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—COLONEL KING-HARMAN'S ESTATE, CO. LONGFORD—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1025
LAW AND POLICE—SUICIDES FROM THE CLIFTON SUSPENSION BRIDGE—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1026
CROWN RENTS AND ROYALTIES—GOLD AND SILVER MINES—Questions, Mr. Watt, Mr. Howell; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1027
INLAND REVENUE — EXEMPTIONS FROM INCOME TAX — THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY—Question, Sir John Kennaway; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1028
COAL MINES, &C. REGULATION ACT—STOPES COLLIERY, BOLTON—Questions, Mr. Leake, Mr. Fenwick; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1028
SEA FISHERIES—REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR—Question, Mr. Rowntree; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1030
LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) — THE DUDLEY COUNTY COURT —FEES—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 1030
LEGAL PROCEEDINGS (REPORTS) BILL—Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1030
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—INSPECTED SCHOOLS—AVERAGE ATTENDANCE, &C.—RETURNS—Question, Mr. Hoyle; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1031
SCOTLAND — GOLD DISCOVERIES — Questions, Mr. Watt, Sir George Campbell; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1031
THE MAURITIUS — SUSPENSION OF THE GOVERNOR, SIR JOHN POPE HENNESSY—Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms) 1032
CHARITY COMMISSION — CHRIST'S HOSPITAL SCHEME — Question, Mr. Mundella; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1032
WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WINE DUTIES—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1033

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC [SALARIES, &C.]—
Resolution *considered* in Committee 1033
Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

IMPERIAL DEFENCE [EXPENSES]—
Matter *considered* in Committee [*Progress* 15*th May*] 1033

IMPERIAL DEFENCE [EXPENSES]—*continued.*

Moved, "That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums, not exceeding £2,600,000, as may be required for the defence of certain Ports and Coaling Stations, and making further provisions for Imperial Defence,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

After debate, *Moved,* "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. Waddy:*)—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Question put accordingly:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 206, Noes 85; Majority 121.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1121

Moved, "That interest at the rate of three per centum per annum on such or so much of the said sum as may be borrowed shall be paid out of the moneys to be provided by Parliament for Army Services,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 1124

After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 216, Noes 136; Majority 80.—(Div. List, No. 126.)

Moved, "That, after 1894, all dividends received by the Treasury in respect of Suez Canal Shares, after deduction of the sum required for paying off the bonds issued for the purchase of such shares, be applied in paying the principal of the amount borrowed,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 1131

After short debate, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee also report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

NATIONAL DEFENCE [REMUNERATION, &c.]—

Matter *considered* in Committee 1143

Moved, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of remuneration to Railway Companies for receiving and forwarding traffic under the authority of a Secretary of State or the Admiralty, and of compensation to any person suffering loss for anything done under such authority, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to make better provision respecting National Defence,"—(*Mr. Secretary Stanhope.*)

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

PUBLIC BUSINESS—THE BANN, BARROW, AND SHANNON DRAINAGE BILLS—Observations, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), Mr. T. M. Healy 1144

Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill [Bill 201]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That the Committee be deferred till To-morrow,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 1145

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Committee *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill [Bill 199]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That the Committee be deferred till To-morrow,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 1146

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Committee *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

County Courts Consolidation and Amendment Bill [*Lords*]—

Moved, "That the Consideration, as amended, be deferred till Thursday" 1147

Question put, and *agreed to:*—Consideration, as amended, *deferred* till *Thursday.*

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EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY FOR INJURIES TO WORKMEN [REMUNERATION]—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) 1148

Glebe Lands Occupation Bill [Bill 34]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Mowbray*) .. 1148

After short debate, Question put, and *negatived:*—Second Reading *deferred* till *Wednesday.*

MOTIONS.

—o—

Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Jackson, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 277] 1149

North Sea Fisheries Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Baron Henry de Worms*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 278] 1149

Torquay Harbour and District Act (1886) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. Charles Acland, Mr. Stuart, Mr. Schwann*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 279] 1149

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL)—

Leave given to the Chairmen's Panel to make a Report 1149

STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRADE, SHIPPING, AND MANUFACTURE—

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures have leave to sit and proceed with the Railway and Canal Companies Charges Bill, and the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill [*Lords*], on Monday 11th June, at Twelve of the clock,—(*Sir Matthew White Ridley.*) [12.30.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, JUNE 5.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—TREATY WITH THE AMANDEBELE CHIEF—ZULULAND—Question, The Earl of Kimberley; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Lord Knutsford) 1150

Universities (Scotland) Bill (No. 47)—

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill,"—(*The Marquess of Lothian*) 1151

After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—House in Committee accordingly: Bill *reported*, without Amendment; Amendments made; Bill *re-committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next; and to be *printed*, as amended. (No. 128.)

Municipal Franchise Extension (Ireland) Bill (No. 80)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Denman*) .. 1157

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now,") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day three months,")—(*The Lord Privy Seal.*)

On Question, Whether the word ("now") shall stand part of the Motion? *Resolved* in the *negative;* and Bill to be read 2ª *this day three months.*

THE SCOTTISH UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION—Statement, The Secretary for Scotland (The Marquess of Lothian) 1158

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EAST INDIA (CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, any mere suspension of measures for the compulsory examination of women, and for licensing and regulating prostitution in India, is insufficient, and the legislation which enjoins, authorises, or permits such measures ought to be repealed,"—(*Mr. Walter M'Laren*) 1187

After debate, Resolution *agreed to*.

REGINA *v.* HARKINS AND CALLAN—

Moved, "That there be laid before this House Copies of a Statement made to Mr. Cuffe, Assistant Solicitor to the Treasury, by Mr. Joseph Nolan, M.P., on the 11th day of January, 1888, with reference to the case of Regina *v.* Harkins and Callan :

And, of a Transcript of the Shorthand Writer's Notes of the Evidence given by Mr. Joseph Nolan, M.P., at the trial of the case of Regina *v.* Harkins and Callan at the Central Criminal Court,"—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley*) 1216

After debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed *To-morrow*.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill [Bill 201]—

Order for Committee read [*Progress 14th May*] 1234

Committee *deferred* till *Tuesday* next.

Land Law (**Ireland**) (**Land Commission**) **Bill** [Bill 199]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved*, "That the Committee be deferred till To-morrow,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 1235

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Committee *deferred* till *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

Parliamentary Voters Lists (Ireland) Bill — *Ordered* (*Mr. Chance, Mr. Maurice Healy*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 280] 1236

Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland) (1877) Amendment Bill — *Ordered* (*Mr. Chance, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Maurice Healy*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 281] 1236

Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers) Act (1875) Amendment Bill— *Ordered* (*Mr. Chance, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Maurice Healy*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 282] 1236

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COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Enniskillen, Bundoran, and Sligo Railway Bill (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time" 1237

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed*.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Libel Law Amendment Bill [Bill 17]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 8th May*] 1237

After long time spent therein, it being half an hour after Five of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House:—Committee to sit again upon *Friday*.

Victoria University Bill [Bill 198]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1310

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered upon *Friday*.

Reformatory Schools Act (1866) Amendment Bill [Bill 161]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 31st May*] 1311

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Friday*.

Railway and Canal Traffic [Salaries, &c.]—Report—

Order for Consideration of Report read 1312

Report *deferred* till *To-morrow*.

QUESTIONS.

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Local Government (England and Wales) Bill — Observation, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1313

Local Government Provisional Order (No. 12) Bill — *Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 283] 1313

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WIMBLEDON — THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION — Observations, Lord Oranmore and Browne 1314

ZANZIBAR — ITALIAN DEMANDS OF TERRITORY — Question, The Earl of Rosebery; Answer, The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) 1314

THE HOUSE OF LORDS—INQUIRY INTO THE STANDING ORDERS—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That the first and third paragraphs of Standing Order No. XX. be suspended, and that the Lord Privy Seal's Motion have precedence of the Orders of the Day and Notice which stand before it,"—(*The Marquess of Salisbury*) 1315

Motion *agreed to.*

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to examine and report upon those Standing Orders of the House which relate to the conduct of public business,"—(*The Lord Privy Seal*) 1315

After short debate, Motion *agreed to.*

Liability of Trustees Bill (No. 24)—

House in Committee (according to Order) 1326

Amendments made; the Report thereof to be received on *Tuesday* the 19*th instant.*

Universities (Scotland) Bill (No. 47)—

House in Committee (according to Order) 1329

Amendments made; the Report thereof to be received on *Tuesday* the 19*th instant;* and Bill to be *printed*, as amended. (No. 133.)

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COMMONS, THURSDAY, JUNE 7.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Ballina and Killala Railway and Harbour Bill (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time" 1347

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. T. M. Healy*:)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 227, Noes 51; Majority 176.—(Div. List, No. 128.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

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Report to lie upon the Table, and to be *printed.* [No. 207.]
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Bail (Scotland) Bill [*Lords*]—
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THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—OUTRAGE IN THE REGENT'S PARK—Question, Mr. Norris; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) 1405

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE COMPENSATION CLAUSES—THE LICENCE DUTIES—Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, The Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) 1406

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE SUBWAY TO THE EMBANKMENT—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1406

CENTRAL AFRICA—ASSAULT ON A BRITISH OFFICER AT NYASSA—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1407

RECONCILIATION TO THE SEE OF ROME—13 ELIZ., C. 2—PETER'S PENCE—25 HEN. VIII., C. 21 — Question, Mr. Commins; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 1407

SAVINGS BANKS ACT, 1887—THE RULES AND REGULATIONS—Questions, Mr. Howell; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1409

COMMITTEE ON IRISH RAILWAYS—Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1409

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS (IRELAND)—LAND IMRROVEMENT ADVANCES—Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1410

HARBOURS OF REFUGE—DUNGENESS—Question, Mr. Pomfret; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1410

HOUSE OF COMMONS—ADMISSION OF DYNAMITARDS TO THIS HOUSE—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1410

THE NAVAL AND MILITARY DEPARTMENTS—THE ROYAL COMMISSION—Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1413

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1414

WAR OFFICE—HYPOTHETICAL INVASION OF THIS COUNTRY—Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Sir William Plowden, Colonel Blundell, Mr. Hanbury; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1414

MOTIONS.

NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—RULE 2 (ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE)—TITHE DISTURBANCES IN NORTH WALES—ACTION OF POLICE AND EMERGENCY MEN—

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Thomas Ellis*) .. 1415

After debate, *Moved*, "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*.

Question put accordingly, "That this House do now adjourn:"—The House *divided*; Ayes 146, Noes 217; Majority 71.—(Div. List, No. 129.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (MORNING SITTINGS)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That whenever the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill shall be appointed for Tuesday or Friday the House shall meet at Two of the clock,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 1438

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]—

Order for Committee read [First Night]— 1440

Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert provisions for the reform of parish vestries,"—(*Mr. Francis Stevenson*) .. 1457

After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 183, Noes 229; Majority 46.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1490

Bill *considered* in Committee:—Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill [Bill 145]

Order for Committee read 1494

Committee *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

North Sea Fisheries Bill [Bill 278]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*) 1494

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

County Courts Consolidation and Amendment Bill [*Lords*]—

Order for Consideration, as amended, read 1495

Consideration *deferred* till *Thursday* next.

Official Secrets Bill [Bill 256]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Attorney General*) 1495

After short debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed *To-morrow.*

National Debt (Supplemental) Bill [Bill 264]—Second Reading [Adjourned Debate]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [17th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1496

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

County Courts Consolidation and Amendment [Salary]—

Matter *considered* in Committee 1496

Moved, "That it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a salary to any Registrar of a County Court, who may be required to give his whole time to the public service, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to consolidate and amend the County Court Acts."

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

National Defence [Remuneration, &c.]—

Matter *considered* in Committee [*Progress 4th June*] 1497

Moved, "That it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of remuneration to Railway Companies for receiving and forwarding traffic under the authority of a Secretary of State or the Admiralty, and of compensation to any person suffering loss for anything done under such authority, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to make better provision respecting National Defence,"—(*Mr Secretary Stanhope.*)

Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress; Committee to sit again *To-morrow*

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Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen [Remuneration]—
Considered in Committee 1498
Resolution *agreed to ;* to be reported *To-morrow.*

MOTION.

Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill [*Lords*]—
Ordered, That the Parties appearing before the Select Committee on the Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill [*Lords*] have leave to print the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee, day by day, from the Committee Clerk's Copy, if they think fit,—(*Mr. Stansfeld.*)

[12.15.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, JUNE 8.

Pharmacy Act (Ireland), 1875, Amendment Bill (No. 112)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl of Milltown*) .. 1498
Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *referred* to a Select Committee.

Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens—The Roehampton Gate of Richmond Park—Question, Lord Oranmore and Browne; Answer, Lord Henniker 1500

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887 — Sentence on Mr. Condon, M.P.—Question, Observations, Lord Coleridge; Reply, The Lord Chancellor of Ireland (Lord Ashbourne:)—Short Debate thereon 1501

Australian Colonies—Admission of Chinese Immigrants—Motion for an Address—
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, for copies or extracts of correspondence between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Governors of the Australasian Colonies on the subject of the admission of Chinese immigrants to such Colonies,"—(*The Earl of Carnarvon*) 1509
Amendment *moved,*
To add at the end of the Motion, the following words:—"And for a Return of all Acts passed by Colonial Legislatures affecting Chinese immigration,"—(*The Earl of Dunraven.*)
After debate, Amendment *agreed to:*—Then the original Motion, as amended, *agreed to.* [6.30.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, JUNE 8.

QUESTIONS.

Imperial and Colonial Defence—Aden—Questions, Mr. Ernest Beckett, Mr. Lyell; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1523
War Office (Ordnance Department)—Alleged Defective Guns—Question, Lord Charles Beresford; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1523
North American Fisheries—Rights of Fishing on the Coasts of Labrador—Question, Mr. De Lisle; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms) 1524

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POOR LAW (METROPOLIS)—GUARDIANS OF POPLAR PARISH—CASE OF F. BURGE—Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1525
THE NORTH SEA FISHERIES—SALE OF TOBACCO—Question, Sir Edward Birkbeck; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1525
POST OFFICE—COUNTRY POSTMEN—TICKET BOOK FOR POSTAL ORDERS—Question, Sir Edward Birkbeck; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1526
THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MESSRS. CECIL ROCHE AND HODDER, R.M. —SUB-COMMISSIONERS—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1526
THE EXECUTIVE (IRELAND)—THE LORD LIEUTENANT—THE LORDS JUSTICES —Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1527
IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONS IN WESTMEATH — Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1528
ADMIRALTY — PENSIONS — CASE OF JOHN M'CARTHY — Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1528
THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—REMOVAL OF PLACARDS AT ENNIS—Question, Mr. J. E. Redmond; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1529
HOUSE OF COMMONS—ADMISSION OF DYNAMITARDS TO THIS HOUSE—MR. LAFONE, M.P. — Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Viscount Ebrington 1529
WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—RELIEF OF LOCAL TAXATION (SCOTLAND)—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1530
WAR OFFICE—H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF HER MAJESTY'S FORCES—Questions, Mr. E. Robertson; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1531
METROPOLITAN POLICE—MISTAKEN ARREST OF DR. O'BRIEN—Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1532
COAL MINES, &c. REGULATION ACT, 1887—THE AYRSHIRE COLLIERIES — THE SPECIAL RULES—Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. 1532
PUBLIC MEETINGS—SPEECH OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY AT BATTERSEA—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1533
HOUSE OF COMMONS—ADMISSION OF DYNAMITARDS TO THIS HOUSE—EVIDENCE OF MR. MONRO, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF POLICE—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1536
LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—ESTIMATE OF VALUE OF PUBLIC-HOUSE PROPERTY—Questions, Mr. Summers, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), Mr. Speaker 1537
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACTS—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION—Question, Viscount Cranborne; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 1538
UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL — THE COMMISSIONERS — Questions, Mr. Hunter, Mr. E. Robertson; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1538
CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE AFFRAY AT MITCHELSTOWN IN SEPTEMBER LAST — THE OFFICIAL SHORTHAND WRITER'S NOTES — Question, Mr. W. O'Brien; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1539

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPLICATION FOR FAIR RENTS, CO. ANTRIM—Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1539

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE BALLYMENA BOARD OF GUARDIANS—Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1540

MERCHANT SHIPPING — SIGNALLING AT SEA — INTERNATIONAL CODE OF SIGNALS—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1540

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) — IMPRISONMENT OF MRS. DAVIES FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT — Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 1541

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BALLINASLOE BOARD OF GUARDIANS — COLONEL CALEB ROBERTSON—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1543

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED INSURANCE FRAUDS AT BELFAST—Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1543

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL—LEGISLATION—Question, Sir Edward Birkbeck; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1544

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—TITHE RENTCHARGE BILLS — Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1545

AUSTRALIA—NEW SOUTH WALES—CHINESE IMMIGRANTS—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms) 1545

IRELAND—THE BANN, BARROW, AND SHANNON DRAINAGE BILLS—LEGISLATION—Questions, Mr. W. A. Macdonald; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1545

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—THE SCOTCH EDUCATION VOTES — Question, Mr. Macdonald Cameron; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1546

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 7th June*] [SECOND NIGHT] .. 1547

After long time spent therein, it being after Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress at Nine of the clock:—Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

It being after Seven of the clock, the House suspended its Sitting.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

WAYS AND MEANS—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE OF INDIA—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is inequitable and anomalous that privileges as regards leave and retirement should be refused to some classes of Officers in the Uncovenanted Civil Service of India which are enjoyed by others in similar circumstances; and that, in view of the heavy fall in the value of the rupee, the payment

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UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE OF INDIA—*continued.*

of pensions of retired European Uncovenanted Officers in England at the official rate of exchange is no longer equitable,"—(*Mr. King,*)—instead thereof .. 1601

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 166, Noes 55; Majority 111.—(Div. List, No. 135.)

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

ARMY (INDIA)—GRIEVANCES OF THE OFFICERS ON THE GENERAL LIST—Observations, Sir Roper Lethbridge; Reply, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 1643

After short debate, Main Question, by leave, *withdrawn:*—WAYS AND MEANS—Committee upon *Monday* next.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1882—SCHEMES OF THE COMMISSIONERS—Observations, Mr. H. F. H. Elliot 1652

NATIONAL DEFENCE [REMUNERATION, &C.]—

Order for Commitee read 1652

Committee *deferred* till *Monday* next.

MOTION.

Local Government Provisional Order (No. 13) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 287] 1653

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (SPECIAL REPORT)—

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report 1653

Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table.

It being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House, without Question put, till *Monday* next.

LORDS, MONDAY, JUNE 11.

ELECTIONS (INTERVENTION OF PEERS, &C.)—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed 'To consider the Sessional Order with reference to the intervention of Peers and Prelates in Parliamentary Elections' which has been communicated to this House,"—(*The Earl of Milltown*) .. 1654

After short debate, Motion *agreed to.*

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—LEGISLATION—Question, Observations, Lord Aberdare, Lord Norton; Reply, Earl Brownlow .. 1660

METROPOLIS—INSPECTION OF THEATRES AND MUSIC HALLS—Observations, The Earl of Strafford; Reply, Earl Brownlow 1665

IMPERIAL DEFENCES—DEFENCES AT VANCOUVER'S ISLAND—Observations, Lord Sudeley; Reply, Lord Elphinstone:—Short Debate thereon .. 1667

RULES OF DEBATE IN THIS HOUSE—PRECEDENCE OF SPEAKERS—Question, Observations, Earl Granville; Reply, The Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury) 1680

Oyster and Mussel Fisheries (West Loch Tarbert) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos,* for *The Lord Ker* [*M. Lothian*]); Then it was moved that the Sessional Order of the 6th of March last, "That no Bill originating in this House confirming any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate shall be read a first time after Friday the 11th day of May next," be dispensed with in respect of the said Bill, and that the Bill be now read 1ª; *agreed to:* Bill read 1ª, and *referred* to the Examiners (No. 145) 1681

Pharmacy Act (Ireland), 1875, Amendment Bill [H.L.]—
Select Committee *nominated:*—List of the Committee 1681

[7.0.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, JUNE 11.

QUESTIONS.

United States—The Inter-State Commerce Commissioners—Question, Sir Richard Paget; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1682

War Office—Sale of Whitworth's Steel Ingots to France—Questions, Captain Cotton; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1682

Defences of the Empire—The Armament of the Spithead Forts—Question, Captain Cotton; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1683

Metropolitan Improvements—The Piccadilly Circus—Question, Mr. F. W. Maclean; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton 1683

Mercantile Marine—The "Ben Cruachen" at Sunderland—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1684

Horsebreeding, &c. (Ireland)—The Grant of £5,000—Question, Mr. Johnston; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1685

Working Classes—Self-Contained "Industrial Dwellings"—Question, Mr. Dixon; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1685

Prisons (Ireland)—Visiting Committee of the Derry Prison—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1686

War Office—Disclosure of Official Secrets—John Hyland, Military Staff Clerk, Woolwich—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1687

War Office—Disclosure of Official Secrets—John Chapman, Master Gunner, Ceylon—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1688

Post Office (England and Wales)—Private Telephone—Question, Mr. Montagu; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1688

War Office—The Canteen—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Brodrick) .. 1689

Criminal Law—Sentence on Alice Durrant at Liverpool—Question, Mr. Neville; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1690

Metropolitan Improvements—Widening of Bond Street—Question, Mr. Cochrane-Baillie; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton 1690

Metropolitan Improvements—Access to Hyde Park—Question, Mr. Cochrane-Baillie; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton 1691

Inland Navigation and Drainage (Ireland)—Lough Corrib—Question, Mr. Pinkerton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1691

Poor Law (Ireland)—Swinford Board of Guardians—Questions, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1692

The Magistracy (Ireland)—Proceedings at a Special Court, Lanesborough—Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1692

Public Petitions—Signatures—Question, Sir Julian Goldsmid; Answer, Sir Charles Forster 1693

Evictions (Ireland)—Eviction of James Kilmartin at Ballinasloe—Question, Mr. Harris; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1694

Supply—Civil Service Estimates—The Education Estimates—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 1695

Universities (Scotland) Bill—Aberdeen University—Question, Mr. Hunter; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) .. 1695

Post Office (Scotland)—Trains to the South—Question, Mr. M'Lagan; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1695

Post Office Contracts—The Down London Mail Train—Questions, Dr. Clark; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1696

India (Bengal)—Out-Stills in the Hooghly and Howrah Districts—Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) 1696

War Office (Auxiliary Forces)—Remounts of Yeomanry Regiments—Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1697

Education Department—The Royal College of Surgeons—Question, Sir Guyer Hunter; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 1697

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill — Boroughs with 50,000 Inhabitants—Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1698

Public Meetings—Speech of the Chief Secretary at Battersea—Questions, Mr. Flynn; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1698

Evictions (Scotland)—Caithness-shire—Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1700

War Office—Hypothetical Invasion of this Country—Transport for 100,000 Men—Question, Sir Richard Temple; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) [Further Questions thereon] 1700

Scotch University Commission—Selection of the Members—Question, Mr. E. Robertson; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1704

The Franchise Act (Ireland), 1884—Duties of the Poor's Rate Collectors—Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1704

Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act—Tullamore—Question, Dr. Fox; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 1705

Poor Law (Ireland) — Boards of Guardians—Ballymena Union—Thomas Duffin—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1705

Merchant Shipping—Hospitals on Board Passenger Steamships—Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) 1705

ARMY (IRELAND)—REFUSING TO BILLET SOLDIERS—Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 1707

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—CONVICTIONS FOR CONSPIRACY—THE EVIDENCE—Questions, Mr. W. E. Gladstone, Mr. Clancy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1708

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—REFUSAL TO GIVE EVIDENCE—Question, Mr. Shaw Lefevre; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1709

AFRICA — CAPE COAST — MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS, &c. — Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms) 1710

INDIA — THIBET — THE "FORWARD" POLICY—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. 1711

ADMIRALTY—GRATUITIES TO FAMILY OF JOHN M'CARTHY—Question, Mr. Flynn; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1711

IRISH LAND COMMISSION — APPLICATIONS FOR FAIR RENTS, CO. ANTRIM — Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1712

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—CASE OF MRS. DAVIS, A PRISONER FOR CONTEMPT, AND OTHERS—Questions, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 1712

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE LATE REGISTRAR OF THE WOLVERHAMPTON COUNTY COURT—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 1713

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE LATE REGISTRAR OF THE DUDLEY COUNTY COURT—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) 1714

FOOD SUPPLY—SALE OF FOREIGN MEAT AS ENGLISH—Question, Colonel Eyre; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) .. 1715

PUBLIC TRUSTEE AND EXECUTOR—LEGISLATION—Questions, Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Shaw Lefevre; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1715

PUBLIC BUSINESS—THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL —SUSPENSION OF THE STANDING ORDERS — Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Summers, Mr. Caine; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1716

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE AFFRAY AT MITCHELSTOWN IN SEPTEMBER LAST—Question, Mr. W. E. Gladstone; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1717

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 8th June*] [THIRD NIGHT] .. 1718

After long time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

WAYS AND MEANS—

Considered in Committee 1801

(1.) *Resolved*, That instead of the Duties on Wine imposed by "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1888," there shall on Wine imported in bottle be charged and paid, from and after the date of the passing of an Act embodying this Resolution, the Duty following, that is to say:—

	s.	d.
Sparkling Wine, imported in bottle, the gallon	2	6

This Duty is to be paid in addition to the Duty in respect of alcoholic strength under "The Customs Amendment Act, 1886."

Ways and Means—Committee—*continued.*

(2.) *Resolved,* That it is expedient to make provision for levying Customs Duties on Wine in bottle.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock; Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

National Debt (Supplemental) Bill [Bill 264]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1804

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again:"—It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House:—Committee report Progress.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into Committee on the Bill:—Bill *considered* in Committee:—Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment Bill [Bill 131]—Second Reading [Adjourned Debate]—

Moved, "That the Debate be further adjourned till Monday next,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 1805

Question, put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) [Remuneration]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 1805

Question put, and *negatived:*—Committee thereupon *deferred* till *Monday* next.

Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 233]

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress* 31*st May*] 1806

Bill *reported,* with an Amendment; as amended, to be considered upon *Thursday.*

Intermediate Education (Wales) Bill [Bill 61]—

Order for Second Reading read 1806

Second Reading *deferred* till *Wednesday.*

Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures—

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures have leave to print and circulate with the Votes the Minutes of their Proceedings from day to day,—(*Sir Matthew White Ridley.*)

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures have leave to print and circulate with the Votes any amended Clauses of Bills committed to them from time to time,—(*Sir Matthew White Ridley.*) [12.30.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, JUNE 12.

Clergy Discipline Bill (No. 118)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3ª,"—(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*) 1807

After debate, on Question? *Resolved* in the *affirmative;* Bill read 3ª accordingly; Amendments made; Bill *passed,* and sent to the Commons; and to be *printed,* as amended. (No. 147.)

[*June* 12.] *Page*

Quarter Sessions Bill (No. 37)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Chancellor*) .. 1818
Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2ª accordingly.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE—THE REV. MR. DALE, OF CHISWICK—Question, Viscount Powerscourt; Answer, The Bishop of London .. 1818

PRIVATE BILLS AND PROVISIONAL ORDERS—
Return (*The Lord Monk-Bretton*) 1820
[6.45.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, JUNE 12.

QUESTIONS.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—INTERFERENCE AT NEWTOWNARDS—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1821
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—APPOINTMENT OF JUNIOR INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Wallace; Answer, The Solicitor General for Scotland (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson) 1822
NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES—THE ARRANGEMENT WITH FRANCE IN 1886—Questions, Mr. Samuelson; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1823
WAR OFFICE—THE SCOTS FUSILIERS AT PORTUMNA—Question, Mr. Harris; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) .. 1824
LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND)—THE KILLARNEY BOARD OF GUARDIANS—Question, Mr. Sheehan; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1824
LICENSING ACT (IRELAND)—CONVICTIONS AT MACROOM PETTY SESSIONS—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1824
POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DEFALCATIONS IN THE BALLYMENA UNION—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1825
WAR OFFICE (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE VOLUNTEERS—THE LONDON IRISH RIFLES—TRAINING AS DRIVERS, &c.—Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1826
AFRICA (WEST COAST)—OPOBO—KING JA JA—Questions, Mr. Picton, Mr. W. Redmond; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1827
METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—THE BLACKWALL TUNNEL—Question, Sir John Colomb; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton 1827
HOSPITAL SUNDAY (METROPOLIS)—COLLECTIONS IN THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACES—Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. James Stuart; Answers, Mr. Tatton Egerton, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1828
THE TRUCK ACTS—THE RHYMNEY IRON COMPANY—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1829
NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—SCHOOL TEACHERS' RESIDENCES—Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1829
EGYPT—THE MINISTRY—RETIREMENT OF NUBAR PASHA—Question, Mr. John Morley; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1830

War Office—Hypothetical Invasion of this Country—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1830

War Office—Army Agents—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1831

Charity Commissioners—The Lichfield Charities—Question, Sir John Swinburne; Answer, Mr. J. W. Lowther 1831

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill—Withdrawal of the Licensing Clauses—Statement, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie); Observations, Mr. J. C. Stevenson, Mr. Stansfeld 1832

Public Business—The Bann, Barrow, and Shannon Drainage Bills—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1834

The Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill—Question, Mr. John Morley; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1834

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress* 11*th June*] [Fourth Night] .. 1834

After long time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

Ways and Means

Customs (Wine Duty) Bill Resolutions [June 11] *reported*, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 293] 1898

It being a quarter of an hour before Seven of the clock, the House suspended its Sitting.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

MOTION.

—o—

Re-organizations in Public Offices—Resolution—

Moved, "That the re-organizations in the Accountant General's and Secretary's Departments of the Admiralty have been injurious to the public interests, by resulting in increased charges for those Departments, and by needlessly adding to extravagant pensions and bonuses; and that in any further re-organizations, officials who are still able and willing to render service for the public money shall be provided with employment in other Departments, instead of being forced to become useless burdens upon the country,"—(*Mr. Jennings*) 1898

After debate, Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, whilst of opinion that when the re-organization of a Department becomes necessary, full inquiry should be made into the wants of other Departments with a view to the continued public employment of redundant officers, is not prepared, pending the inquiry of the Royal Commission upon Civil Service Establishments, to anticipate its report by laying down any absolute rule as to the provision of employment for persons not required in the Department to which they have been originally appointed,"—(*Lord George Hamilton.*)

RE-ORGANIZATIONS IN PUBLIC OFFICES—*continued.*

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After further short debate, *Moved,* "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. James Stuart:*)—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 113, Noes 94; Majority 19.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1945

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Victoria University Bill [Bill 198]—

Bill, as amended, *considered* 1947

Bill to be read the third time upon *Monday* next.

Oaths Bill [Bill 7]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1947

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

Accumulations Bill [Bill 55]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Cozens-Hardy*) 1948

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday* 20th June.

Trawling (Scotland) Bill [Bill 155]—SECOND READING [ADJOURNED DEBATE]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [8th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1953

After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Mark Stewart:*)—Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 87, Noes 53; Majority 34.—(Div. List, No. 145.)

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

Public Libraries Act (1855) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Arthur Acland, Sir Lewis Pelly*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 292] 1958

CORN AVERAGES—

Select Committee *appointed,* "to inquire into the present system of ascertaining the official average price of Corn in the United Kingdom, and to report what alterations, if any, are expedient,"—(*Mr. Jasper More.*)

It being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

LORDS.

SAT FIRST.

TUESDAY, JUNE 5.

The Lord St. John of Bletso, after the death of his brother.

THURSDAY, JUNE 7.

The Lord Berwick, after the death of his uncle.

MONDAY, JUNE 11.

The Lord De Tabley, after the death of his father.

COMMONS.

NEW WRIT ISSUED.

TUESDAY, MAY 15.

For *Southampton Borough, v.* Admiral Sir John Edmund Commerell, V.C., G.C.B., Chiltern Hundreds.

MONDAY, JUNE 4.

For *Ayr District of Burghs, v.* Richard Frederick Fotheringham Campbell, esquire, deceased.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

MONDAY, JUNE 4.

Dublin City (*St. Stephen's Green Division*)—Thomas Alexander Dickson, esquire.

Southampton Borough—Francis Henry Evans, esquire.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

IN THE

Third Session OF THE *Twenty-Fourth Parliament* OF THE
United Kingdom OF *Great Britain* AND *Ireland*,
APPOINTED TO MEET 5 August, 1886, IN THE Fiftieth
Year OF THE Reign OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1888.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 11*th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Local Government (England and Wales) Electors (103).
Second Reading—Glebe Lands * (100).
Committee—Church Discipline (87-108).
Third Reading—Customs and Inland Revenue * (95), and *passed*.
Provisional Order Bills — *First Reading* — Elementary Education (Birmingham) * (101); Elementary Education (London) * (102); Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough, &c.) * (104); Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse) * (105).

THE NATIONAL DEFENCES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT HARDINGE: My Lords, seeing the illustrious Duke the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief (the Duke of Cambridge) in his place, I take the liberty of putting a Question to him with respect to a paragraph, or rather an article, which appears in to-day's *Daily Telegraph*. The article is evidently intended to be very sensational. It is headed, in large letters, *England in Danger, Our Army without Arms, Worst Guns in the World*; and then it goes on to say—

> "We have to state on the highest military authority that the subjoined facts are indisputable, and it is, therefore, a matter of supreme importance for Ministers, discarding all less important business, to devote their earnest attention to the statements which follow."

My Lords, I have always understood that the highest military authority in this country is the Commander-in-Chief. The Secretary of State's responsibility is complete; but the Commander-in-Chief is the responsible adviser of the Secretary of State in all military matters, aided by his staff; and if he is not the highest military authority in this country, I do not know who is. Now, I cannot read the whole of the article to your Lordships because it would take up too much of your time; but I must, in order to enable the Commander-in-Chief to answer the article satisfactorily, mention one or two of its most salient statements. The article then proceeds to say—

> "Owing to the deplorable neglect of Parliament and the mischievous system adopted by successive Ministries in deliberately hiding the truth from the people, it has at last to be sorrowfully acknowledged that we are wholly unprepared for war, if not, indeed, at the mercy of any European enemy, unless immediate and energetic steps are taken to put the kingdom and the Empire into a state of security. The strength of our Army is insufficient; more men are instantly required. If the men were enlisted to-morrow, barrack accommodation for them does not exist. The country is in the shameful position of having many of its artillery batteries in possession of the worst guns served out to any army of the present day. In the service it is true that we possess a gun which is unsurpassed, but we have no means of manufacturing this arm except after much delay. We are said to have the best magazine rifle which has yet been invented, but up to the present moment not one single regiment in the Army is provided with this weapon. Army stores are lamentably insufficient. . . . At this moment there is not, it is authoritatively stated, in any one of our land fortresses, from Portland Bill to the Tweed, a modern breech-loading gun. The latest type actually in use is the seven-inch Armstrong. The guns served out to the Volunteers are obsolete; the armaments of the forts are obsolete; the piles of shot and shell at Woolwich are for the most part obsolete."

I do not, my Lords, propose to make any comment on these statements. These allegations are most serious. At this moment the country takes great interest in the question of the national defences; and I have thought it my duty to take the earliest occasion of giving the illustrious Duke an opportunity of expressing in this House, the only way in which he can do so, his opinion on these subjects. I venture, therefore, to ask him whether, as stated in this newspaper, these facts are indisputable, and what foundation, if any, there is for these very serious allegations.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE: My Lords, I rejoice that my noble Friend the noble Viscount has put to me this Question. I do not suppose that anyone in this House, or anyone out of it, could have been more astonished than I was this morning when, on opening *The Daily Telegraph*, I observed this extraordinary sensational article; and I asked myself whether anything could possibly have emanated from me to call for anything so extraordinary and so sensational. I can only say that I have reason to believe that "the highest Military Authority," which I admit that, up to this moment, I believed I was, is intended for somebody else. Well, of course, on that I can give no opinion; but, so far as I am concerned, I can hardly suppose that anyone should have imagined that this article could have been ascribed to me or that such sensational remarks should have appeared on so important a subject. The question referred to in that article has been a good deal before the public; and I have given very decided evidence, no doubt, before a Committee in "another place" on the general condition of things connected with the Army. To those statements I adhere; but I do not believe that my noble Friend or any of your Lordships will expect me to go into any details of that sort at the present time. I will only say that the circumstances are such that these questions are well worthy of the fullest and most anxious consideration of Her Majesty's Government and of this House and of the country. But as to probable danger, imminent danger, or anything of that sort, I, for my part, cannot be a party to any such words. But I believe that Her Majesty's Government are as fully alive as I am to the present condition of things. I have not the slightest doubt that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and the Members of the Cabinet are considering all the evidence which has been brought before the various Committees now sitting; and I have no doubt that the result will be such as will at the same time be satisfactory to the country and agreeable to those who, like myself, take a warm interest in the naval and military position of the country. I cannot for one moment deny that this is a very grave and important matter; but I certainly have had nothing whatever to do with the sensational article which has appeared to-day, and I absolutely and entirely repudiate it.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, I am sure your Lordships must have heard with great satisfaction the statement of the illustrious Duke and his opinions on this important question. I can only say that I am glad to find that "the highest Military Authority" is not the illustrious Duke, as I should have imagined it was, but some lower Military Authority who has furnished this very startling and inexplicable statement. I do not wish to pass from this subject without entering a protest against the impression which seems to prevail that because Her Majesty's Government do not talk on this matter, because they do not make public speeches or show their feelings, that, therefore, deep anxiety and vigilance are not directed to this question. It has been, and is still, the subject of our anxious thought; but, owing to the very nature of the subject, we cannot do otherwise than practise the utmost reticence and reserve with respect to it. If such things existed as Secret Committees, I should have no objection to lay before such a Committee everything we know and do on the subject; but Secret Committees are not in our habit; and everybody must see that nothing would be more insane than to explain to all the world what our strength or what our weakness was, what the nature of the precautions were which we were taking, and what the subjects were as to which we were directing our vigilance and our care. It would be absolutely not only insane, but treacherous, if we were to commit such matters as these to a publicity which does not include merely our own subjects, but which must extend to all the nations of the world. I therefore rise to say just these few words as a protest against the tones of panic which prevail and the language which is used, as though the Government were passing by all these matters in utter apathy, which, in the present state of the world, would be a flagrant dereliction of their duty. But though it is satisfactory to think we are increasing our precautions, I would commend to your Lordships the following rough figures as to our action in recent years. I will take them so as to cover several years, so that there should be no question of Party in the matter. I wish to make no distinction between ourselves and the noble Lords opposite, but only to show that there has been a considerable increase of preparation in this country. I find that if your Lordships compare 1884 and 1888 it will be found that the number of men of all forces that were under the colours were 181,817 in 1884 and 212,241 in 1888—a very large increase, much larger than some of the increases which at that time were demanded even by the most alarmed persons. And in the same way with regard to the expenditure on the Navy. I have here a comparison of the money devoted to shipbuilding and armaments. In 1883-4 there was an expenditure of £4,445,000; in 1887-8 the sum was £6,611,000. Now I do not quote expenditure as in itself a thing that is admirable, but I am merely showing that there is no ground whatever for the implied reproach of parsimony and that we are neglecting the defences of the country. I merely wish to make that one protest and observation. But before I sit down I feel that I cannot avoid taking advantage of the opportunity to enter a protest against another practice. That is, the practice of those who are, or ought to be, distinguished authorities upon military affairs making statements against the Government under whom they serve, and making them in a place where they cannot be answered. I have here the report of a speech—apparently an authorized speech—made by a Member of this House, the Adjutant General of the Army. I read in that speech these words—

> "The answer to the question why the Army and the Navy are not as strong as they ought to be is to be found in the system of our Government by party—that curse of modern England which is sapping and undermining the foundations of our country, which is depriving our statesmen of the manly honesty which was once their characteristic. What do we see when any new Administration comes into office?"

Remember, we were the last Administration which came into Office.

> "What directly takes place? It is the same with all Parties. The first thing is the endeavour made by the Minister in Office to obtain some clap-trap reputation by cutting down the expenses of the Army and Navy."

That is the comment of the Adjutant General on the conduct of the Secretary of State for War. The next thing he says is this—

> "This is the result of what? The result of a low and vicious standard of morality which is now uppermost in men's minds. In speaking so light-heartedly he forgets, in his pride of having reduced the Estimates, the fault he has committed, the crime he is guilty of against the country."

My Lords, I am not going to answer these comments. They relate to matters of whose existence I am ignorant; but what I do earnestly protest against is that panic-producing speeches should be made at public dinners by public men. The Adjutant-General is a Member of this House. If he thinks his duty forces him to make such statements as these, let him come down here and make them, and we will answer them. What would be thought of any man in the Army lower in rank than the Adjutant-General who wrote to the newspapers in the tone of the Adjutant-General? What is to be thought of the Adjutant-General who speaks in that tone of the Government? If the Adjutant-General thinks it worth his while, we have our case; we have something to say for ourselves; we can defend ourselves if we are attacked. But the attack is made where we cannot defend ourselves instead of here, the Forum which is open to him—your Lordships' House.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) ELECTORS BILL.

BROUGHT FROM THE COMMONS.

Bill read 1ª. (No. 103.)

LORD BALFOUR gave Notice that he proposed to fix the second reading for Monday.

THE EARL OF JERSEY said, that by this Bill, for the first time, persons who held property on which the rates were to be levied, would not have the opportunity of deciding who should cause those rates to be levied. He thought some opportunity should be given to their Lordships to consider Amendments to this Bill, and therefore he hoped the noble Lord would be able to allow some time to elapse so that Amendments might be placed on the Paper.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The MARQUESS of SALISBURY) said, there was a difficulty in the way of his noble Friend's proposal, because if this Bill did not come into operation early in June he was afraid the year would be lost. If the noble Lord would put his Amendments on the Paper on Monday, the Government would be able consider them on Tuesday.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, he might point out that Monday was fixed for the Committee stage of the Scotch University Bill, which would certainly take the whole of that sitting. He was only expressing the wish of a number of Peers interested in Scotch business when he asked to be told whether that Bill was coming on on Monday or not. It still remained on the Paper, but none or only one of the Amendments was printed, and he could not conceive that it was the intention of the Secretary for Scotland to proceed with it on Monday. Great public convenience would result if their Lordships were told what was to be done, and it would have been a still better public convenience if they had been told earlier.

LORD BALFOUR said, the Secretary for Scotland was not in his place at present; but he had seen his noble Friend a short time ago, and was told that he had abandoned the idea of taking the Committee stage of the Scotch University Bill on Monday. In all probability it would not come on before the Whitsuntide Recess.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY suggested that perhaps if the Secretary for Scotland attended their Lordships' House that afternoon, he would so far inconvenience himself as to make some public announcement.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY asked, whether it was the intention of the Government to go into Committee on Tuesday if the Bill passed the second reading on Monday?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, it was the wish of the Government unless there was any important Amendment.

Bill to be read 2ª on *Monday* next.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL.—(No. 83.)

(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.*)

COMMITTEE (ON RE-COMMITMENT).

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee (on Re-commitment), read.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, in moving that the House do now resolve itself into Committee, said, he desired to make a short statement as to the changes made in the measure. In the first place, the Bill was now strictly limited to the neglect of duty and offences against morality. Whatever appeared, even indirectly, to go beyond those matters had been struck out of the Bill. The second change which had been made in its provisions was the omission of the one which required the presence of the Bishop and his assessors in a Court which was to try the matter of fact whether the moral offence charged had been committed. The sentencing in the graver cases was still reserved to the Bishop. The third change was that the function of the Commissioners, now called assessors, would be limited to trying questions of fact. It had been objected to the original measure that it would entail the disadvantages of having two additional trials; but he could not understand how the procedure laid down by the Bill could have been so greatly misinterpreted. It had provided that there should be an appeal to the Provincial Court and again to the Judicial Committee on the sentence and on points of law, but not on the verdict on the facts. The appeal against "sentence," which could only mean appeal against amount of punishment, had been misinterpreted, as if it meant appeal against verdict. There could not have been any such thing under the Bill as two trials of question of fact. It would be for the Court, not for the Bishop, to grant a re-hearing on special prescribed grounds only. But one re-hearing of facts by the same Court would be preserved, if, for example, new evidence were produced. By the adoption of the system of assessors they at once secured any advantage of the old commission of inquiry, saved expense, and got rid of other objections. The reduction in the expense would be a substantial one, seeing that the witnesses would be examined on the spot, and only once. The cost of appeal upon questions of fact, which was the great source of expense under the present system, would no longer have to be incurred by either party. He knew of one recent case in which the cost of the trial had been about £300, and the cost of the appeal was thrice that sum. Moreover, when a case was sent, as now, direct to the provincial Court, it involved the discrimination of facts, and not of law only, by the single man. Decisions of fact by one mind, however capable, were unsatisfactory, and were increasingly felt to be so. Nevertheless, if both parties consented, there could be no objection to a case going to the provincial Court, and this was accordingly left possible. The expenses of a hearing under this Bill could scarcely exceed those of the present commission alone. Again, the Bill provided for a scale of costs, and yet again for the taxation of costs. On the whole, therefore, the costs entailed by the proposed procedure under the Bill would be far less than they were under the existing system. He begged to move that the Bill be re-committed.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill."—(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.*)

Lord COLERIDGE, in moving that the House resolve itself into Committee that day six months, said, he did not know that it was necessary for him to apologize to the House for having taken in this case a step which he had never before taken during the 15 years he had had the honour of having a seat in that House, and he should not have taken the step of moving the rejection of this measure unless he thought that the Bill involved a most objectionable and mischievous principle, which was not only objectionable in theory but was bad in the interests of order, of justice, and of religion. He did not deny that there were many things in the present Church Discipline Act that ought to be amended, and any proposal to amend them in the right way would meet with his hearty concurrence. The objection he felt to this Bill was that it exempted particular classes of persons from the ordinary operation of the law. In former days, no doubt, the supremacy of the Crown was maintained and defended by ecclesiastics as part of the attributes of the Sovereign. In the days of the Tudor and Stuart Monarchs ecclesiastics were much in the habit of defending and justifying the most execrable tyranny in the name of religion and of "making gods of Kings." That kind of supremacy had disappeared, and in its place was now recognized the supremacy of the State and of Parliament. The law of the Church was the law of the land; but under the Bill, if it became law, no offender against that law, however extreme and grave the offence he had committed—whether adultery, drunkenness, or profligacy—could be brought to justice unless the Bishop thought that he ought. According to the Bill, after persons had been brought to justice and sentence had been pronounced by the Court, it rested with the Bishop whether or not that sentence could be carried into effect. What would be thought if corruption among lawyers was to be punished by an Act which should enable any Judge upon the Bench to shield from the operation of the law any practitioner who was made the subject of attack? Yet that was practically what was done by this Bill as regarded the Church. It might be said that persons in the condition of Bishops might be trusted to exercise properly the power entrusted to them. But Bishops, like other classes of men, were not exempt from human failings. He might say that he knew of one case where, if this Bill had been law, no proceedings whatever would have been taken against a person who dared not face the horrible charges brought against him. It should be remembered that this Bill was directed against moral offences only; but to exempt any class of persons from the consequences of their crimes was to violate the first principles of justice. It was undoubted that questions of doctrine and ritual were the most important to the Church at the present time, and the greater part of the proceedings of the Ecclesiastical Courts consisted of that class of cases. Why were those questions not brought within the Bill? Was it that the present procedure with respect to doctrine and ritual was satisfactory? He could not think so; but if it were satisfactory, why change the tribunal in respect of morals? If it were not satisfactory in the case of morals, why should not the change also be made in regard to doctrine? He could state a few facts from which everyone might form his own judgment. A great number of suits had been instituted on points of doctrine and ritual. The expenses of those suits had been enormous. In one case the expenses on one side alone amounted to £3,000. The judgments were, in many cases, unsatisfactory, and, moreover, they were evaded oftentimes upon pleas which were purely technical, which sufficed to prevent the operation of the law in a particular instance, but which settled nothing for the future. A good deal of dissatisfaction arose as to the state of the Law of Church Discipline, and especially as to the composition and conduct of the Court. It was the practice of that Court that no member of it ever attended unless he was summoned, and no member was ever summoned unless he was selected by the Lord Chancellor of the day, or occasionally by the Lord President. In one instance a Judge was excluded from interfering in a particular case by the special interference of a particular Lord Chancellor. He was told that the noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond), when President of the Council, gave directions that when any question of ecclesiastical interest arose, all the Judges should be regularly summoned by the Registrar; but so inveterate was the habit of interference that in a famous case the Lord Chancellor intimated to Sir Alexander Cockburn and himself that he could do without them and that they had better stay in their Courts. Such things were manifestly wrong. No Court ought to be so constituted that the members of it had not the absolute right to attend the deliberations and the hearings of suits, and certainly no Court should be constituted so that it could possibly be said that the Executive Government interfered with its action. He recollected it being said that it was an intrusion on the liberties of the Church that these Courts should sit and act by the authority of the State. In that House, however, he need hardly point out that such a contention was groundless. In this country no tribunal could ever profess to affect the property or position of a subject except under the authority of Parliament. No one could read the Statute Book without seeing Statute after Statute dealing with these Ecclesiastical Courts, and especially the two great Courts now represented, one absolutely, and the other, to some extent, by the Privy Council. It was clear, therefore, that those two Courts were Courts of absolutely statutory creation. Then the High Commission Court, which was the strongest ecclesiastical tribunal which ever existed in this country, was created, and afterwards abolished, without the smallest reference to Convocation or to the clergy in any shape or form. It was reserved for the Public Worship Regulation Bill and for a decision of their Lordships' House to clothe the Bishops of the Church of England with a power of interfering with the process of the law. He did not wish to go into the details of the clauses, but had noticed the general objections to the Bill—the confusion which it presented of the functions of Judge and jury or assessors, and the powers given to the Bishop. These were matters which must be discussed in Committee if the Bill went into Committee. There was, however, one question upon which he would like to say a few strong words. Unless he had misunderstood, there was, save in the particular circumstances referred to in the 7th section, absolutely no appeal whatever in matters of fact. He trusted that the House would not pass a Bill which contained a principle so alien from the present law, so perilous and unjust to persons whose characters and reputations might be vitally affected. He remembered an appeal from a judgment which, if this Bill had been law, would have been final, in which the most telling argument for the appellant was the reading of the judgment appealed from, so wrong-headed, absurd, and monstrous was that judgment. To leave the Bill as it was in this respect would make it a most unjust and oppressive measure. If he had said a word disrespectful or improper of those from whom it was his painful duty to differ, he asked their pardon. He stood there for law against personal will, and wished to see the clergy made, like other subjects of the Queen, obedient to the law, and he earnestly hoped that the discipline of the ancient and glorious Church of England, which undoubtedly was not perfect, would not be made any worse by the passing of this Bill. He begged to move that the House resolve itself into Committee on this day six months.

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now"), and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months").—(*The Lord Coleridge.*)

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, that he was placed in some difficulty in dealing with the speech of his noble and learned Friend, who, both personally and by the office which he held, was entitled to great respect whenever he addressed the House on any question, particularly one relating to law. Undoubtedly it was competent for any noble Lord to take the course taken by his noble and learned Friend, though it was not usual when a matter had received any amount of deliberate consideration at the time of the second reading. He should be most unwilling, in a case of this kind, to reject at this stage a Bill promoted by the most rev. Prelate. But he acknowledged that, if his noble and learned Friend had stated good grounds for reconsidering the decision on the second reading, he had given good reason why he was not present on that occasion to move the rejection of the Bill. But had his noble and learned Friend really stated grounds which would go to the rejection of the Bill if the House were now on the second reading? He had made a speech very able and interesting, which contained much matter deserving of serious attention. But a large part of the speech had been addressed to matters which were not within the Bill and were not germane to the question whether it should be permitted to proceed. The Bill was one for providing a more satisfactory mode of trial in particular cases, cases of immorality or neglect of duty by clerks, which for certain reasons, good or bad, it had been thought right to separate from the trial of questions of doctrine and ritual. One objection of his noble and learned Friend was that this separation had been made. But the object itself was one which it was most desirable to attain. There could be no better proof of the intolerable cost which might be involved in the present mode of proceeding than the instances given by his noble and learned Friend, in which the costs of one suit had reached the figure of £14,000. Some of their Lordships might probably be familiar with other cases in which the cost had been enormous. What was his noble and learned Friend's objection to the principle of the Bill? It was that it was an attack, either open or covert, upon the supremacy of the Crown, of which his noble and learned Friend had given a just and happy definition. He had always thought that all mystification about the supremacy of the Crown, as distinguished from the supremacy of the law, was under a Constitutional system of Government unreal and absurd. He agreed with his noble and learned Friend that the supremacy of the law ought at all hazards to be maintained, and if the Bill had attacked that supremacy he should think it a most serious objection. If there was any such attack in the Bill as it stood, it was certainly covert and not open. In fact, so far as the supremacy involved anything in the nature of

Prerogative, it was expressly saved. Then what was there else in this Bill to interfere with the supremacy of the law as distinguished from Prerogative? The Bill itself, if it became law, would regulate the manner in which a certain part of the law of the land was to be administered. If the law was administered in a manner itself unexceptionable, it would be not an exception or derogation from, but an example of, that supremacy; for it would be an Act of Parliament regulating, by the authority of Parliament, the manner in which for the future this part of the Ecclesiastical Law is to be administered. His noble and learned Friend found fault with the Bill because it expressly exempted Bishops from its scope. But as the law at present stood Bishops could not be proceeded against by the same machinery which was applicable to those subject to their jurisdiction. Certainly the machinery of this Bill could not well be applied to the case of Bishops. There had been cases in which Bishops had been deprived for criminal offences. He remembered the case of a Welsh Bishop who was deprived in the reign of James II. or William III., but in that case proceedings were taken by means of special commission. Whether that was a proper and suitable mode of procedure was not now a matter for discussion; but this, at any rate, was quite clear—that any existing possible mode of dealing with Bishops who might be guilty of offences against the Ecclesiastical Law remained untouched by this Bill. It might or might not be desirable to provide by legislation some further mode of proceeding against Bishops, but that was no ground for objecting to this Bill, which only dealt with the machinery in proceedings of a certain kind against ordinary clergymen—a machinery manifestly not applicable to the case of Bishops. His noble and learned Friend, as he understood him, also took exception to the Bill because of the power with regard to initiation, and also with regard to sentences, which it gave the Bishop. It was quite true that the Bill provided that upon complaint being made to the Bishop, he should only take proceedings when satisfied "that proceedings under this Act ought to be taken" on such complaint. But that was not a change in the present law. Under the Church Discipline Act, as had been decided by a judgment in this House, the Bishop was not compelled to institute proceedings unless he thought fit to do so. He thought it would be unreasonable and intolerable that a Bishop should be compelled to proceed against any clergyman of his diocese against whom any charge of immorality, however manifestly groundless or trumped up, was brought. Before the Church Discipline Act, there was no doubt a rule with regard to the person making the complaint giving security for costs. But that was not the law or practice now. At present the Bishop was personally liable for the costs. It was said that the Court could deal with the costs, but the person who instituted the proceedings might be unable to pay the costs. It would be monstrous that upon a complaint made against a clerk the Bishop should be compelled to proceed, though satisfied that there was no *primâ facie* case and no real foundation for the complaint. The Bishop would, of course, act under a sense of responsibility, and they might rest assured that the person who made a valid complaint, upon which a Bishop refused to proceed, would not be slow to appeal to that most potent of all Courts, the Court of public opinion. This, he thought, would be good security against a Bishop improperly refusing to take proceedings. He could understand that if it were a matter of doctrine or of ritual, a Bishop who was supposed to sympathize with the doctrine or ritual complained of might be considered unwilling to proceed in respect of such complaint; but he could not imagine that any one would suspect a Bishop of connivance or sympathy with drunkenness or other acts of gross immorality, or accuse him of a desire to shield any person against whom a *primâ facie* case of that kind had been made out. But if his noble and learned Friend thought the Bishop ought to be bound to proceed whenever complaint was made, it was surprising that he did not wait until the Bill was in Committee, and then move an Amendment to carry out his object. His noble and learned Friend also took exception to the power given to the Bishop as to certain sentences, and appeared to argue that the Bill enabled the Bishop to throw his shield round a man and refuse to pass sentence though he was found guilty. But that was not so.

If a sentence of suspension, or anything less, were passed by the Court, the Bishop could not overrule it. It was, no doubt, quite true that a more severe sentence, such as a sentence of deprivation, was to be passed in the Bishop's Court, by the Bishop himself, and not by his Chancellor, though in the provincial Court it might be passed by the Official Principal of the Archbishop. This, whatever might be the reason, was now, and had been for above 200 years, if not always, the settled law and usages in such cases. It had been recognized by such Judges as Lord Stowell and Sir John Nicholl. What the Bill provided was strictly agreeable to that law and usage. If the Court considered that the case required a sentence in excess of suspension, the Court would remit the case to the Bishop for sentence, with an intimation of their opinion, and with their finding of fact and the evidence. The Bishop in such case would exercise his judgment, and pass, or not pass, a sentence of deprivation. His noble and learned Friend had said it was a great hardship that there was to be no appeal on the question of fact. He hoped that their Lordships would not forget what the state of our Criminal Law was. If a man was found guilty by a jury of murder or any less crime, which might materially affect his position, his person, or his character, there was no appeal except on a matter of law. There might, no doubt, be recourse to the Prerogative of Mercy vested in the Crown; and this Bill recognized that Prerogative, to say nothing of any other power of mitigating punishment that might exist. But they had not at present, in ordinary criminal cases, any Court of Appeal on the facts. It was a much disputed question whether they ought or ought not to have one; and the difficulties were so great that no one seemed to have been able to overcome them up to the present time. And as to any other question of fact tried, in a civil case, before a jury, there was not any appeal in the proper sense of the word. There must be an application for a new trial, which must be based on a special ground, either some matter of law, or that the verdict was against the weight of evidence; and it was not the disposition of the Courts to overturn verdicts simply because the Court from which the new trial was asked might have come to a different conclusion from that which the jury had arrived at. This Bill would allow a re-hearing of the question of fact, if the Court were satisfied that there were special grounds for granting what would, in substance, be a new trial; and, although it was true that, in these ecclesiastical cases, there was at present a general right of appeal upon the facts, it was productive of great, and often very unnecessary, expense, and he thought the re-hearing, on special grounds only, much better. His noble and learned Friend had touched upon some other points which he humbly thought were outside the Bill, and not germane to the present measure. He had asked why the Bill was confined to morals and neglect of duty. Some good reasons might, he thought, be given for that. The necessity of dealing with that class of questions was a matter about which people in general were quite agreed; and if the Bill was good in itself it might be fairly hoped that it would pass through both Houses of Parliament without encountering those difficulties and storms which arose out of popular animosities connected with parties in the Church. Again, Parliament in 1874 had thought fit to deal separately and specifically with questions of ritual, and had provided a special and peculiar machinery for that particular class of cases. They might think, and think rightly, that questions of doctrine were of enormous importance; they would, on the other hand, probably be equally convinced of the difficulties of raising them judicially. Everyone would probably agree that the existing limits of liberty in the Church of England, on the one side or on the other, ought not to be curtailed; and, therefore, there would be no great disposition to facilitate procedure in that particular class of cases which related to doctrine. Whether that ought to be so or not he did not say. With regard to what his noble and learned Friend had said about the Judicial Committee, nobody knew better than his noble and learned Friend did that they were not over-manned with respect to judicial strength, and that it was convenient to make some arrangement as to who should attend in one Court and who in another. He did not believe that arrangements of that kind had ever been made, or proposed to be made, in the Judicial Committee or elsewhere, for the purpose of constituting the Court in a particular manner with a view to the decision of particular cases; than which, if it were indeed done, nothing could be more scandalously improper. To suppose that any Lord Chancellor could, with such an object, send messages to such men as the late Chief Justice Cockburn and his noble and learned friend, requesting them not to attend, would imply not only misconduct, but folly amounting to idiotcy. The only possible motive for the communications which had been mentioned was that those learned Judges might not be unnecessarily withdrawn from their own Courts, to their own inconvenience or that of the suitors in those Courts, when it was known that the Judicial Committee would be attended by a sufficient number of Judges, whether they were there or not. The Judicial Committee might or might not be a good tribunal; the present was not a convenient time for arguing that point. But no one who wished to remodel the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council or to abolish it, would ever think of introducing such a proposal into a Bill of this kind, to which it did not appear to be at all germane. In conclusion, while he admitted that some of the observations made by his noble and learned Friend suggested points which might be fairly considered in Committee on the Bill, he maintained that they furnished no sufficient ground for refusing to go into Committee on the measure.

Lord GRIMTHORPE did not think that the noble and learned Lord who had just sat down had displaced any of the contentions of the noble and learned Lord (Lord Coleridge) who moved the rejection of the Bill. The noble and learned Lord was not present when the second reading of the Bill was moved and carried without opposition. All that happened on that occasion was that he made a speech about the Bill, and while he knew there was no use in throwing it out, he thought it desirable that their Lordships and other people should understand a great deal more about it than otherwise they would have learnt. It happened that last year he found a right rev. Prelate moving the Committee stage of a certain Bill, at the second reading of which he had been unable to be present. On hearing that, and a remark or a question by a noble Lord opposite, he rose and said he did not think that the Bill was understood. The result was that, when the Lord Chancellor put the Question, only one "Content," from the right rev. Prelate himself, was heard; while, on the other side there were a good many "Non-Contents." The result was that the Bill died, although it appeared in the Votes every day until the end of the Session. Their Lordships had been told that, when this Bill was in Committee, it would be remodelled. He had hoped that it was going to be modified to such an extent that he could accept it. He knew that in certain quarters he was represented as an obstructive of measures of this kind; but he believed he was the first drawer of a Bill for amending the defects of the Church Discipline Act and the Public Worship Act, which may be seen in the volume of evidence of the Ecclesiastical Courts' Commission five years ago. It might be bad, or it might be good; but one thing was quite certain, that it was a great deal more simple than this Bill, and was not complicated with sections and subsections. Further experience and the reading of the evidence of the Commission had induced him to alter his views on some points, especially on the veto. He had no idea, until after reading the evidence, of the extent to which the veto was carried in depriving parishioners of the rights of the Church of England in having their service conducted according to law. That was one of the things which made a deep impression upon his mind. The veto had been abused; it was liable to be abused. Even the noble and learned Lord who spoke last had admitted that it was liable to be abused in ritual and doctrinal cases. Lord Stowell had said most emphatically that it had always been the law that anyone might promote the office of judge against clerical offenders. People forgot that the parishioners had an interest in prosecuting moral offenders among the clergy, and that this was a very different thing from prosecuting a thief. That was a matter for the Queen or the Attorney General, who can issue a *nolle prosequi*, to deal with as representing the entire public; but the present question was a different one. The parishioners had a right to prosecute their clergyman if he either commit immorality or conducted his service illegally. He agreed that it was a hardship for the Bishop to prosecute the clergyman at his own cost; but it was the Bishops' own doing in the Clergy Discipline Act of 1840. Before that Lord Stowell said that the Court was open to everybody. He did not wish the Bishops to do that work; he wanted other people to do it; they had the moral right to undertake it. And, now again, it did not appear to be perceived generally that the Bishops had got rid of the necessity of undertaking the suits themselves, and being liable to costs, and yet they insisted on retaining the preliminary veto, and demanded a final one besides, if they did not like the Judge's sentence, which was a distinct usurpation of the Royal power, and, in fact, a dispensing power, unknown to the law. It was true that the Queen, acting by her officers, could pardon a man who had been convicted; but was that a reason why the Bishop should be authorized to do the like? The Bishops claimed, under this Bill, powers that they had never had before, not even under the Act of 1840, to interfere with the sentence of their own Courts. So that there were two invasions of the Royal supremacy in this Bill. Another peculiarity showing how badly the Bill had been prepared, and modified since, was the provision that if a clergyman were convicted by any Court, say, by two Justices, who very often made mistakes, the Bishop had no veto. By the first operative clause of the Bill the trial must go on. The man might be innocent; yet he had the right to do everything except to prove that he was innocent; he might bring what evidence he could in mitigation of punishment, which is, *ipso facto*, confessing that he is guilty. But why should a man charged with having committed an offence be precluded from proving, not that the sentence ought to be mitigated, but that no sentence ought to have been passed upon him at all? Nothing is easier, for instance, than for a woman and a confederate to get a bastardy order against any man, and the Justices must decide according to the evidence, which the defendant may have no means of refuting; in fact, from the nature of the case, it is most difficult to do so. As the Bill was framed, a case had to be sent to the Bishop, not where he had to take action, but where he had not to take action. He had brought these matters under the notice of the House merely to show how little the machinery of the Bill had been attended to, notwithstanding the measure had now been before the House for two months. Another clerical aggression was that their Lordships were asked by this Bill for the first time to ratify a canon by law. Such a thing had never been done before. Canons of the Church had often been overruled by our Courts of Law and by the Legislature; indeed, more than half of the 141 canons had been thus disposed of, or are absolutely illegal and *ultra vires*; but in no single instance had a canon been ratified by the Legislature. It was asserted that this 122nd canon might be merely a declaration of the ancient law; but, fortunately, the Convocations themselves had left on record a refutation of that hypothetical justification. For, in 1571, a canon was drawn up and passed by the Convocations; but the whole Code was refused by Queen Elizabeth, which declared that the Chancellors might not pronounce a sentence of excommunication, but that they might deprive; whereas in 1603 they enacted that the Chancellors might not deprive, but might excommunicate. Therefore, the Convocation—that is, the Bishops and clergy—had themselves proved that this canon was an aggression and a novelty, besides being contrary to the Acts of Uniformity and the great Heresy Act of 13 *Eliz.* c. 12. Chancellors having followed it without argument proves nothing. Decisions, even of the highest Court, without argument, had been overruled in two great ritual cases after argument. It seemed from this Bill, too, that the Archbishops and their provincial Judge might run a race with each other which is to deprive, though the Privy Council had decided, after argument, that the Dean of Arches was the proper person to do it. So the Bill overrides both Acts of Parliament and legal decisions and the oldest testimony of the canons themselves, merely to please the High Church clergy and set up some episcopal supremacy, including the power to alter as well as to pronounce the sentence, or to act either as executioner or dispenser of pardons. Another reason why this Bill should not be further proceeded with at the present moment was that the Bishops were only showing half their hand, because it was well known that they had another Bill behind, which had been nominally "presented," but seen by no one but themselves. Before the House made any concession with regard to the measure now before them they should insist upon having the fullest information with regard to the other Bill. It was useless to talk about costs. Litigiousness was the cause of costs. Unless they cut off justice they could not cut off costs in cases where people were litigious. Broadly speaking, without going into the details of the Bill, which was exceedingly ill-drawn, these were the reasons why he entirely agreed with the noble and learned Lord that the Bill ought not to be allowed to go further at this time. The Church Discipline Act, passed by this House in 1838 and 1839, and spoilt by the Bishops in 1840, as he had explained on the second reading of this Bill, was framed by the strongest Commission, appointed in 1832, that had ever sat to consider such questions, and it ought not to be lightly set aside. Although he had put down Amendments to the Bill, he was strongly of opinion that the Bill was of such a character that it would be useless to go into Committee upon it. The question would then be left for another Session, when there would be an opportunity of bringing in a proper and thoroughly simple Bill to deal with it.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury) said, that if the most rev. Prelate who had moved the re-commitment of this Bill required any excuse for having divided the subject of morals from ritual and doctrine, it was furnished by the speeches of the noble and learned Lord Chief Justice and the noble and learned Lord who had just sat down. If two such speeches could be made upon a subject upon which it could hardly have been supposed there would be scarcely any difference of opinion, he would like to know what chance of passing a Bill would have had which involved the delicate subjects of doctrine and ritual? In the speeches of each of the noble and learned Lords the mischiefs which they had portrayed had been in a great measure connected with questions arising out of ritual and doctrine. It could not but be admitted that it was unfortunate that in the case of a man who had been convicted before a Temporal Court of any offence against the moral law, the whole proceedings should have to be begun again before the Ecclesiastical Court and at great expense. He did not understand that the Lord Chief Justice was satisfied with the present condition of the law in that respect. As the law now stood, the Bishop had to prosecute, at his own expense—and sometimes the expense was enormous—a person unfit to remain in the Church; and this Bill provided a remedy, at all events in a large class of cases. It would provide a comparatively cheap, facile, and expeditious mode of getting rid of persons whom both the laity and the clergy desired to have put out of the Church. All the rest of the criticism which had been passed upon the Bill was more or less criticism upon the machinery by which the admitted evil was to be remedied. If questions having regard to supremacy and to right of veto arose, there was nothing to prevent any noble Lord moving in Committee to strike out the provision which gave the Bishops the right of veto in certain cases. There could be no doubt that the present state of the law with regard to immorality by the clergy was extremely unsatisfactory; but in consequence of the Bill containing a provision to which he objected the Lord Chief Justice moved to reject the Bill, instead of moving to strike out the objectionable clause. He had been unable to discover in the Bill anything of that spirit of ecclesiastical aggression in which the noble and learned Lord (Lord Grimthorpe) so evidently believed. The object of the Bill was to facilitate the expulsion from the Church of those clergymen whose conduct the general body of the laity and clergy alike condemned, and he trusted their Lordships would agree with the Motion made by the most rev. Prelate.

On Question, *resolved* in the *negative:* Then the original Motion *agreed to:* House in Committee accordingly.

Clause 1 (Short title) *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Sentencing clerk found guilty by civil court).

Lord GRIMTHORPE moved an Amendment the effect of which would be to provide that the Court which tried a man should pronounce the judgment and sentence as was done in all other Courts.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON, in opposing the Amendment, said, the real purpose of the clause was to provide that in cases such as were contemplated further on in the Bill, the Bishop should have a voice in settling the sentence. The Bishop was only called in where the sentence exceeded admonition or suspension.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK) said, he would point out that a parallel might be found in criminal information cases, where a Judge often pronounced sentence from the notes of another Judge or of the magistrate who tried the prisoner.

Amendment *negatived;* Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Complaint against clerk for criminal offence or neglect of duty).

THE EARL OF HARROWBY asked, what was the meaning of a "criminal offence against ecclesiastical law?"

THE BISHOP OF LONDON said, that offences against ecclesiastical law were offences concerning doctrine and such as were inconsistent with the duty and position of the clergyman—neglect of services prescribed by the law and like offences.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY said, that under the present law a clergyman was bound to read the service every day in church. Some persons might think that hunting was unsuitable in a clergyman. Would a clergyman who hunted twice a week come within the definitions of the Bill?

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, that hunting was not an ecclesiastical offence. No doubt, such offences as refusing to bury or marry would be included.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY said, he should like to know whether there was any criterion of what amounted to a neglect to visit parishioners?

THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD said, that on that point he would refer the noble Lord to the Pluralities Act Amendment Act of a few years ago.

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses *agreed to.*

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE said, he begged to move the insertion of a new clause, to put the Isle of Ely under the archidiaconal jurisdiction of Ely. In consequence of some quarrel in the Middle Ages, the Isle of Ely was the only part of the county of Cambridge which was not subject to the jurisdiction of the Archdeacon of Ely. He moved the clause at the instance of the Bishop of Ely.

New Clause *agreed to.*

Moved, "That the Bill be reported to the House as amended."

THE EARL OF HARROWBY said, he thought something should be done to protect Bishops against the cost of proceedings under this Act, and he hoped the Government would consider what could be done in this direction.

THE BISHOP OF CARLISLE said, this Bill would certainly diminish the costs of such proceedings. Even under the present law he had, by trying the case himself with assessors, got rid of a peccant clerk without any expense.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, Her Majesty's Government would consider, before the next stage of the Bill, whether some clause could not be inserted to meet the point suggested by his noble Friend.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON said, no provision as to giving security for costs would be of any avail, as parishioners would not give such security, and the effect would be that the immoral clergyman would not be prosecuted at all.

Motion *agreed to:* Report of Amendment to be received on Tuesday next; and Bill to be *printed,* as amended. (No. 108.)

UNIVERSITY (SCOTLAND) BILL.

STATEMENT.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS) said, he had been requested by his noble Friend the Secretary for Scotland to state, for the information of those Gentlemen who were interested in this matter in Scotland, that the Committee stage of the University (Scotland) Bill would not be taken until Tuesday, the 5th of June.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (BIRMINGHAM) BILL [H.L.]. (NO. 101.)

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to enable the School Board for Birmingham to put in force the Lands

Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the Acts amending the same: And

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON) BILL [H.L.]. (NO. 102.)

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to enable the School Board for London to put in force the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the Acts amending the same: Were *presented* by The Lord President; read 1ª.

House adjourned at a quarter before Eight o'clock, to Monday next, a Quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 11*th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered* — *First Reading*—Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland) (No. 2) * [260]; Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment (No. 3) * [261]; Vestrymen's Qualification * [262].

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS — *Ordered* — *First Reading*—Local Government (Highways) * [258]; Local Government (Port) * [259].

Report — Local Government * [213]; Local Government (No. 2) * [214]; Local Government (Poor Law) * [215]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 2) * [216]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 3) * [217]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 4) * [218]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 5) * [219].

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

MOTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (HIGHWAYS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board under "The Highways and Locomotives (Amendment) Act, 1878," relating to the Counties of Durham, Hertford, and Westmoreland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 258.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (PORT) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm an Order of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Public Health Act, 1875," as amended by "The Public Health (Ships, &c.) Act, 1885," relating to the Port of Dartmouth, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 259.]

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CITY OF LONDON (FIRE INQUESTS) BILL.

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) said, he did not rise to oppose the Bill, but to state the view of the Government. The principle of the Bill the Government approved; and, in fact, in "another place" they had introduced a Bill applying that principle to a larger area. He only now rose to give the House to understand that, though in deference to the wish of the strong Committee to which this Bill had been referred, they did not wish to infere with its progress, it must be with the understanding that "elsewhere" they might possibly give that preference to their own measure that would not tend to the passing of this Bill into law.

Bill read the third time, and *passed*.

QUESTIONS.

ARMY (INDIA)—"COLONELS' ALLOWANCES."

MR. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he can state how many officers are now drawing colonels' allowances in India, and how many officers altogether are now drawing colonels' allowances, the payment of which is borne on the Indian Exchequer; whether an officer "on colonels' allowances" payable by the Indian Government, if he resides in Ceylon, or in any part of the world except India, is permitted to draw his allowances in England in full sterling value; whereas, if he resides in India, his allowances are converted at the rate of 2*s.* 0½*d.* the rupee, the value of the rupee being at present under 1*s.* 5*d.*, thereby entailing upon him a loss from 25 to 30 per cent of his income as compared with his brother officers, in precisely the same position, residing elsewhere; whether he will state the entire sum saved to the Indian Exchequer per annum by this mode of settling accounts with the officers who reside in India; and, whether the Government will consider the advisability of altering a policy which has the effect of dissuading officers trained and acclimatised in India from residing in that country after retirement?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): There are 430 officers drawing colonels' allowances from the Indian Exchequer. Of these, 418 reside in the United Kingdom, and 12 in India. An officer on colonels' allowances, residing in India, receives his pay and allowances in Indian currency like all other officers on full pay. If residing out of India he may, under the Regulations, draw his pay and allowances in sterling at the rate fixed for the purpose in 1854. It is the view of the India Office that there is no saving by paying the officers in India at the fixed rate; but there is a very heavy charge owing to the fall in exchange by paying those in England at the rate fixed in 1854, and this charge would be increased by the proposed measure. The objection raised to alter the Rule is that to do so would abrogate the rule that officers in India not on the retired list are to draw their pay in the currency, and at the rates of the country in which it accrues; but the Secretary of State does not at present see his way to make the alteration.

NAVAL COURTS MARTIAL—NAVAL MEDICAL OFFICERS.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the same or similar Regulations exist permitting naval medical officers to serve on courts martial as is the case with officers of the Army Medical Staff; and, if not, can he state the reason for this difference?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The Regulations do not admit of naval medical officers serving on courts martial. In common with officers of the other civil branches of the Navy they are debarred from this duty by Section 58 of the Naval Discipline Act, which lays down that—

> "No officer shall be qualified to sit as a member of any court-martial, unless he be a flag officer, captain, commander, or lieutenant of Her Majesty's Navy on full pay."

The conditions of the two Services widely differ; in the Navy it has always been held desirable that the military branch only should deal with questions of discipline.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS — MILTON ABBAS SCHOOLS.

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) (for Colonel HAMBRO) (Dorset, S.) asked the hon. Member for the Penrith Division of Cumberland, By what authority Her Majesty's Charity Commissioners, in the absence of any scheme for the management of the Milton Abbas School, Blandford, endeavour to restrict an appointment about to be made by the Trustees of the school, of a head master in, or intending to be in, Holy Orders, to a temporary appointment only; and, if he can assure the Trustees of the Milton Abbas Grammar School, that if they appoint a master under whom the school flourishes, and meets the requirements of the district, the fact that the master is in Holy Orders, or intends to take Holy Orders, shall not be a reason for the Charity Commissioners to remove him if at any future time they prepare a scheme for the school?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): Under the Endowed Schools Acts the Charity Commissioners have authority to make a scheme for Milton Abbas School, and therein to direct that a new head master be appointed. By Section 18 of the Act of 1869, it is expressly directed that, in any scheme for such a school as this, it shall be provided that a person shall not be disqualified for being a master therein by reason only of his not being, or not intending to be, in Holy Orders. A scheme being now in contemplation, and the Trustees having meanwhile advertised for a master, "who must be already in, or preparing to take, Holy Orders," the Commissioners thought it right to advise them that any appointment so made should be regarded as temporary. In reply to the second part of the hon.

Member's Question, the mere fact that the master proposed to be appointed is in orders, or is about to take orders, will not afford a ground for interference with his tenure by the Commisioners. Beyond that the Charity Commission is unable to give any pledge which would in any way fetter the discretion of the Governing Body which may be appointed under any future scheme.

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—THE SMALL ARMS FACTORY AT SPARKBROOK.

MR. KENRICK (Birmingham, N.) (for Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN) (Birmingham, W.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that the Small Arms Factory at Sparkbrook was purchased by the Government about two years ago, on the liquidation of the Small Arms and Ammunition Company, Limited; whether, since the purchase, a sum of about £50,000 has been spent in laying down new machinery and improving existing plant; whether the Government are now removing large quantities of the new machinery to the Enfield Factory; and, whether there is any intention on the part of the Government to transfer the manufacture at Sparkbrook to the works at Enfield?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Small Arms Factory at Sparkbrook was purchased in 1885. About £31,000 has been spent in laying down new machinery and improving existing plant. Some of the machinery is in course of removal to Enfield, for the purpose of starting the manufacture of the new magazine rifle. The intention may be stated generally to be that the Government manufacture of small arms will be carried on at Enfield alone; but large contracts for arms have been placed in Birmingham, so that the artizans there will not suffer by the removal of this machinery from Sparkbrook, and this place will be utilized as the principal Government depôt for repairs.

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR SERVICES — CONSULAR OFFICIAL AT MASSOWAH.

MR. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Civil Estimates of the last two years and of this year provide for the payment of a Consular official at Massowah; whether a Consular official was, in fact, appointed to this post about two years ago; and, whether this officer has for the last two years been working in the Foreign Office instead of going to Massowah?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The Estimates of last year and those of the current financial year provide for the payment of a Vice Consul at Massowah. A Vice Consul was appointed on October 26, 1886; but in consequence of the unsettled state of the country it has been decided from time to time to defer his departure. He has been employed on important duties in the Foreign Office.

EXCISE DUTIES (LOCAL PURPOSES) BILL — THE CART AND WHEEL DUTIES—FARMERS' LOCOMOTIVES—MARKET GARDENERS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, as the Revenue Bill now stands, farmers' locomotives used solely for agricultural purposes will be exempt from the Cart and Wheel Duties.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): In answering this question I must repeat a caution which I gave a few days ago, that any reply I may give must be taken as explanatory only of my proposals in the Bill, and not as a pledge as to the manner in which it may be interpreted when it becomes law. The interpretation of the Act will rest with the Board of Inland Revenue, subject to the Courts. With this reserve I may say that farmers' locomotives used solely for agricultural purposes will not be exempt from duty if they are used upon a road for drawing or propelling any vehicle. But I think it would be better if hon. Gentlemen interested in such points as this would wait to discuss them in Committee on the Bill, instead of asking me Questions over the Table, as any short answer I may give may lead to misapprehension.

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN (Lambeth, Brixton) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether carts belonging to market gardeners who were also nurserymen and florists would be exempt from payment under the Wheel Tax?

Mr. GOSCHEN: Yes, Sir; such carts will be exempt if they are used solely for the conveyance of fruit and flowers grown upon lands in the occupation of their owner. But I must repeat the caution I gave in answer to a previous Question dealing with the provisions of the Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) — PRISON SURGEONS.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is the case that the average daily population of the prison of Perth is 620; of Glasgow 500; and Barlinnie 500; whether the English Prison Commissioners recommended in their first Annual Report that chaplains in prisons of an average population of 400 and upwards should be appointed at a salary of £300, rising to £400; whether the average daily population of Glasgow, Barlinnie, and Perth, is equal to the average daily population of Birmingham, Leeds, and Durham; and, whether prison surgeons in those prisons are appointed at a salary of £320 a-year, while in the Scotch prisons they begin at £200 a-year; and what is the reason for the difference of salary?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The hon. Member has now asked specific Questions about particular prisons; and, in reply, I have to inform him that the surgeons at Glasgow and Perth receive higher pay than they would in English prisons of corresponding population; while the surgeon at Barlinnie and the chaplains at all three prisons receive less, the figures given by the hon. Member being substantially accurate as regards these four officers. The Scotch scales of salary were fixed by a Committee which had full knowledge of those adopted in England. In regard to the officers who are paid at a lower rate than the English scale will give them according to population, I wish to point out that although it is so in these particular cases, there are other cases, as I have already stated, in which reductions will have to be made.

Dr. CLARK asked, how the hon. Gentleman reconciled his answer with the previous answer he had given? The Question was, whether the highest salary was £200? The answer to that Question was that that was the case. Now the hon. Gentleman told them that in the English Provincial prisons the salary was £320.

Mr. JACKSON said, the hon. Member was aware that applications had been received in these particular cases where there was a disadvantage in the case of Scotland, and these applications were now under the consideration of the Treasury. If it were found necessary to make an alteration it would be made.

EGYPT—THE SUEZ CANAL—REGISTER AND TONNAGE OF STEAM VESSELS.

Captain COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any steps can be taken to ensure a record being kept by each Colony of the number and tonnage of steam vessels entered and cleared from and to foreign countries *viâ* the Suez Canal, so that information may be included in the Statistical Abstract for the several Colonial Possessions, similar to that furnished in No. 78, Statistical Abstract, British India?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry de Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Her Majesty's Government will consider how far a complete record of the nature desired can be obtained.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—JUDICIAL RENTS—ACREAGE.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether he can state the acreage represented respectively by the 136,722 cases of fair rent disposed of in Court, and the 94,469 cases of agreement out of Court, reported by the Irish Land Commission up to end of March, 1888?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): The Land Commissioners inform me that no record is kept of the acreage represented by the cases which are struck out, dismissed, or withdrawn. These cases number 37,059. Judicial rents were fixed in Court up to the end of March, 1888, in 99,663 cases. The acreage represented by these cases is 2,966,026. The acreage represented by the 94,469 agreements is 2,441,846.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—DUTY ON FOREIGN WINES.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any representations or remonstrances have been addressed to the Foreign Office by the French Government in connection with the proposed tax on bottled wines; and, if so, what the representations or remonstrances may be?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to refer the hon. Member to my answer to the hon. Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) on the 26th of April.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION COURT AT DOWNPATRICK.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether an application was made to the Sub-Commission Court (Messrs. Edward Greer, O'Callaghan, and Sproule) sitting at Downpatrick on Friday the 4th instant, that a case in which an hon. Member was coming over from London to give evidence in might be fixed for Tuesday the 8th instant was refused; whether the case was fixed for Saturday positively; whether, on Saturday, the hon. Member being in Court, having been summoned by telegraph, the Sub-Commissioners refused to take the case on that day, and postponed it until Tuesday; and, whether the action of the Sub-Commissioners can be justified on grounds of public convenience; and, if so, what were those grounds?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Land Commissioners had not yet been able to give him the information he had asked for. He imagined they found that local reference was necessary.

LAW AND POLICE (METROPOLIS)—BOW STREET AND MARLBOROUGH STREET POLICE COURTS.

Mr. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, How many summonses are heard on an average in a week at Bow Street and Marlborough Street Police Courts respectively; and, whether the two Courts are required?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: The weekly number of summonses heard on an average in a week at Marlborough Street Police Court for the year 1887 was 112; at Bow Street the weekly average is 132. Judging from the number of cases disposed of at each Court, and from the fact that the Committee which lately inquired into the disposition of magisterial business in the Metropolis, after full consideration, did not recommend the abolition of the Court at Marlborough Street, the Secretary of State is not prepared to say that the two Courts are not required.

CUSTOMS—IMPORTATION OF UNWHOLESOME TEA—COFFEIN.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can now see his way to frame Regulations to allow the importation duty free of tea unfit for human food, with precautions to prevent its getting into the market, for the purpose of the production of coffein, a chemical industry which our present Custom House Regulations drives completely to Germany?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The subject is now under reference to the Board of Customs. The firm who are seeking such a facility have undertaken to furnish further particulars desired by that Department; and, in the meantime, no definite answer can be given.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED INSURANCE FRAUDS AT BELFAST.

Mr. CAREW (Kildare, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, with reference to the intended prosecution for insurance frauds at Belfast, Whether it is the intention of the Crown to change the venue from Belfast to Dublin?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): This matter is now under the consideration of the Attorney General for Ireland.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—DISTRICT COUNCILS —CREMATION.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he intends to confer upon the new District Councils the right of cremation, if the said Council should think this desirable in the public interest?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): No, Sir; I have no such intention at present.

MERCHANT SHIPPING — THE MAIL STEAMER "ARIZONA"—DUNMANUS BAY.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the reported narrow escape of the mail steamer *Arizona* on Monday night last, that during the prevalence of a thick fog ran into Dunmanus Bay, and very nearly went ashore; whether this is the place where the *Iberian* was lost; and, whether, in view of the fact that this Bay lies unprotected, parallel and close to the track of the American liners, the Board will recommend the placing a fog bell or gun on the Mizen or Three Castle Heads? The hon. Member said, he did not intend asking the first part of the Question, as he understood the thing did not occur. He would, however, ask if it was not a fact that the steamship *Catalonia* narrowly escaped going ashore at or about this very place during last week?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.), in reply, said, that was not exactly the same Question as that which the hon. Gentleman put on the Paper; but he had to say with regard to the lights on the coast at this place, of course it was not the business of the Board of Trade to initiate the establishment of any light. The Irish Lighthouse Authorities were now in the course of erecting a lighthouse at a place called Bull Rock, or Mersey Head, close to this very part of the coast. He was also informed that if mariners would use the ordinary precautions of taking soundings the danger to which the hon. Member referred would be avoided.

Dr. TANNER asked, if Bull Rock was not about 50 miles west of this place?

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: No, Sir.

Dr. TANNER: It is about 45.

PORTUGAL—BOMBARDMENT OF MINENGANI—COMPENSATION.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What steps have been taken by the Government to press on the Government of Portugal the claim for compensation by British Indian subjects at Minengani on the Zanzibar Coast for their losses due to the bombardment of that place by the Portuguese in February, 1887?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): For reasons, into which I cannot enter, no claim has yet been presented; but the case of the British Indian subjects at Minengani forms part of an affair which is under consideration.

In reply to further Questions by Mr. Buchanan,

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, claims had been sent to the Government; but the Government had not yet made any claim.

EUROPEAN TURKEY—REPORTED INSURRECTIONARY DISTURBANCES IN MACEDONIA.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government are in possession of any, and, if so, what, information regarding the disturbances and insurrectionary movements recently reported from Macedonia?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): We have received information of acts of brigandage in the neighbourhood of the Greek Frontier, and in the Sandjak of Serres; but not of anything that could be called an insurrectionary movement.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — CAMP ALLOWANCE TO VOLUNTEERS.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary of State for War, If, having regard to all the circumstances, he can see his way to grant some further camp allowance to the Volunteer Force than that notified, so as to prevent, as far as possible, any reduction in the number applying to go into camp for training?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The amount of camp allowance already authorized is in excess of the sum included in the Estimates, though over-estimated numbers and failures to appear will probably equalize them. I cannot, therefore, authorize additional issues; but if at the end of the camping season a saving should appear in the item for camps in the Volunteer Vote, I will consider whether it could be divided proportionately among the corps which may earn more than the amount allotted to them. This was done in 1884, and resulted actually in all corps getting as much as they had earned.

CUSTOMS HOUSE OFFICERS—HOURS OF ATTENDANCE.

MR. FORREST FULTON (West Ham, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is contemplated to increase the hours of Customs House officers, and to what extent; and, if so, whether they will receive any compensation for their increased attendance; and, whether it is a fact that, whilst the average attendance of officers in the Outdoor Department exceeds 10 hours daily, many of them are compelled to remain on duty for alternate periods of 24 hours?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I would ask my hon. and learned Friend not to press for an answer to his Question; I am not in a position to make any statement. Even if it be contemplated to make some change, he will feel that it is not to the advantage of the public interest that such matters should be made the subject of Question and answer in this House before they are completed.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ASSAULT ON POLICE SERGEANT O'SHEA, AT MACROOM.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that at the trial of Mr. Creedon, under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," at Macroom, for an assault on a policeman named O'Shea, on the 8th of April last, no attempt was made by the prosecuting counsel to prove that the meeting out of which the said assault arose was an illegal and unlawful assembly; and, whether he will order an inquiry into the facts of this case?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am advised that it was not necessary for the prosecuting counsel to prove the nature of the meeting. Creedon was tried not for taking part in an unlawful assembly, but for a cowardly and brutal attack on a police officer.

DR. TANNER: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether it is not the fact that Creedon was struck first by this man O'Shea, and, that being the case, if he was not justified in striking O'Shea; if the meeting was not an illegal one—in other words, if the meeting was not an illegal one, was the policeman justified in striking him first?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe the hypothesis on which the hon. Gentleman founds his Question is an inaccurate one.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, has he seen the report in the Cork newspapers of this case, in which it is distinctly stated by evidence for the defence, and admitted in evidence for the prosecution, that in this case the policeman struck this man Creedon in the first instance, and that the apparent justification for so striking him was that the meeting was an illegal one?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not informed in reference to that.

MR. FLYNN: Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiries?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already given an answer on the subject.

DR. TANNER: Being an eye-witness of the occurrence, might I ask the right hon. Gentleman his authority for making the statement he has made in this case? I saw the assault committed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman has asked for information, and I have given him the best information that I have at my command.

DR. TANNER: Can he give me his authority? I am perfectly aware that the right hon. Gentleman is making the best statement that he can on the subject; but I, at the same time, would wish to know his authority—if he is able, or not afraid, to give it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not the practice to name authorities.

DR. TANNER: Are you afraid to give it?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS — UNITED WESTMINSTER SCHOOLS CHARITY—SALE OF LANDS.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked the hon. Member for the Penrith Division of Cumberland, as a Charity Commissioner, Whether the United Westminster Schools Charity has entered into any agreement to sell or lease the land belonging to the Charity in Victoria Street; and, whether such sale or lease has been approved by the Charity Commissioners?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The Governors of the United Westminster Schools did, in December, 1883, with the sanction of the Charity Commissioners, enter into an agreement for the sale (at the price of £56,375) of a piece of land having a frontage to the south side of Victoria Street of 255 feet. The terms of the agreement were somewhat altered in April, 1888, and the agreement so altered has just received the sanction of the Charity Commission. This is the only uncompleted transaction of which the Charity Commission have any information.

ADMIRALTY — "A DANGER IN THE PACIFIC."

MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If he has seen a statement in *The St. James's Gazette* of the 9th instant headed *A Danger in the Pacific,* and in which attention is directed to the great disparity between the Russian and English Squadrons in those waters, and which, in the words of the article—

> "Is known in Singapore and Hong Kong, where they excite the gravest uneasiness, and in Russia, where they excite a corresponding degree of satisfaction;"

and, what measures he proposes to take in order to raise the British Squadron to a strength sufficient to restore public confidence in those commercial centres?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The article in question purports to give with great detail and authenticity the relative strength of the Russian and English Squadrons in that part of the Pacific which is comprised in the China Station; and it draws from the statement so given certain conclusions that are affirmed to be endorsed by the great commercial ports of Singapore and Hong Kong. Both these statements and conclusions are equally fictitious. The article asserts the Russian Squadron to be at this moment composed of four iron-clads and 10 cruisers, and that it is about to be re-inforced. The real strength of the Squadron is one iron-clad and five cruisers, and this Squadron is far inferior both in numbers and strength to the British Naval Force on the China Station alone. There are two other English Squadrons in the Pacific, one at Esquimalt and another at Sydney, making a total of three Squadrons. It is needless to add that these facts are well known, both at Singapore and Hong Kong. Sir Richard Vesey Hamilton, the late Commander-in-Chief on the China Station, has recently returned to England, and he is satisfied with the adequacy of the force on that Station.

IMPERIAL DEFENCE—THE ISLAND OF ASCENSION.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is the fact that the Island of Ascension is to be given up both as a Naval and a Health Station, and the stores to be divided between Simonstown and Sierra Leone; when such arrangement is to be carried into effect; what measures the Government propose to adopt to prevent the Island, when thus abandoned, from falling into the hands of a Foreign Power; and, whether he will give the House an opportunity of considering the policy of such abandonment before it is carried out?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing) (who replied) said: Ascension is to be abandoned as a Naval Station and Sanitarium, and this arrangement will be carried out as soon as the Naval Authorities at the Cape decide the Stations to which the stores are to be transferred. The Island will still remain a British Possession. The present course of action has been strongly advocated by the Colonial Defence Committee, a Royal Commission, and many naval officers. If the hon. Gentleman objects to the abandonment of this Island he has the opportunities available to private Members of publicly protesting against it.

PRIVATE BUSINESS—COMMITTEE ON THE "HYDERABAD DECCAN COMPANY."

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether Her Majesty's Government, in view of the interest taken in the proceedings of the "Hyderabad Deccan Company" Committee, and of the serious nature of the charges to be investigated, will take measures to enable parties interested to be heard by counsel before the Committee?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The question of allowing parties interested to appear by counsel before the Committee is one entirely for the Committee and the House of Commons, with which it would be unbecoming in the Government to interfere.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WHEEL TAX—MARKET GARDENERS.

MR. SMITH BARRY (Hunts, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether carts belonging to market gardeners, who are also nurserymen and florists, will be exempt from payment under the Wheel Tax?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Yes, if they are used solely for the conveyance of fruit grown on the land of the owners of the carts.

WAR OFFICE—COMMITTEE ON EXPLOSIVES.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) (for Lord CHARLES BERESFORD) (Marylebone, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he has nominated the promised Committee to experiment with shell charged with high explosives; and, if not, whether, having regard to the importance of the question, he will state to the House the reason the Committee has not been nominated?

Lord George Hamilton

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Members of the Committee on Explosives are—Sir Frederick Abel, F.R.S., Chemist to the War Department; Professor Dewar, F.R.S., Professor of Chemistry at the University of Cambridge and at the Royal Institution; and Dr. Dupré, F.R.S., Consulting Chemist to the Home Office on Explosives. They are, during the present week, making experiments with shell charged with high explosives.

CROFTERS—COLONIZATION.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Government will lay upon the Table of the House the Papers in connection with the proposed scheme of emigration from the Highlands of Scotland?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I beg to refer the hon. Member to the answer which I gave to the hon. Member for Wandsworth (Mr. Kimber) last Monday, that the Government would be prepared to give all necessary information with reference to the scheme of emigration from the Highlands before the Vote for it is taken.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked, whether this meant that the Government would spend the money and then come to the House for it; or would they have an opportunity of discussing the subject before the money was spent, and the people sent away?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I must ask my hon. Friend to give me Notice of that Question.

CRIMINAL LAW—CASE OF RICHARD WALFORD AND HENRY HARDWICK—DOUBTFUL CONVICTIONS.

MR. BERNARD COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that Richard Walford and Henry Hardwick were convicted in April, 1879, for shooting, and sentenced to 20 years' and 15 years' penal servitude respectively; whether he is aware that, in answer to an application on their behalf, the then Home Secretary, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), on the 23rd of August, 1880, refused to interfere with the sentences; whether he is aware that, after this refusal, two other persons then undergoing sentence for another crime confessed to having committed the crime for which Richard Walford and Henry Hardwick were then undergoing punishment, and exculpated them from all complicity; whether he is aware that, in consequence of these confessions, Richard Walford and Henry Hardwick were liberated from gaol on the 27th of February, 1883, after having undergone four years' penal servitude; whether he is aware that, on the 19th of March, 1883, the then Home Secretary, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, promised that if further proof should be given of their innocence the question of granting them a free pardon should be considered; whether further proof on affidavit has since been given to the Home Office, confirming the confessions above mentioned, and exculpating Richard Walford and Henry Hardwick; whether he is aware that in 1885 arrangements were made by the Home Office for allowing the men to report themselves by letter, and why; and, whether he is prepared, under the circumstances, to grant Richard Walford and Henry Hardwick a free pardon?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): My answer to the Questions of fact is in the affirmative, except that the two persons mentioned in the Question did not confess that they had committed the crime of which Walford and Hardwick were convicted. And that the affidavits recently sent to the Home Office did not contain any fresh evidence; but were the same as my Predecessor had considered in 1883. The privilege of reporting by letter is occasionally conferred on licence-holders, where the circumstances of the case justify any such concession. I am not prepared on these materials to depart from the decision of three of my Predecessors—that this is not a case in which the grant of a free pardon can be advised.

In answer to a further Question,

Mr. MATTHEWS said, that in February, 1883, it was decided, as the case was surrounded with doubt, that the prisoners ought not to be punished any longer; but after consultation with the Judge who tried them, and the Law Officers of the Crown, the Home Secretary declined to advise that they should be pardoned.

METROPOLITAN POLICE — DISTURBANCE IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been directed to the severe censure of Mr. Vaughan, at Bow Street Police Court on Wednesday the 9th, on the conduct of the police in refusing admission to certain persons at the police station on Saturday last, when they had attended to tender evidence in favour of persons charged with assault, and arrested in Trafalgar Square; and, if he will take steps to give the police magistrate's censure some practical effect?

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the conduct of the police in Trafalgar Square on Saturday last, and to their evidence in the Bow Street Police Court, at the trial of a Mr. Thompson, on Wednesday last, alleging that stones had been thrown in the Square on that occasion; and, whether he will direct the Chief Commissioner of Police to make a special inquiry into their conduct, which elicited severe comment from Mr. Vaughan, the magistrate at Bow Street?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The rule and the practice which ought, in my opinion, to be followed is to admit to the police station persons who apply for admission in order to testify in favour of an accused person. On some occasions this is impracticable, when crowds follow prisoners to a station. On the evidence before Mr. Vaughan I understand that he thought that the police were to blame for not having admitted certain witnesses who appeared in defence of Mr. Thompson. I have caused full inquiry to be made; and I am informed that these witnesses were kept back in the first instance as they were accompanied by a disorderly crowd pressing into the station, and when their application to be let in as witnesses was made at another part of the station premises the charges had already been taken. Mr. Vaughan informs me that he discharged the defendant Thompson because upon the whole evidence he thought the blow given by him to a police constable was accidental and not wilful. I am not aware that he censured the conduct of the police in the Square or in the Court.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM asked, whether one of the persons refused admittance was the mother of the boy, and whether she was ejected by the police with foul language?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I have no information to that effect. Mrs. Thompson and two men were kept back in the first instance. They then went round to the entrance in the station yard; but the Inspector told them the charge had already been taken.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM: Will the right hon. Gentleman insist on an inquiry as to whether the woman Thompson was dismissed and called by a foul epithet by the policeman, she being a perfectly respectable woman?

[No reply.]

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether Mrs. Thompson's poverty gives the police a right to call her by this foul name?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. CONYBEARE: Will the right hon. Gentleman undertake to institute such an inquiry that the public concerned may have some confidence in the proceedings?

[No reply.]

Mr. CONYBEARE said, that not having had any answer to that Question he would put another—whether it was a part of the duties of the police to address foul and abusive language to unoffending persons?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the Question which stands in the name of the hon. Member.

Mr. CONYBEARE: I have another Question to ask. It is whether, in view of the fact that some of us will be in Trafalgar Square to-morrow, the right hon. Gentleman will state, for the guidance of ourselves and the police, whether we have not a right to circulate in Trafalgar Square?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! That again does not arise out of the Question on the Paper. If the hon. Member has an independent Question to ask, he must wait until the Questions are disposed of.

Subsequently,

Mr. CONYBEARE inquired, whether the police had any authority to hustle persons when they stopped for a moment to speak to personal friends in Trafalgar Square; also, whether the police were authorized to interfere with persons who might be walking or standing in the Square, when no attempt to hold a public meeting was being made by anybody?

Mr. MATTHEWS: The hon. Gentleman has asked me a Question to which he must be aware that the answer is obvious and can only be in one shape. If he merely puts the Question with the intention of throwing obloquy on the police, it can hardly be proper for me to answer it.

Mr. CONYBEARE: I have done nothing of the kind. I have asked the Question, as I have a perfect right to do, because what I referred to happened to myself. If I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the police have no authority, then I will ask whether he will permit me to lay evidence before him, and whether he will act upon that evidence, to prove that the police did hustle inoffensive persons, and did use insolent language to them? If the right hon. Gentleman says that the police have no such authority, I shall claim protection at his hands, and ask that the police, whose conduct has been reflected upon, shall be properly punished.

[No reply.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS—ADMISSION OF STRANGERS TO THIS HOUSE.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is possible, during the Whitsuntide Recess, to give effect to some, at any rate, of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Select Committee on the Admission of Strangers?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): In answer to the Question of the hon. Member, I have to say that the Speaker would desire to be guided in the matter by the convenience of the House. The Speaker is aware of a difference of opinion as to accepting without further discussion all the decisions at which the Committee have arrived; but, pending the decision of the House, the Speaker is prepared to do this much—to throw the two Galleries, the Speaker's and Strangers', into one, thus gaining an additional row of seats, and providing admission to what would be henceforth one Gallery by the entrance in the Central Hall. All the other arrangements would go on as at present, till the House had come to a definite decision on the subject.

IRELAND—RUMOURED ESTABLISHMENT OF A CATHOLIC COLLEGE.

Mr. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which I have given him very short private Notice; and that is, whether he has seen in *The Star* and other evening newspapers a statement to the effect that the Government had decided on founding and endowing a Catholic College in Ireland; whether that statement is true; whether there have been any negotiations that could reasonably give rise to such a report; and what has been the tone of such negotiations, if any? It is right I should say that I regret that there has not been time to give longer Notice than I have been able to give; but I think the right hon. Gentleman will agree with me that if the answer is in the negative the sooner it is given the better.

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Gentleman gave me Notice of this Question a few minutes ago. I am sorry to say that I have not yet had an opportunity of seeing the evening papers. There is no truth in the statement that Her Majesty's Government has decided to found or endow a Roman Catholic College in Ireland, and there have been no negotiations which could reasonably give rise to such a report.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): In answer to a Question of mine on Tuesday last, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury hinted that it might be necessary to take a Morning Sitting on Friday next. In consequence of the rapid transaction of Public Business since that Question was answered, I suppose we may take it for granted that that idea is dropped?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I should be exceedingly glad that there should be no Sitting on Friday morning next; but the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that there is usually some time consumed on the Motion for Adjournment: and as Thursday is fully appropriated for other Business, unless the House is willing to adjourn without discussion on Thursday evening, it will be necessary to have a Morning Sitting. The Business on Monday, as I have stated, will be some Irish and other Bills. I am afraid it will be necessary to have a Morning Sitting on Tuesday, unless we can reach a Motion which it will be my duty to make with reference to the Imperial defences, and on which some discussion is likely to arise. I should regret exceedingly to deprive hon. and gallant Gentlemen on either side of the House of the opportunity of which, I understand, they wish to avail themselves of debating the proposal on which the Bill will be founded to provide for the Imperial defences. Unless that is reached by 10 o'clock on Monday evening it will involve a Morning Sitting on Tuesday. On Thursday it is intended to take the Employers' Liability Bill.

In reply to Mr. H. Gardner (Essex, Saffron Walden),

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, the Committee on the Local Government Bill would not be taken before the Monday after the re-assembling of the House.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY said, the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) was on the Paper for Tuesday, which attracted deep interest among Members on that side of the House; and he asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would not defer his Resolution on Imperial defences until Thursday?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he understood there was a very strong desire that the Employers' Liability Bill should be read a second time before the Whitsuntide holidays; and if the Motion he proposed to make was put down for Thursday, he was afraid there was little

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chance of an adequate discussion on the Employers' Liability Bill.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, he thought he might appeal as to the Morning Sitting on Tuesday, as those near him had done their best, especially since Easter, to facilitate the despatch of Public Business. [Mr. W. H. Smith: Hear, hear!] He feared there would not be facilities sufficient to deal with the Bill on the eve of the Recess, as a number of his Friends had made arrangements to leave London before Thursday.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he thought that the desire to place the Bill in a secure position was greater than the contemplation of a holiday. Under the circumstances, he hoped the hon. Gentleman would be satisfied with the arrangements which had been made. He should do his best to shorten the discussion prior to his Motion on Tuesday, and keep a House, so that adequate attention might be given to the subject. He wished to endorse the remarks of the hon. Member as to the conduct of the Opposition in facilitating Public Business.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): With regard to the question of the Morning Sitting on Tuesday, in the event of the Business not concluding at 10 o'clock, may I remind the right hon. Gentleman that he has put Irish Business on the Paper for Monday which it will be wholly impossible to conclude by that hour? Might I, therefore, suggest to him that he should postpone the first Order—the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill—and then we might get on with the other Bill—the Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill—and perhaps conclude the debate by 10 o'clock.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am exceedingly anxious to meet the convenience of hon. Members on both sides of the House; but I think it is better for the Government to adhere to the announcement that they have made.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY observed that, as it appeared by the answer of the right hon. Gentleman that the Morning Sitting on Tuesday was required, not for the advancement of the Employers' Liability Bill, or for the discussion of the Motion with regard to the National defences, but for the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill, he would give Notice that when the measure was brought forward he would move the postponement of the debate.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Might I remind the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that there is also Irish Private Business fixed for Monday? The Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill is fixed for that day, and it will necessarily involve considerable discussion. Might I suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that he would arrange with the hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Armagh (Sir James Corry) to take that measure on some date after Whitsuntide, at a time when it would be more convenient to give the measure adequate time for discussion?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am exceedingly obliged to the hon. and learned Gentleman for his suggestion, and I will see what arrangement can be made.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair."

NEW MEMBER TAKING HIS SEAT.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton), in rising to move—

> "That, on a new Member presenting himself with his introducers below the Bar, at the time and under the conditions specified in the Standing Order 86, Mr. Speaker, unless the House otherwise resolve, shall forthwith call such Member to the Table for the purpose of taking his seat,"

said, he desired to state expressly and without the slightest reserve that while in moving this Amendment it was necessary he should refer to and object, he did not complain of the ruling of Mr. Speaker Brand in his own case, or challenge that ruling as an honest interpretation of the law and practice of Parliament. He desired to acknowledge the great and generous courtesy which Mr. Speaker Brand had shown him at all times during the controversy, conducted at times during its five years' continuance under conditions of great tension. Standing Order 86, which was formerly Standing Order 62, provided that Members might take and subscribe the Oath required by law at any time during the sitting of the House before the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motion were entered on, or after they had been disposed of, but that the Business of the House was not to be interrupted for that purpose. That differed from the old practice set out in *Hatsell*, according to which, when the Member presented himself to take the Oath, the Business before the House was to cease and no other Business to be proceeded with until the Oath was taken. At a General Election no difficulty presented itself, because Members were sworn together in large numbers. It was when Members were elected at bye-elections, and the new Member with his introducers appeared at the Bar, that the difficulty with which he proposed to deal might arise. He did not desire to modify the conditions as to new Members presenting themselves or the time; what he did propose was that when the new Member with his two introducers presented himself in proper fashion at the Bar the Speaker should call upon him to fulfil the obligations imposed upon him by law. As a matter of fact there were only two cases, to one of which he did not intend to refer, in which the Speaker did not call upon the new Member to come to the Table to be sworn. But in 1884, in a suit tried at Bar, there was an information against himself, some of which was material for the purpose of this discussion. There was a count which involved the question whether he had been "disorderly" because he had come to the Table without having been called by the Speaker to come forward to take the Oath, and the Attorney General of that day, now the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James), appeared against him. That right hon. and learned Gentleman presented the facts with the utmost accuracy, and there was no attempt whatever to strain any point to his prejudice. But, as appeared from one count of the information and the shorthand notes of the trial, the Court and jury were asked to find that the Statute had not been complied with because

> "He was not called upon by Mr. Speaker according to the usual practice of the House;"

and the then Attorney General told the jury that when Mr. Speaker so called upon a Member

> "The Speaker remains in the Chair, showing that he is willing that the taking of the Oath by the Member should be proceeded with;"

and that, therefore,

> "First there will be a question whether the Speaker was in the Chair."

It was proved that the Speaker had said to him (Mr. Bradlaugh)—

> "You have come to the Table without being called by me according to the Rules and Orders of the House."

That Attorney General frankly stated—

> "There is not the slightest doubt that the time Mr. Bradlaugh chose to come up would be the proper and regular time."

He (Mr. Bradlaugh) argued against this that by

> "The mere omission of those words the Speaker might prevent everyone elected after a General Election from even taking his seat at all, and if it happened that a majority of the House were hostile to a particular Member or Members so elected, there would be no means whatever in Parliament itself of dealing with the decision of Mr. Speaker; and instead of the representation of a constituency being a matter dependent upon law, it would be a matter dependent upon the whim of the House, which sometimes is not wisely exercised, and upon the discretion of the Speaker, which, although I am sure whoever may be the Speaker, and whatever his politics, is always sought to be exercised consonant with the dignity of Parliament, is yet only the discretion of one man, which may seriously conflict with the law."

The Lord Chief Justice, at the trial at Bar, said—

> "For some questions which you will have to determine, it is necessary to ascertain exactly what the Speaker's physical position was at the time this Oath was taken. . . . . It is said on the part of the Crown that inasmuch as the Speaker was standing, and inasmuch as Sir Erskine May says, when the Speaker is standing, he is in possession of the House, that Mr. Bradlaugh took the Oath, if he did take it, interrupting, if not debate, at any rate interrupting business, for the purpose of taking the Oath, and that, therefore, the 1866 Standing Order was broken. That is how the case is put on the part of the Crown as to the 1866 Standing Order. On the part of Mr. Bradlaugh, it is put that that cannot be the true meaning of it; that he had a perfect right to take the Oath; that he came to the Table to be sworn; that the business of swearing was the proper thing to be done; and that nobody had a right to interfere, and that anybody who interrupted his business was himself out of Order; that the business of swearing was to be done at the time, and that he was doing it, and that anyone who interrupted him in doing it was himself out of Order, and, therefore, that that Standing Order does not prevail against him. That is the argument Mr. Bradlaugh raises on those words;"

and the following three questions were left to and answered by the jury: First—

> "Was the Speaker in fact standing in front of the Chair, or sitting in the Chair, at the time when the defendant made and subscribed the Oath?"

The answer is "Sitting." The next is—

> "If you think the Speaker was sitting in point of fact, then was he sitting for the purpose of preparing and correcting notes which he was about to use in addressing the defendant, or for any other purpose, and if for any other purpose, can you say for what purpose?"

The jury answer—

> "Sitting for the purpose of preparing or correcting notes which he was about to address to the defendant."

Thirdly—

> "Had the Speaker resumed his seat, and if he had, had he resumed it for the purpose of allowing the defendant to make and subscribe the Oath?"

The jury answer, "No." Whilst he had argued against this as long as he could, and considered that such points were too trivial and undignified for decision by the Judges, when a grave principle was raised for judicial decision he hadn ever complained of the interpretation of the law which had then been given; but what he put to the House was this—that a Member elected at a bye-election ought to be in the same position as a Member elected at a General Election. He did not touch the authority of the House. There might be occasions when the House ought to make a special order with respect to some Member; but he thought it his duty to try to prevent any new Member from being put in the same position as he had been placed in himself. As the law now stood a new Member would be "disorderly" the moment he crossed the Bar if the Speaker did not call upon him. It was for the dignity of the House that there should not be a possibility of the difficulty which had arisen in his own case occurring again. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

> To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "on a new Member presenting himself with his introducers below the Bar, at the time and under the conditions specified in the Standing Order 86, Mr. Speaker, unless the House otherwise resolve, shall forthwith call such Member to the Table for the purpose of taking his seat,"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, he assumed that the discussion of the Amendment would not occupy the attention of the House for any great length of time. He was not very confident that the matter submitted to it was quite understood by hon. Members. If he understood the position of the hon. Gentleman, it was this—that in a case in which he was concerned a proposition was submitted to a jury, and held to be correct, that the Speaker had the control of the Business of the House, and that, therefore, he could, if he thought right, exercise an arbitrary discretion as to whether he would call a Member at the Bar to the Table to be sworn or not. That was a legal proposition, but constitutionally the Speaker was bound to call a new Member appearing at the Bar to take his seat; and, supposing the Speaker said arbitrarily he would not call a new Member appearing at the Bar to take his seat, he would be acting unconstitutionally, and his position could not be maintained for a single moment. As he understood it, the hon. Member for Northampton wished the House to declare that it was not satisfied with the constitutional duty cast upon the Speaker, and he wished that there should be a hard-and-fast line of obligation which should bind the Speaker to call upon a new Member standing at the Bar to come and take his seat, and should not allow him to exercise his discretion.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that prior to 1886 there was a hard-and-fast duty on the Speaker; but the Standing Order made in pursuance of the Act of 1886 had not left that duty on the Chair.

Sir HENRY JAMES said, that the constitutional duty nevertheless remained on the Speaker, who could not turn his head aside and say that a Member appearing at the Bar should not be allowed to come to the Table and take the Oath. But the real point which he wished to urge with regard to this Amendment was that it was a very dangerous one from the hon. Member's own point of view, because it said that the Speaker should, unless the House otherwise resolved, call the new Member to the Table for the purpose of taking the Oath. The effect of this was that the Resolution invited the House to resolve whether a Member should or should not take his seat. The former contention of the Liberal Party had been that the House had no legal right to pass a Resolution interfering between a Member and his taking the Oath; but now the hon. Member for Northampton invited the House to resolve that a new Member could not come to the Table to be sworn if the House so resolved. He would ask the hon. Member to consider whether he was not, by his Amendment, endeavouring to establish a record of a right which had never been constitutionally exercised by the House?

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, he desired to point out to the hon. Member for Northampton that he would hardly attain the object which he had in view by the Motion which he had brought forward. He could not contradict this—that if this Amendment which he had now moved had been a Standing Order in the beginning of the Parliament in 1886, the hon. Member would not at that moment be sitting in his place.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, that his Resolution only applied to Members elected at bye-elections; the question of Members elected at a General Election, who came to the Table uncalled and without introducers, did not arise.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he did not see what distinction there was between the two classes. The hon. Member suggested that the House should be given the right to resolve that a Member at the Bar should not be allowed to come to the Table and take the Oath. Had this Amendment been a Standing Order in 1886, certainly the Speaker could not have ruled out of Order a Motion made interposing between an hon. Member and his coming to the Table and taking the Oath. The position taken up by the present Speaker at that time had been that it was absolutely out of Order and impossible for the House to interpose between a Member coming to the Bar of the House and claiming to take the Oath, and his performance of that duty. But that ruling would have been rendered impossible under the wording of the hon. Member's Resolution. For his own part, he could not quite make out what the hon. Member was driving at. The hon. Member seemed to imagine that it was in the power of the Speaker to refuse to call a Member to the Table of the House. But when the Speaker had refused to permit the hon. Member to take the Oath, it was in pursuance of a Resolution of the House.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, that it had been proved at the trial that at that time there was no Resolution in force; the Resolution had been Sessional, and had expired with the Session. The proceedings in question had taken place 12 or 13 days after the beginning of a new Session, and there had been no Resolution in force at that time.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he was afraid they were getting on somewhat thorny ground which he would rather avoid; but the hon. Member had then claimed to affirm, and asserted his inability to take the Oath, and in consequence of that the House had passed a certain Resolution. He would ask, however, whether there was a single other case where the Speaker had ever refused to call a Member to the Table?

MR. BRADLAUGH said, that there was only one other case, that of Wilkes, where the question arose whether the Deputy was compellable to put the Oath to him, and that was put from the Chair and decided by the House.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked the hon. Member whether he thought it worth while to occupy the time of the House on a Friday afternoon in order to guard against an occurrence which had only taken place in such an extremely complicated case? Did he think that was an object for which they should pass a Resolution which invited the House to be continually interposing to prevent hon. Members from coming from the Bar to the Table? He did not think the Motion was one which would improve the position of private Members.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, he was glad he had been anticipated by his right hon. and learned Friend (Sir Henry James) in pointing out to the hon. Member for Northampton that he could not effect any really useful object by putting his Amendment in writing on the records of the House. If agreed to it would be merely an enunciation of what was accepted as the unwritten law. With the exception of what had taken place in the last Parliament, there was only one case in which such a question had ever arisen. As a matter of practice of Parliament, the Speaker invariably did call to the Table any new Member who presented himself at the Bar with his introducers at the proper time. He did not think that, in the circumstances, this proposed Amendment would have affected the question in 1886, if it had then been a Standing Order of the House. He certainly thought that the words "unless the House otherwise resolve" were necessary for the protection of the Speaker; and if the hon. Member was of opinion that there was any good purpose to be served by having this Resolution put on the Standing Orders of the House, Her Majesty's Government would have no objection. He did not, however, believe that it was anything more than a declaration of the unwritten law of the House, or that there was any necessity for the Resolution.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that he should certainly deem it to be his duty to press the Resolution, as he saw an advantage in it.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he considered that the hon. Member for Northampton was more justified than the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) seemed to think in asking the House to put this Amendment upon the record, even though the case might not have often arisen; because as long as so ingenious a Member as the noble Lord remained in that Assembly he could imagine that his hon. Friend must be anxious that every possible security should be taken against the repetition of the proceedings which had taken place in 1880. He joined with his right hon. and learned Friend (Sir Henry James) in regretting that the hon. Member for Northampton had assented to the insertion of the words "unless the House otherwise resolve;" because he feared that the Resolution, with those words of limitation, would leave gentlemen in a worse position than they were in at the present moment. If his hon. Friend could see his way to removing those words, he would more willingly and cheerfully approve the passing of the Resolution; but if the Government said that without those words they could not accept it, then, of course, he would rather have the Resolution with than without them. If, however, such words were now inserted, they would give a false impression of the true position of the right of an hon. Member on being returned to Parliament to come to the Table for the purpose of taking his seat.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) said, he hoped the House would give the strongest opposition to this Motion; it was admitted to be absolutely unnecessary, and therefore ought not to be allowed a place among the Standing Orders. It required, however, a more full consideration before even this could be safely asserted; and in the absence of the Leader of the House and of those responsible for the Standing Orders of the House, he should certainly vote against the Resolution.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 147; Noes 152: Majority 5.—(Div. List, No. 103.)

Question proposed,

"That the words 'on a new Member presenting himself with his introducers below the Bar, at the time and under the conditions specified in the Standing Order 86, Mr. Speaker, unless the House otherwise resolve, shall forthwith call such Member to the Table for the purpose of taking his seat,' be there added."

Sir HENRY JAMES, in moving, as an Amendment, the omission of the words "unless the House otherwise resolve," said, if these words were maintained he feared they would undo all the work of the bulk of the Liberal Party from 1880 to 1885, as they would confer a right upon any Member to move that another Member should not take his seat. The position of the Liberal Party had been that such a power would be in opposition to the Constitutional rights of constituencies to return Members to the House. If they struck out the words there would be left a colourless Resolution, the passing or rejection of which was of no moment or importance.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "unless the House otherwise resolve."—(*Sir Henry James.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment," LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that the Amendment just moved rightly showed what an awkward position the House had got into by doing what he ventured to say it never ought to do—namely, lightly and unreflectingly tamper with its Standing Orders. He wished, without discourtesy, to remonstrate with the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) on this point. The Government had put down Supply, and had told the House that Supply would be taken till 12 o'clock. The hon. Member for Northampton then moved his Resolution affecting the Standing Orders of the House; and the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir Henry James), who was one of the first authorities on this matter, objected, and asked the House not to agree to it. The Attorney General admitted that the Resolution was wholly unnecessary, but said he would agree to it, and the result was that the Government knocked down and destroyed their own Motion for going into Supply. Such conduct on the part of the Government with regard to Supply was absolutely unprecedented. He should not have objected if the Motion carried had been a Motion calculated to increase the efficiency of the Orders of the House of Commons; but it was admitted by the Government that the Resolution was unnecessary. He appealed to the First Lord of the Treasury to reconsider the position of the Government. He was certain that if the First Lord followed the argument which was put forward by the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, he would see that the proposed alteration of the Standing Orders was not one which could be agreed to in a hurry and without mature reflection. It would be far better to negative the whole Resolution, and set up Supply again. He would make a very earnest and strong appeal to the First Lord to consider the suggestion he now made in the interests of the House of Commons.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he greatly regretted that urgent business compelled him to be absent from the House during the last few minutes, and that he had not had the advantage of listening to the debate. When he saw the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton he thought it better to communicate with the Speaker and take his opinion upon it. The opinion which the Government entertained was that the Resolution was totally unnecessary; but, as the hon. Gentleman pressed it, and as the Speaker was of opinion, as he interpreted that opinion, that it was perfectly innocuous, he did not think it necessary to oppose the Resolution. The House had suffered great disadvantage from the absence of the Speaker from the debate. He did not think that the noble Lord was justified in reproaching him for his absence and for the course he thought it right to take. The desire which he had to put forward Public Business did not lead him to oppose any perfectly innocuous Motion when he was assured by high authority that it was innocuous and unnecessary. But he thought that it would be desirable that the question should not now be settled, and that they should reject the proposal and leave the hon. Member for Northampton to bring it forward at another opportunity. [Mr. LABOUCHERE: When?] His noble Friend the Member for South Paddington did not seem to be fully aware of the fact that a Motion on going into Committee of Supply was often accepted, and Supply, according to custom, was immediately set up again, so that it would be competent even if the House accepted the Resolution to set up Supply again. He trusted that for the present at least the House would not put the Resolution upon the Order Book.

MR. JOHN MORLEY said, that the change of mind on the part of Her Majesty's Ministers was the most extraordinary he had ever seen. It was only a few minutes since that the Attorney General assured the House that the Government were prepared to assent to the Resolution as it stood.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: The right hon. Gentleman will pardon me. I stated distinctly on behalf of the Government that, in our opinion, the Resolution was unnecessary. It was not because we thought it necessary that we were prepared to assent to it, but for the reasons explained by the First Lord of the Treasury.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: But the hon. and learned Gentleman voted for the Motion.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: Because I was not going back upon my statement.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY said, he hoped that the hon. and learned Gentleman would persist in that frame of mind. There was an extraordinary inconsistency in the position taken up by the noble Lord. The noble Lord and the First Lord of the Treasury said at one moment that the Resolution was harmless and innocuous.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I did not say it was harmless or innocuous. I suggested rather the reverse; I pointed out that it might have mischievous consequences.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY said, that diametrically opposite positions were taken up by Gentlemen on the Ministerial side of the House. The First Lord of the Treasury and the Attorney General said that the Resolution was innocuous, and the noble Lord in his last speech said that it made a grave alteration in the Standing Orders. In his opinion, the Resolution would simply place on record what was the practice and custom of the House, only once broken in the last century and once in the Parliament of 1880, chiefly at the instance of the noble Lord himself. His right hon. and learned Friend had moved the omission of the words which he ventured to object to; and he hoped that his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton would assent to the Amendment.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that he had listened to the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury with considerable pain. Whatever difference of opinion he had had with hon. Gentlemen sitting opposite, he thought that every arrangement entered into would be carried out by them to its full extent. He had now learned that an arrangement deliberately made one evening might be broken by the Government under pressure from the noble Lord. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for releasing him from his part of the arrangement. He was now free. The words proposed to be left out were not his. For two years this Resolution had stood upon the Paper without them. The Resolution had not been lightly and suddenly sprung upon the House. For four weeks it had been upon the Order Book in the place which it was entitled to occupy, and for two years it stood among the Procedure Rules. It was one of the very first matters which he submitted to the authorities connected with the House when he knew that Procedure would come up for discussion. He did not want these words. He hailed with delight the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman; and if the First Lord had not broken the complete arrangement made on the previous night, he should have perhaps found himself bound to vote against his own words, holding himself honourably bound by the arrangement which he believed the Government would honourably fulfil. He had striven, in moving his Resolution, to avoid every memory, bitter as many of them were, connected with this struggle. He let fall no word that could imply the slightest sort of imputation upon any person directly or indirectly connected with it. He thanked the noble Lord for the honesty of his declaration, and he would like to see the Resolution rejected entirely. The noble Lord alleged that the Resolution was absolutely unnecessary. But this was clearly not true. If such a Resolution had been upon the Books it would have been needless for him to figure as disorderly before the world, and for the Attorney General to bring the three counts against him for the recovery of £1,500, nor could the three questions he had read have been left to the jury. [Lord Randolph Churchill was understood to dissent from something the hon. Member had said.] The noble Lord should hardly differ from him on a question of fact, for he had many reasons for recollecting what had occurred. The matter had nearly ruined him; on account of it he now stood deeply in debt; and it was to prevent others being placed in that position that he now moved this Resolution. He felt the generosity even of his foes during the period since he had taken his seat; and it could not be said that he had in any fashion presumed upon the indulgence the House had shown him. He regretted that the First Lord of the Treasury, having had time to consider this Resolution, should have allowed himself to be influenced by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington to go back from a distinct arrangement made last night. It was perfectly accurate that the right hon. and learned Member for Bury had in that House, as he himself had in the Law Courts, disputed the Constitutional right of the

House to interfere in any way between a Member who was returned and the seat to which he was entitled. Unfortunately for a Member who was struggling, there was no remedy for him against any decision of the House, for it was supreme within its own walls. Therefore, he sought to put on the Order Book a Resolution which would exempt new Members from the difficulty in which he found himself. In the interests of peace, he assented last night to the insertion of these words, because he had the desire to bury the memory of a painful struggle. He deeply regretted that Members on the other side should have felt it necessary to do anything which might seem to revive it. He should now go into the Lobby with the right hon. and learned Member for Bury, and he felt that fair-minded Members on both sides of the House ought to do the same. Whether the words were omitted or retained, the House would remain master of its own proceedings; but he had always contended, and he understood the Front Opposition Bench to contend in the last Parliament, that while there was no legal limit to the power of the House, there was a Constitutional limit to meddle with the free choice of a constituency, unless the person returned were legally disqualified from taking his seat.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, it was perfectly true he had said he would not advise Her Majesty's Government to assent to the proposition of the hon. Member for Northampton unless these words were inserted. He stated—and the right hon. Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) would remember it—when he was appealed to across the Floor of the House before the first Division, that he should not assent to the Resolution, unless it contained these words. As the hon. Member for Northampton said he would now assent to these words being struck out, he must, of course, oppose that step. In this he was consistent from beginning to end. He must, on behalf of the Government, express their intention to reject the Resolution as now proposed by the hon. Member, because it was only on condition that the words proposed to be inserted should be adopted that he could possibly have given the proposition support.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked whether there could be a greater waste of time than had taken place on this occasion, and for this the Government was responsible? He might perhaps have hesitated about voting with his hon. Friend and Colleague; but, finding him supported by the Attorney General, of course he had no hesitation in the matter. The Attorney General admitted that he agreed that the Government should assent to the Motion if the words were inserted. It was now moved that they should be struck out; and if that Motion were not carried, he wanted to know what the Government were going to do? He had no particular objection to the Government stultifying itself in the face of the country—they knew what Dogberry wrote himself down, and he did not mind the Government doing the same; but they had a right to know before voting on the Amendment what the Government meant to do if it were carried, and also what they meant to do if it were rejected.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was sorry if the hon. Member for Northampton thought he had not acted with perfect fairness and straightforwardness. He thought he had spoken with clearness. He had stated that he thought it would be far better that the Motion should be withdrawn on this occasion. If the Amendment were carried, undoubtedly the Government would vote against the Resolution; if the words were retained, he was bound by the engagement he had made to vote for it.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, the right hon. Gentleman had given another flat contradiction to his Attorney General. Two things were clear—that the House had now got into a mess, and that this was owing to the Attorney General, who had said that whether the words were in or out he should be obliged to vote for the Resolution. ["No, no!"]

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I said nothing of the kind. I said that I could not consent to the Resolution passing if these words were struck out, but that I did not go back from the undertaking I had given if they were left in.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he trusted that the records which were being made by the "recording angels" would bear out the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman. Most certainly they did not understand the hon. and learned Gentleman in that sense on that side of the House. He (Mr. T. M. Healy) never remembered anything like the present mess. The right hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir Henry James) had hit an obvious blot when he proposed that these obnoxious words should not be left in the Resolution. The Resolution had been accepted by the House on the faith of the experience of the "high contracting" parties; but ought not this to be a warning to them all against making arrangements with the Government? He would not vote for the Resolution as it stood, because it asserted for the House a right which was never claimed until it was asserted by Sir Drummond Wolff's famous Motion—namely, to stop a new Member from going to the Table. The adoption of the Resolution, as it stood, would appear to confer on the House a right it had never possessed—it would surrender the immemorial right of an elected Member to come to the Table to be sworn.

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, N.) said, he had voted for the Resolution, but the arguments had shown him that he had voted wrongly, for the Resolution as it stood asserted that the House had a right to stand between a man who was elected and the constituency who elected him, a proposition from which he entirely dissented. He trusted the Amendment would now be carried, as that was the only way to cure the evil.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed,

"That the words 'on a new Member presenting himself with his introducers below the bar, at the time and under the conditions specified in the Standing Order 86, Mr. Speaker shall forthwith call such Member to the Table for the purpose of taking his seat,' be there added."

Mr. T. M. HEALY wished to know what course the Government were now going to pursue? After the arrangement which they had made with the hon. Member for Northampton, were they going to turn round and stultify themselves by voting against the Resolution, because, with their connivance, certain words had been removed from it? Not having disputed the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury, they surely could not intend to defeat the Resolution because that Amendment had been carried.

Mr. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, that when the right hon. and learned Member for Bury proposed that the words "unless the House otherwise resolve" should be struck out of the Resolution, the Government accepted the proposal at once. [An hon. Member: No.] The hon. Member's memory was even shorter than usual—which was saying a great deal. The Government, having agreed to the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury, could not make that agreement a ground for breaking their engagement with the hon. Member for Northampton.

Mr. W. W. H. SMITH said, he was not surprised that the hon. and learned Gentleman should have amused himself by making a speech on this occasion. [*Cries of* "Oh!" "Hear, hear," *and* Mr. J. E. Ellis: What impertinence!] The comment had reached him, but he thought it unworthy of answer.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): The hon. and learned Member had a perfect right to make a speech in this House.

Mr. W. H. SMITH (resuming) said, he had explained before the last Question was put that if the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury were agreed to, the Government must vote against the Resolution. The hon. Member for Northampton had claimed to be perfectly free to vote upon the Amendment as he might think fit, and consequently the Government had regained their freedom also. The words proposed to be omitted by the right hon. and learned Member for Bury having been struck out of the Resolution, the Government must vote against it.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that what he stated was, that if the Government adhered to their engagement, he felt bound to vote for the insertion of the words, but that, as he thought the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman released him from the engagement, he should support the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury, because the words objected to were introduced by him at the last moment on the understanding that the Government would accept the proposal if worded in that way.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 152; Noes 180: Majority 28.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Anderson, C. H.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, Sir G.
Barbour, W. B.
Barran, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Bolton, J. C.
Bright, Jacob
Broadhurst, H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Buchanan, T. R.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carew, J. L.
Channing, F. A.
Childers, right hon. H. C. E.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Colman, J. J.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Craig, J.
Crawford, W.
Crilly, D.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Duff, R. W.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, T.
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, H. J.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Graham, R. C.
Grey, Sir E.
Gully, W. C.
Haldane, R. B.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.
Healy, M.
Healy, T. M.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Howell, G.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Jacoby, J. A.
Joicey, J.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kenny, C. S.
Kilbride, D.
Labouchere, H.
Lalor, R.
Lawson, Sir W.
Leahy, J.
Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
Lockwood, F.
Lyell, L.
Lymington, Viscount
Mackintosh, C. F.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Ewan, W.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
M'Lagan, P.
Mahony, P.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Menzies, R. S.
Mildmay, F. B.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, rt. hn. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Keeffe, F. A.
Palmer, Sir C. M.
Paulton, J. M.
Pease, A. E.
Pease, H. F.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, R.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Pugh, D.
Randell, D.
Rathbone, W.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Robinson, T.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Samuelson, Sir B.
Shaw, T.
Sheehan, J. D.
Simon, Sir J.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stevenson, J. C.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Tanner, C. K.
Thomas, A.
Thomas, D. A.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waddy, S. D.
Wallace, R.
Warmington, C. M.
Wayman, T.
West, Colonel W. C.
Whitbread, S.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williamson, S.
Wilson, C. H.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.

Bradlaugh, C.
Burt, T.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Allsopp, hon. P.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Bazley-White, J.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, H. F.
Beckett, W.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Brooks, Sir W. C.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, Sir A.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Compton, F.
Corbett, A. C.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, H. S.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Darling, C. J.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Dugdale, J. S.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Egerton, hon. A. J. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elliot, G. W.
Ewart, Sir W.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fielden, T.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Gilliat, J. S.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Green, Sir E.
Greene, E.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hankey, F. A.
Heath, A. R.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hill, A. S.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Howard, J.
Howorth, H. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, hon. E.
Hughes, Colonel E.

Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hulse, E. H.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
Jennings, L. J.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lea, T.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Legh, T. W.
Leighton, S.
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewis, Sir C. E.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Long, W. H.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Mallock, R.
Maple, J. B.
Matthews, rt. hn. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Moss, R.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muncaster, Lord
Norris, E. S.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Parker, hon. F.
Powell, F. S.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Richardson, T.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Round, J.
Russell, T. W.
Salt, T.
Sandys, Lieut-Col. T. M.
Selwyn, Capt. C. W.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stephens, H. C.
Stewart, M. J.
Swetenham, E.
Temple, Sir R.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Townsend, F.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vincent, Col. C. E. H.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

Amendment proposed, after the word, "That," in the original Question, to add the words, "this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PLEURO-PNEUMONIA IN CATTLE.

RESOLUTION.

MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) said, in rising to move the Resolution of which he had given Notice, he wished to point out that it was of the highest importance that experimental inquiry should be made into the characteristics of pleuro-pneumonia, for the ravages of the disease had been extending by leaps and bounds. In Scotland alone, the number of outbreaks in 1884 was 55; in 1885, there were 60; in 1886, 94, and in 1887 there were 339 outbreaks. He begged to call special attention to the striking increase between 1886 and 1887. The outbreaks were, of course, attended with great loss, which he thought might be fairly divided into three categories. First there was the loss to the ratepayers generally; and he ventured to remind hon. Members that the loss consequent upon this increase of the disease fell both upon occupiers and landlords, as both were rated equally for the compensation. In 1884, the compensation amounted to £5,581; in 1885, it was £10,391; in 1886, it was £15,131, and in 1887, the amount was £34,593. The House would, therefore, see that the loss to the ratepayers was something enormous. In the next place, there was the loss to the farmers, and especially to the dairy farmers, for whom, as well as for the ratepayers, he particularly spoke. In Lanarkshire they were engaged in supplying milk to the Glasgow market. Under recent regulations, the dairy farmer was not allowed to re-stock for 56 days; but even if he were allowed to re-stock at once an outbreak of disease was in many cases absolutely ruinous to him, because his customers, finding his supply cease, went elsewhere, and the trade which he had built up only by degrees was destroyed at one fell swoop. No amount of monetary compensation could make up for it. Thirdly, the loss fell upon the country at large, by the destruction of much of the best cattle and stock in the Kingdom. The Highland and Agricultural Society appointed a Committee last year, which, in the recently issued report, pointed out that there were certain questions which could not be definitely answered without practical experiments. These were the questions:—

> "(1) How pleuro-pneumonia is propagated, and how long it may remain latent. (2) How far the disease may be carried, and what may be considered an infected area. (3) Whether the infection can be resident in places such as cowhouses, trucks, boats, or pens which diseased animals have recently occupied. (4) At what stage of the disease it begins to be-

infectious, and whether it can be detected before that period. (5) Whether inoculation gives permanent protection against the disease, or for how long it may be capable of doing so. (6) Whether an animal that has been inoculated can six weeks or more thereafter propagate the disease."

Now, the Committee of the Highland and Agricultural Society, which was composed of very able and experienced men, quite as much so as is the Committee at the present time sitting, came to the conclusion that these questions could not be satisfactorily answered in the present state of knowledge without experiment. A deputation originally initiated by Lanarkshire, but in the end representative of almost every Local Authority in Scotland, waited upon Lord Cranbrook on the 19th of March to press these views. He received it most courteously, and gave a most satisfactory answer to the effect that the points upon which inquiry was proposed to take place had been set forth very clearly, that if an inquiry were constituted, as he hoped it soon would be, it would be upon a system which would, as far as possible, bring to light all the matters to which the deputation referred, and others which might arise for examination. It was gathered from those words that the inquiry was to be such as the deputation demanded, and they went away satisfied, taking it for granted that there would be a real series of practical experiments in inoculation, and also into all the characteristics of the disease; but, after some delay, a Committee, which was little more than a Departmental one, was appointed, and was so constituted as to be absolutely under the influence of official experts. He well knew the enormous value of expert opinion. He had the very highest respect for official experts; but he was a little doubtful as to whether his respect did not fall slightly short of the respect they had for themselves. He had an idea that when an official represented the collective wisdom of such an important body as the Committee of the Privy Council, he might get a little beyond himself. He considered him, although an omnipotent, not necessarily an omniscient being. Now, under the guidance of the official expert and other advisers of the Department, it had been decided that no experiments should be carried out by the Committee. It was not easy to know clearly what was going on. As far as could be gathered from the meagre details supplied to the public, the Committee was chiefly employed in rethreshing the evidence which had already been threshed out by the Highland and Agricultural Society. He would be told that the Committee was not qualified to conduct experiments. But that was hardly a proof that the Committee was an eminently satisfactory one. Then he would, probably, be told that exhaustive experiments had been already conducted. He would like to ask when they were conducted; because he had a suspicion that it would be found that no real experiments had been carried out for 30 years? Moreover, to what extent had the experiments gone, and were they conclusive? Had they gone far enough to give definite knowledge of the value, whether great or little, of inoculation? Many foreign countries, and many of our own Colonies, were far in advance of us in knowledge on that point. In the Cape Colonies inoculation was almost universal, as also in Australia and Holland, where it had been found very beneficial. His own information respecting Queensland enabled him to say that no wise cattle owner there ever thought of sending a mob of cattle to the ports without having them inoculated. Further, and more especially, he asked whether the experiments had been sufficient to give us clear and definite information respecting the very nature and the very characteristics of the disease itself; did they suffice to give definite answers to the questions put forward by the Highland and Agricultural Society? To that he most emphatically and decidedly said "No." He had himself carefully looked into the matter, and he was strongly of opinion that no definite answers could be given to the questions put forward. For instance, he wished to know whether the experiments hitherto conducted enabled us to give any clear definition of what was meant by "contact." He would read the Slaughter Order of the 6th of March, 1888, which was in substance applicable to Ireland as well as England and Scotland. It was that—

"1. A local authority shall cause all cattle being or having been in the same field, shed, or other place, or in the same herd, or otherwise in contact with cattle affected with pleuro-pneumonia, to be slaughtered within ten days after the fact of their having been so in contact has been ascertained, or within such further period as the Privy Council may in any case direct. 2. A local authority shall cause all cattle which have been certified by an inspector of the Privy Council to have been in any way exposed to the infection of pleuro-pneumonia to be slaughtered within such period as the Privy Council may direct.''

It was to these two paragraphs that he wished to call the attention of his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long), who, in addition to his multifarious duties in connection with local government, had also the arduous task of solely representing the Agricultural Department in that House. That obligation could not have fallen into better hands, for he (Mr. Hozier) could truly say that no one in the House understood more about agriculture than his hon. Friend, and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) would except him, at an rate, from the charge he made that no one on the Treasury Bench knew the difference between a horse and a cow. He (Mr. Hozier) regarded his hon. Friend as peculiarly fitted to be at the head of the new Agricultural Department, which he earnestly trusted would be soon established. But high as was his opinion of his hon. Friend, he ventured to defy him to give a definite answer as to what was meant by the words, "otherwise in contact" or "in any way exposed to infection;" and yet it must be borne in mind that upon that word "contact" depended the whole working of the Act. A hundred Veterinary Inspectors were examined by the Highland and Agricultural Society, and they varied to an enormous extent in their opinions. Some declared that the animals must touch before they can be infected; others that infection could be communicated at a distance of from half a-mile to four miles. There was also the same divergence of opinion with regard to disinfection, how far it was necessary, and in what it consisted. And yet the slaughter order was administered by these very Veterinary Inspectors who held these diametrically opposed views. How could there be uniformity of administration if there was no uniformity of opinion. He was far from saying that the present Committee of Inquiry was useless; on the contrary, he thought it might lead to several very desirable results, such as the rescinding of certain regulations which at present embarrassed the dairy farmer; for instance, he earnestly hoped that some arrangement might be come to by which they could keep their stock on condition that it did not leave the farms. That was one way in which the Committee might be of use. But the inquiry of the Committee did not go far enough or deep enough, and he could truly state that he echoed the minds of the dairy farmers in Scotland, when he said that in order to give real satisfaction to the agricultural community, it was absolutely indispensable that a series of exhaustive experiments should be instituted without delay to clear up points on which we were at present most lamentably in the dark.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, he rose with much pleasure to second the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for South Lanarkshire (Mr. Hozier), because, like him, he felt deeply the National importance of this question, and because, perhaps, his hon. Friend and himself represented the county which was more than any other interested in cattle rearing. All the scientific investigation which had taken place simply led to two great practical points; what was to be done to prevent the disease called pleuro-pneumonia, and what was to be done when it had established itself amongst our cattle? He was very glad, indeed, that in deference to the wishes of the Deputation, which waited on the noble Lord the Lord President of the Council (Lord Cranbrook), this Committee had been appointed, and, although the Committee was a fairly representative one, the scope of the inquiry was not so wide as he should liked to have seen. They knew quite well what were the remedies for the disease among the farmers. They were strongly imbued with the idea that it should be stamped out at once, and that in this way a clean bill of health could be got for the country once more. And, it was well known that this had been successful with the rinderpest which had threatened to exterminate horned cattle in this country, and they knew that the process, in order to be successful, must be applied, not partially but universally, and he believed his hon. Friend would confirm the statement that £10,000 had been spent in Aberdeenshire, where the disease had nearly been exterminated, but had been unfortunately re-introduced from a neighbouring county. He should be sorry to think that any inquiry into the subject of inoculation should have the effect of preventing the stamping out process which they advocated; still he thought there ought to be elaborate experiments made in connection with inoculation, a process which they knew was very patiently endured by cattle, although sometimes the tail sloughed off, where the operation was not scientifically performed. He thought it would be well that in addition to the plan of stamping out, there should be some other form of remedy for this great pestilence. No one could deny the advisability of experiments being made. A Committee was appointed by the House to consider the experiments of Pasteur, and it was placed beyond the question that the method of Pasteur was successful. Mr. Rutherford, of Edinburgh, had inoculated cattle with great success, and inoculation had been carried on abroad with great success. He considered they ought to take the opportunity of the sitting of the present Committee to have certain experiments made with a view of finding out the scope and extent of inoculation, for there were many points in connection with the system upon which the information was not complete. What he said was:—"Continue to stamp out the disease vigorously, thoroughly, and universally—get rid of the disease if they could, and, perhaps the present plan might be successful, but, at the same time, let them have the proposed experiments, because, not only might they be scientifically interesting, but eventually be found to be practically useful."

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Committee of Inquiry into Pleuro-pneumonia in Cattle will be satisfactory which is not specially empowered to conduct practical experiments, with the view of ascertaining the value of inoculation, and the characteristics of the disease."—(*Mr. Hozier.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

SIR ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL (Renfrew, W.) said, he hoped the Government would take the opportunity of testing the various modes by which they hoped to be able to get rid of that barbarous process of stamping out disease by means of the pole-axe. He did not think this could be done without exhaustive inquiries on the spot. He had been making inquiries as to the spread of pleuro-pneumonia, and as to the various views that were held by the authorities on the subject of inoculation. He found that there was a great consensus of opinion to the effect that if they could arrive at a means of preventing the spread of pleuro-pneumonia without having recourse to the pole-axe, it would be an immense benefit to the country. But he did not think this could be done without experiments, and he trusted the Government would see their way to spend a certain sum of money in making experiments. These experiments might cost £10,000 or £20,000 a-year for two or three years, but they would be well worth the trouble. If they were able to find an alternative to the pole-axe, they should be able to save far more in their flocks and herds than they would lose by the expenditure of money in the way he had indicated. He was fully alive to the importance of stamping out the disease, but he believed they would never get the people to second their efforts in stamping out the disease unless they felt quite sure that it was the only remedy which could be applied. Therefore, he was very anxious the people themselves should be taught by experiment—if there were no other remedies except stamping out—that that was the only remedy that could be adopted, and then they would co-operate with the authorities in endeavouring to reduce the disease within limits.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) said, that the hon. Baronet the Member for Renfrewshire (Sir Alexander Campbell) had stated that the people would not co-operate with us in stamping out pleuro-pneumonia until they were satisfied that there was no other remedy than the pole-axe. But at the present time there was no other remedy. Inoculation had not yet been found to be useful, and in the meantime very great destruction was going on. Aberdeenshire had complied with the instructions of the Privy Council by stamping out the disease, and the vigorous manner in which they had attacked it was the salvation of the county; but in consequence of a neighbouring county acting in a dilatory and less vigorous way upon the principle of trying milder remedies, one or two animals were brought into Aberdeenshire from outside, and the consequence was there had been a loss of something like £6,000. Unless they should have vigorous co-operation in the neighbouring counties they would have spent £10,000 in Aberdeenshire and have the disease brought in again by means of people who were trifling with inoculation. So far as he was aware, we had never imported pleuro-pneumonia; we were never free from it, and always had the disease either in Ireland, England, or Scotland; and, if that were so, we owed it to ourselves, and it was our duty to stamp it out. Stamping out, monstrous and destructive as it was, was the only remedy yet devised. The hon. Member who moved the Motion (Mr. Hozier) had somewhat thrown discredit on the present Committee; but he (Mr. Esslemont) thought the hon. Member should take the investigations of the Committee for what they were worth, and not throw discredit upon them. He hoped there would be co-operation throughout the whole of the United Kingdom in stamping out the disease without interfering with the scientific experiments, in which, he confessed, he had not so much faith as his hon. Friend the Member for West Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson). All past and present experience pointed to the fact that unless they acted together, and vigorously stamped out the disease, very great injury would be done.

Sir RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) said, that the debate hitherto had been carried on by hon. Gentlemen from Scotland, but he desired, as an English agriculturist Member, to say in a few words how heartily he was prepared to support the Motion now before the House. He thought it would be no less than absolutely discreditable if they should be told that this matter, recognized to be of vast importance to the agricultural interest, was to be left untouched, because they had no Agricultural Department, and because the proposed experiments would entail the expenditure of a certain amount of money. He remembered the debates in the House upon rinderpest, and questions connected with the importation of foreign animals. He remembered that it was laid down by those opposed to the Party to which he belonged, that it was the desire and demand on the part of the agriculturists to enhance the price of meat. They were told over and over again that the restrictions against the importation of disease were nothing more than so many devices of the farmer, backed by the landed interest, to increase the price of meat. All subsequent experience had clearly and distinctly proved that those assertions were without any foundation whatever. The more strictly regulations were enforced, the more carefully they scrutinized every head of stock brought from abroad; the more money they spent in reasonable investigation, the more free they were from disease; the healthier were their stocks, the more numerous they became, the better it was for everyone. There was, no doubt, that pleuro-pneumonia stood on a very different footing from other diseases. It was a somewhat mysterious disease. The process of incubation was most protracted, it was almost impossible to detect in its earlier stages, and the way the disease was transmitted from animal to animal was still a matter on which there was great diversity of opinion, even among scientific men who had to deal with the subject. Everything pointed to this—that in the case of a matter so difficult to understand, there ought to be instituted a full and complete series of practical experiments in order to derive some benefit therefrom. The one experiment of the day was that of compulsory slaughter, and in the present state of veterinary science he was distinctly in favour of that remedy, and entirely objected to its abolition until it could be supplanted by something proved to be better. But far be it from him to say—indeed, it would be a miserable and weak position to take up—that because at present there was no other remedy, therefore they should do nothing but continue to slaughter, not only all animals diseased, but every animal which had been in the same herd with an infected animal. He contended that most distinctly it was the duty of the Government—in view of the fact that the disease spread with great rapidity; that once having taken possession of a herd it went with certainty through the whole of the herd, and must entail of necessity considerable expenditure; and in view of all the difficulties which were dependent upon the infliction of compulsory slaughter, at present the only remedy—to agree to the present Motion. He thought the hon. Member who moved this Amendment was, perhaps, a little severe in his criticisim of the existing Order, for he (Sir Richard Paget) took it that the words to which the hon. Gentleman referred as not satisfactory were introduced with deliberation. There were 100 different ways which would readily occur to anyone in which the disease might spread. The words to which the hon. Member referred were introduced a long time since after much consideration. There was, no doubt, something indefinite and uncertain in the words as they stood, but he assured his hon. Friend that the words were put in on purpose, in order that they should be wide words and should include a number of eventualities which it was impossible to specify one by one. One hon. Member spoke of the Agricultural Department as a thing that was to be put off until next year. He (Sir Richard Paget) had not heard from the Government any intimation of that. Indeed, the only official intimation which had reached the House was that there was a Bill in course of preparation. He confessed it would be with feelings of utter dismay if he should hear that a measure so important, and which had been distinctly promised to the House, was now to be withdrawn without any further notice. The hon. Member for East Aberdeen (Mr. Esslemont) pointed to the difficulty of getting uniformity of action when there was no uniformity of opinion. He (Sir Richard Paget) desired to remark that uniformity of action was, under present circumstances, more or less possible, because they had a Central Authority which could issue an order which should be compulsory upon all. But they were drifting into times when uniformity of action would become absolutely impossible. When they transferred to the newly-elected County Councils powers which were vested in a certain department of the State, when each one of those Councils would have power and be allowed to choose for itself whether it would slaughter or not, they might come to a time when uniformity of action might be impossible. He hoped, at any rate, that in these matters, which were of the supremest importance to the agricultural interest, the Central Authority would take good care to keep in its hands such severe and drastic powers as it was now authorized to use, and did use with great advantage. It was well the House should recognize the gravity of this disease. They had got rid one by one of several of the diseases which harrassed the flocks and herds of the farmers. Rinderpest was stamped out with a determined foot by the help of the State. Foot and mouth disease had been dealt with; but only because people at last came to recognize that it did not come in the wind, but was a disease which could be stamped out. He spoke with some practical experience of this matter, having been largely mixed up in the dealings with foot and mouth disease in the West of England. In that district there were many people who thought the disease could not be got rid of; but it had been got rid of absolutely and entirely by stringent regulations. Those regulations were enforced, and were submitted to willingly, because the farmers were satisfied the authorities were acting to the best of their judgment, and that that judgment was a sound one—that the restrictions would have a permanent and satisfactory result. They had stamped out foot and mouth disease, and pleuro-pneumonia was a disease they must stamp out too. If there could be found by scientific experiment any means of dealing with it which could save them from the necessity, the brutal necessity, of absolutely destroying a whole herd, it was their duty to find them. If it were possible to find a remedy, that remedy ought to be found. It was not enough to say a remedy had not been found; they must find it. There was no way in which they could find it except by making full and satisfactory experiments. How was that to be done? By the action of the Government, who must not shrink from incurring the expenditure which would be necessary in the matter. They had a right to appeal to the Government to act in no uncertain way. He, however, knew the difficulty agriculturists experienced, and at least they should be assisted by the State when they were doing all they could to hold their heads up in the present struggle. They said—"There is a reasonable remedy which you have it in your power to grant, and which we have a right to ask." He did not for a moment anticipate that the Government would refuse to agree to the present Amendment. He certainly trusted they would not, because he maintained that this was a matter of the greatest importance, and was not to be pooh-poohed and set aside on the ground that it was already being considered by the Committee. He desired to speak with every respect of the importance of that Committee. He had no doubt that their labours would prove of certain and distinct value, but he asked, what power had that Committee to spend a single halfpenny in experiments? They had no power to spend anything at all, and he believed the Agricultural Department was equally powerless. He trusted that the Government would assent to the Amendment.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) said, he hoped that this discussion would not have the effect of weakening the hands of the authorities in prosecuting the policy which they had resolved upon. He recollected very well that they had similar discussions to that in which they were now engaged at the time when rinderpest was ravaging the country. It was said then that the slaughtering process was very barbarous and unscientific, and that a much better remedy should be devised. While they were waiting to find out the remedy, the disease spread all over the country, and the loss was very enormous in proportion to what it might have been if active measures had been taken at once. The disease appeared almost at the earliest period of its existence in this country in Aberdeenshire. The farmers of that county resolved, after seeing what the nature of the disease was, that it ought to be stamped out. Hon. Members would, no doubt, be surprised to learn that a voluntary subscription of one penny in the pound of the rental did more than exterminate the disease in Aberdeenshire, and compensate the farmers who lost cattle to the extent of three-fourths of the loss. It might be a very interesting speculative question whether disease could be prevented by inoculation, but he thought he should be able to satisfy the House that it was of very little value from a practical point of view. There was no doubt whatever that the Order in Council, if carried out, would have the effect, if not of exterminating this disease, of at least reducing it to a minimum. Suppose they had pleuro-pneumonia in the same position as foot and mouth disease was at the present moment—that was to say, that they did not know that it existed anywhere in the country, and pleuro-pneumonia appeared in one particular place, would anyone hesitate to say that the wise and proper course would be to slaughter the animals affected, and also those in contact with them? Pleuro-pneumonia did not spread nearly so much as foot and mouth disease. They had adopted a certain policy with regard to foot and mouth disease which had been successful. They did not think of trying experiments whether foot and mouth disease could be prevented by inoculation. He believed the severity of the disease might be lessened by inoculation; but they would not now think of trying to cure foot and mouth disease. It would be the same with pleuro-pneumonia. When they had pleuro-pneumonia exterminated, or reduced within a small compass, as he had no doubt would be the result of the operation of the Order in Council, it would be extreme folly to begin inoculation of cattle when disease broke out again. Inoculation of cattle might be very important where large herds of cattle were in an open country, and would have been here had they not resolved to slaughter all animals affected with the disease, because it might have been said they had discovered a scientific remedy, and it would be unnecessary to slaughter animals. But they had resolved to slaughter the herds affected, and it was a question of very secondary importance to farmers whether disease be prevented in future by inoculation or not, because clearly the soundest policy, if disease again appeared in a herd, was to slaughter the animals. This proposition with respect to disease depended upon the assumption that it was a disease which was not generated in this country, and he thought all the evidence was conclusive upon that point—contagious pleuro-pneumonia was not generated in this country, but had always been imported. Their hope was that when the Order in Council had been carried out for a very short time the disease would cease to exist in the country, and then their only trouble would be to keep it out. Hon. Members seemed to think it would be a very easy matter to determine whether inoculation was or was not efficient; but practically it would be a very difficult question to test, and for various reasons intimately connected with the disease itself. He did not know whether hon. Members generally understood that by inoculation they did not produce the same disease that the animal died of. The disease from inoculation affected the mucous membranes of the animal, but it did not affect the lungs of the animal. Pleuro-pneumonia was a disease of the lungs, and inoculation did not affect the lungs at all. The presumption, therefore, was that inoculation would not prevent a disease which was not produced by inoculation. In the case of all other diseases where inoculation was resorted to, he understood the process produced the same disease, only in a milder form. The evidence before them was that inoculation did not produce pleuro-pneumonia, but something very different. Experiments had been going on in inoculation for very many years. In some parts of the Continent inoculation had been adopted, but in those parts of the Continent, where inoculation had been adopted, they were never free from pleuro-pneumonia, but had it to a greater or less extent. In other parts of the Continent the slaughtering of animals had been resorted to, and there the herds were kept free from the disease; therefore, so far, experience was against the system of inoculation. This disease was not what might be called of a very contagious character. So far as the evidence went, the disease had never been transmitted except from a live animal to another live animal. The disease ceased to be communicable as soon as the animal affected with the disease died. If a rigid system of isolation was maintained in the case of diseased herds, he thought comparatively few animals would beome infected. He knew of several cases where farmers, pursuing the policy of isolation—slaughtering any animal which was affected, and slaughtering any animal which might be unwell—had been able to get rid of the disease by slaughtering a small proportion of their stock. If this system could be effectively adopted throughout the country, he thought it would be preferable to general slaughter. But it could not be adopted without such a close supervision as was impracticable. He, therefore, thought the only sound and wise policy was to slaughter all animals which were affected, and all those which had been really in contact with them. Of course, a great deal depended upon the definition of the word "contact." He should say that if animals were in the same shed they were in contact, but he did not think there would be any necessity to slaughter the animals in an adjoining shed. Experiments in inoculation were misleading. If a man had disease among his stock and slaughtered one or two which were considerably affected and one or two which appeared to be affected, and isolated all the other animals, he might probably get rid of the disease without inoculation at all; but, if he inoculated the animals, there was not, as the evidence showed, any great difference. Statistics of the results in one county had been submitted to him, and they were supposed to show greatly in favour of the system of inoculation. In some cases only the animals affected had been slaughtered, without inoculating the remainder; and in other cases animals affected had been slaughtered and the remaining stock had been inoculated. The percentage of subsequent losses in both cases was, curiously enough, practically the same, only six per cent of the animals in both cases had to be killed. It was extremely difficult to make practical experiments except upon a very large scale, and even then grave doubts might be entertained as to the evidence of the results. While he approved of the Committee making all inquiry and investigating into the nature of the disease, and into the question whether it could be inoculated or not, and what might be the result of inoculation, he maintained that, so far as the farmers themselves were concerned, it was not of much practical importance to them whether inoculation was a preventive or not, because certainly if disease was reduced to a minimum, as it would be by the slaughtering of all animals affected, it would be wise policy to slaughter animals in the few cases which might afterwards break out.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) said, as one who had had large experience of the ravages that pleuro-pneumonia wrought among herds of cattle, he agreed with the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. Barclay) that until another remedy could be ascertained the only course was to apply the pole-axe indiscriminately. If the Government could see their way to give real assistance, in the shape of a grant of £10,000, for a number of successive years, he was convinced that something would be done, not only to stop the mischief that was now going on, but also to give them a thorough guide as to the future. Although the experiments would have to be made on a large scale, he believed it would pay the country to try them; and he was hopeful that the Government would see their way to deal with the matter in the way proposed. It was the duty of the Government to lead the way, and if they did so, he believed many private individuals would come forward and assist them. On the question of inoculation, he observed that the large majority of those who had thoroughly studied the scientific aspects of the case were, as far as he knew, of one mind. They did not see much use in inoculation. He hoped that the Government would come forward and give what assistance they could in this matter.

Mr. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, that up to the present—with the exception of the hon. Baronet the Member for the Wells Division of Somerset (Sir Richard Paget)—the debate had been carried on by Scotch Members. He (Mr. Gray) desired to say, however, that English agriculturists were perhaps as much interested in the question as their Scotch friends, although it might not appear so from the course the debate had taken. In England they had suffered over and over again from the prevalence of this most disastrous disease. It seemed to him that they had rather got away from the subject-matter of the Amendment. The question before the House was whether they were to give certain Instructions to a Committee which had been formed for the purpose of inquiring into this matter. He considered that while that Committee was sitting they could hardly give their Instructions as to experiments in inoculation, or any other system. Although he thought it was probable his hon. Friend the Member for South Lanarkshire (Mr. Hozier) would withdraw his Amendment, he hoped the debate would make an impression upon the Government. What they wanted were the sinews of war to carry on experiments. All other countries that he knew anything about, with the exception of England, generously and liberally gave money for carrying on important inquiries and experiments of this description. If they followed the example of other countries in this respect, he felt certain they should not only be benefiting agriculturists but benefiting the community at large.

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Long) (Wilts, Devizes) said, he could assure hon. Gentlemen that the Government had been very much impressed with the debate; and he had no hesitation in saying that the very interesting statements which had been made would have their due effect on the Government and on the Committee. The Government, however, could not undertake to accept a Resolution couched in the terms proposed by the hon. Member for South Lanarkshire (Mr. Hozier). The Resolution, if adopted, would be practically a vote of condemnation on the Committee which was at that moment earnestly and carefully inquiring into the best means of dealing with pleuro-pneumonia. Speakers in different parts of the House had advocated inoculation; the hon. Gentleman the Member for Forfarshire (Mr. Barclay) however, had very wisely directed attention to the fact that it was by no means certain that great advantages would accrue from any wholesale adoption of the system of inoculation. His hon. Friend who moved the Resolution quoted certain evidence in favour of the adoption of inoculation. He quoted the case of Australia and Holland, and the evidence given by the Highland Society. What were the facts? The information he (Mr. Long) had received on the point was to the effect that Australia, which had always adopted a system of inoculation, had always, at the same time, suffered from this disease. He had every reason to believe that the evidence of the Highland Society was, in the strictest sense of the word, extremely contradictory on the question of inoculation. Holland for many years adopted inoculation; but for the last four years Holland had given up that system, and had adopted compulsory slaughter, with the result that the country was free from the disease at this moment. Surely these facts were enough to warrant them in saying that the evidence quoted in support of inoculation was not sufficiently convincing to justify them in adopting a Resolution which would undoubtedly be a vote of censure on the Committee. His hon. Friend had stated that the Committee was under the sway of Professor Brown. No doubt Professor Brown had considerable influence on the Committee, but he very much doubted whether his hon. Friend had rightly described his position on the Committee. The names of the members of the Committee showed that it was one that would not be unduly influenced by Professor Brown or any expert. Whatever might be the conclusion at which the Committee now sitting might arrive, it would be the honest outcome of the evidence given to it. They would, he had no doubt, give their best energies and abilities to elucidate the important questions they had been called upon to decide. But, with reference to this proposal of experiments, every hon. Member who had spoken had dwelt upon the importance of the disease being promptly dealt with, and the Government had been told that they ought to expend whatever money was required in order that the question might be properly and effectually dealt with. He had no hesitation in saying that if that was their desire, they could do nothing more calculated to postpone the accomplishment of that desire than to adopt this Resolution. It was only common sense to say that if they were going to initiate a system of Government experiments to ascertain the result of a certain scientific process upon animals with reference to a particular disease, it would be impossible to form an opinion which would be reliable from a few isolated instances. They would have to collect a large number of instances, and carry on the experiments for a considerable time, before they could arrive at an opinion that would be in the slightest degree trustworthy. Therefore, he did not believe the adoption of the Motion would attain the object hon. Members had at heart. The Committee had been referred to, and an apprehension expressed that their inquiry would not be so exhaustive and valuable as it ought to be, and that they had no power to spend money. It was the case that they had no power to spend money, but they would agree that a Committee such as that now sitting in London was not one to which should be entrusted either a carrying out of those experiments or the spending of money on such experiments. It would be extremely difficult to appoint a Committee which should be a really powerful and practical one, and which should also be called upon to carry on experiments under their own supervision. For instance, how could the present Committee, with the heavy labours now entailed upon them, superintend in any part of the country experiments on a sufficiently large scale to enable benefit to be derived from them? The Committee were at this moment taking evidence on this question of experiments, and so far from the experiments being so old as to be worthless, they hoped to take the evidence of a distinguished scientific man from Holland who had had experience of the system of inoculation practised there, and who would not only speak to those experiments, but of their results. The Committee hoped to complete the evidence about Whitsuntide. The Government heartily sympathized with what had been said about the burden on the ratepayer from the charges for compensation, and about the loss to the agriculturists, and would willingly do anything they could to relieve the ratepayers, and would consider whether they could in any way strengthen the evidence proposed to be taken by the Committee. But, on the part of the Government, he could not accept the Resolution, which would practically be a condemnation of the Committee now sitting. One of the objects of the Committee being to report on the experiments in inoculation, hon. Members would agree that when the Committee had reported then this House and all interested in the question would be in a stronger and better position to approach its consideration. Therefore, he hoped the hon. Member would be content with the very able and practical discussion which had taken place, and with the assurance that the Government would do their utmost in this, as in other matters, to safeguard the interests of the agricultural community; and if the

Committee reported in favour of the experiments being carried out, their Report and proposals would receive the most careful attention of the Government.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Eight o'clock, till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 14*th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Standing Orders Committee, Lord Wenlock, *v.* Earl of Ducie.
Report—High Sheriffs [No. 109].
PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Pharmacy Act (Ireland), 1875, Amendment * (112).
Second Reading—Local Government (England and Wales) Electors (103).
Select Committee—Report—Liability of Trustees [No. 110].
Committee—Suffragans' Act Amendment * (83).
Report—Liability of Trustees * (24-111); Tithe Rentcharge Recovery and Variation (99); Copyright (Musical Compositions) * (92); Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances) (96).
PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL—*Committee—Report*—Local Government (Ireland) (Coleraine, &c.) * (63).

THE NATIONAL DEFENCES.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

VISCOUNT WOLSELEY: My Lords, I rise to make a personal explanation, and after what took place in your Lordships' House last Friday, I do not think it will be a matter of surprise to any of your Lordships that I should do so. On that occasion an attack was made upon me in my absence, which I think is indirectly a matter of some little public interest, and which directly is me to a matter of very serious consequence, both as a soldier and as a public servant. Early on Saturday morning, as soon as I read in the newspapers of the day the report of what Lord Salisbury—["Order, order!"]—of what the noble Marquess had said, I wrote to the noble Marquess, and gave him private Notice that it was my intention today to speak here upon the subject, and I regret extremely, my Lords, that the noble Marquess did not adopt a similar course with respect to myself before he spoke here last Friday. My Lords, I feel it necessary to refer to this trifling incident, to this fact, because I think it will explain what might otherwise have seemed an act of discourtesy on my part that I was not here in my place to answer the serious charges then made upon me. It will be within the memory of every one of your Lordships who were present in this House, that the attack to which I have referred was made during a discussion which arose upon an Answer given by the illustrious Duke (the Duke of Cambridge) with reference to a paragraph which appeared that morning in a newspaper. And perhaps, my Lords, it may not be uninteresting if I were at once to state to your Lordships that until the discussion took place in your Lordships' House, until that time of day I was not even aware of the existence of the paragraph which had caused that discussion. I did not know that there was any such paragraph in the newspapers of that day at all. My Lords, I have to claim your indulgence whilst I make a few remarks upon the charges made against me, and in doing so I hope I shall make use of only measured terms, and do so with unruffled temper, with the simplest words at my command, and in a straightforward manner. The noble Marquess began by a protest—I quote his own words—

> "Against the practice followed by some of those who are, or who ought to be, distinguished authorities on mititary affairs. I allude to the practice of making statements against the Government under whom they serve, and making them in places where they cannot be answered."

The noble Marquess then proceeded to name me personally as the chief offender, though he did not mention by name those who were my fellow-offenders. My Lords, I deny most emphatically that I have ever said one word that could be in any way construed into an attack in any form upon the Administration presided over by the noble Marquess. Nothing has ever been further from my intention. The Prime Minister of the present day has plenty and ample occupation without attempting to follow the course of military speeches which are made from time to time. I think I may congratulate the noble Marquess that among the many trials to which he has to submit, the reading of speeches on the Army and Navy is not one of his functions. But it struck me very forcibly, when I read the reports in the newspapers of what the noble Marquess said on the occasion to which I refer, that he had not read the speech to which he alluded—that is, the speech which I made at a private dinner. It seemed to me rather as if the noble Marquess had had supplied to him at secondhand an account of the speech, or rather a report marked and annotated so as to call his attention to certain particular facts in it. I do not know whether any of your Lordships have done me the honour of reading my remarks, but I feel convinced that if any unprejudiced person, no matter whom he might be, whose mind was not warped by the habitual contemplation of Party politics, if such a man would calmly read what I said, he could not have construed or twisted my remarks into any attack upon Her Majesty's Government. From the beginning to the end my intention was to point out what I considered to be the disadvantageous manner in which Party Government reacted upon Her Majesty's Army and Navy, and more especially what were the difficulties under Party Government in the way of the people being able to elicit the actual and true condition of the Army and Navy on which they will have to depend in times of danger and trial. My Lords, in a letter which I wrote to the illustrious Duke, I emphasized my view of what I had said in a manner so concise that I think I will venture to read it. There is all the more reason for doing so because it will relieve the noble Marquess from the imputation which has been conveyed in some quarters—that he allowed nearly three weeks to elapse before he made any remark with reference to my speech. On the 27th of April, after the private dinner to Sir John Pender, I received a note from the Commander in Chief in which he forwarded me a formal—I might call it a formidable—letter from the Secretary of State for War. That letter was not addressed to me. It was addressed to His Royal Highness the Commander in Chief, and therefore I do not feel justified in even quoting from it. In fact, I cannot read it because it is not in my possession but the letter contained a series of extracts from the speech which I had delivered a few days before, and those extracts were almost identical with those which the noble Marquess did me the honour to quote on Friday. Party Government has many advantages. It secures to the nation who live under it, not only political but individual freedom. But, after all, it is a mere human institution, and has its defects. My endeavour was to point out the great defects inherent in it—in its bearing on the constitution and efficacy and efficiency of Her Majesty's Naval and Military Forces. With your permission I will now read the answer which I sent to His Royal Highness with reference to the letter of the Secretary of State for War. I said—

> "In reply to the question asked by Mr. Stanhope in his letter of yesterday, I have the honour to state that the quotations given in it from the speech of last Monday at the dinner to Sir John Pender are practically correct, so far as I can remember the words I used. It certainly describes very accurately the opinions I hold with regard to Party Government, and I was not aware, till I read the letter in question, that any exception could be taken by Her Majesty's Government to an officer like myself, who does not hold any political appointment, expressing his views in the most open way upon what he conceives to be a grave fault in our Constitution. I made no attack of any sort or kind upon the Government of the day or upon any Member of it. I attributed our shortcomings to the vicious system of Party Government, and not to any particular individual on one side of the House or the other. My reference to Ministers was to Ministers in the abstract, quite independent of the political Party to which they belong, and I would not, on any account, take any steps which would tend to weaken Lord Salisbury's Government,"

and so on. It is not necessary for me to read the rest. Well, my Lords, I have no wish in any remarks I am about to make—and I never had any wish—to attack Her Majesty's Government, for I am no politician, and I hope I never may be one. But even if I were, I could not with any honesty attack Her Majesty's Government for neglecting to attend to the interests of the Army and Navy. From the position which I occupy in the administration of the Army, no man is more thoroughly aware than I am of all that the present Secretary of State for War has done and is doing in order to render the naval and military forces of the Crown efficient in every way and worthy of the nation.

Instead of attacking the military policy of Her Majesty's Government, my object has been at all times to support it to the best of my ability, and when upon previous occasions I endeavoured to do so, when I have expressed myself in still far stronger terms as to what I believe to be the wants of the Army, I have done so without entailing any censure upon myself from the Secretary of State for War or from the Prime Minister. I shall refer to this later on, when I venture to quote from some public documents as to what I have stated in public. Experience tells me—and I have had considerable experience, not in public affairs, perhaps, but in military administration—that it is absolutely impossible for any Secretary of State for War to obtain for the Army all that it requires, unless the English people are at his back—unless public opinion supports him—and unless the English people feel the necessity of increasing the numbers of the Army, or of adding to its military equipment, and of making it more readily and better prepared to take the part it is intended to play in the event of trial and danger to this country. It was in order to call public attention to these points—to the Army and its wants—that I said what I did. I think everyone knows that, in this country, the people are too prone to care little for the organization of the Army and for its affairs. They take it as a matter of course, when they are told —as everyone tells them at public dinners, and in speeches delivered from both sides of the House—that Her Majesty's Army and Navy have always done their duty, and will do it in future, they take these views as correct, and carry them home, and think they may sleep quietly in their beds, because the Army and Navy are strong enough. There is abroad in England an enormous amount of ignorance on the part of the English people in regard to the condition of the Army. Within the last few years, it has been found necessary by the Administration of India to increase their military force by 10,000 men. We have had, for some years past, to maintain a force in Egypt, where we have accepted greatly increased responsibilities, which may entail at any moment the necessity of sending out large reinforcements. We had also very recently—thanks to a Commission which sat and reported on the strength of our garrisons—become aware of the condition of things in our fortresses abroad, in our coaling stations, and in our home defences. We have been obliged to send abroad considerable reinforcements to our coaling stations; so that, though I have no wish to follow the noble Marquess into his statements of figures made on Friday, I may tell you that of the increase of 20,000 men to which he referred, 10,000 men are now in India. I may also tell you that, though in recent years, since 1884, 20,000 men have been added to the Army, the Army has, at the present moment, 23,000 men less than in 1860, 16,000 men less than in 1862, 8,000 less than in 1863, and at this moment 7,000 less than in 1864. How, then, can it be possible for the noble Marquess to come down and say that the Army has been increased in recent years? I have already said that my position at the War Office makes me know the earnest desire of the present Administration to make not only the Army, but, I believe, the Navy also, perfect in every respect. It is not breach of confidence if I give very briefly the result of a conversation I had with the present First Lord of the Treasury, when he came for the first time as Secretary of State to the War Office. In answer to a question I put, he said that his endeavour would be, during his tenure of Office, to make the Army a reality—that he would deal with it on business principles, and would be guided by these principles in its administration. I can still remember the emphasis with which he said that he would be no party to a sham Army. That statement is, I think, quite sufficient to prove that the present Administration and Ministers have ardently at heart the efficiency of both the Army and the Navy. Since Lord Cardwell introduced the great reform of the Army, and changed the basis of our military organization, no Administration has done so much as the present Administration for the Army, or has introduced so many beneficial changes in the short time they have been in power. That is one reason why it would be impossible for me to attack the Government upon the subject of the Army and Navy; but there is also one more reason to which I may refer, and that is the position I now hold. The position of Adjutant General is entirely non-political. He neither comes in nor goes out with the Ministry; he has nothing whatever to do with Party politics, or with the affairs of either Whigs or Tories. It would be most improper—it would, in fact, be almost outrageous—on the part of an Adjutant General if he were to allow himself, in any circumstances whatever, either at a public dinner or in this House—if he enjoyed the honour of a seat among your Lordships—to come down here upon any occasion to attack any Administration under which he was serving. Holding these views, is it likely that I should wish, in the remotest degree, to speak against Her Majesty's Government, to whose continuance in Office I, in common with a large portion of the nation, attach so much importance at the present moment? No, my Lords; I repudiate the accusation made against me on this point with all the force of which I am capable. But I cannot help feeling that the line of conduct I have pursued, much as it may be objected to by some people, if it has called public attention to a subject which is of such great importance, has fulfilled the object I had in view. That subject, which is always uppermost in my mind, and, I am sure, is uppermost in the minds of most of those who hold high positions in the War Office—certainly as far as the military side of the War Office is concerned—is this: Is the effective strength of the Army and Navy sufficient to fulfil for this country the objects and functions that the country has in view in maintaining these forces; is it able to guard the defences of this country and to maintain its honour at home and abroad; are the forces strong enough to maintain its commerce on all the seas and to defend our coaling stations and our Colonies, which are essential to that commerce? Such a question is uppermost in the minds of a considerable section of the people of this country also. I know how sincerely and deeply the Secretary of State for War desires to make the Army efficient. I have already alluded to what he has done in the short time he has been in Office to improve not only the efficiency and organization, but also the discipline of the Military Forces. I say deliberately that I do not believe there is at the present moment, or that there ever has been since he took Office, the slightest shadow of difference between the Secretary of State for War and myself as to what are the requirements of the country, and as to what is necessary at the present moment to place the Army in a thoroughly efficient position. When I speak of increased efficiency, I refer not merely to increase of numbers, important as that increase may be; but to what I believe is still more urgently required than an increase of numbers—namely, that whatever we have got as Military Forces in this country—whether Regulars, Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers—should be made thoroughly efficient, and should be placed in a condition, whenever the necessity arose, to be able to act effectively as an Army, and not merely as dispersed units, which they merely are at the present moment. There were two points in the observations of the noble Marquess concerning myself which, in some newspapers, have been graphically described as a "severe wigging." One of these points was that I had attacked the Government. With that I have already dealt. The other point was that if I had anything to say about the Army I ought to have come down to your Lordships' House and have said it. I hope I have convinced your Lordships that I had no intention, and never had the intention, of attacking Her Majesty's Government. I shall, therefore, allude simply to the charge which the noble Marquess made against me—that if I had anything to say about the Army I ought to say it from my seat in the House of Lords. During the five or six years I have had the honour of a seat in your Lordships' House I have never yet presumed to speak here; and it will always be to me a matter of sincere and deep regret that the first time I have felt it necessary to speak has been to repudiate charges made against me by the Prime Minister, and to defend my character against what I believe to be charges that ought never to have been brought against me, and that have no foundation in fact. From the time that I first entered this House I laid it down as a rule—and it was a rule that found favour in high quarters—that as long as I occupied the position of Adjutant General I should never speak here. My reasons for this determination were because, being no politician, and taking no interest in politics it would be unbecoming in me as Adjutant General to mix myself up in current politics. There are few questions which come before your Lordships' House that have not some Party interest; and it is very difficult to draw a distinction between subjects that are and are not free from Party politics. Another reason was that I felt that, as Adjutant General, it would be most improper for me to come down here to speak on military matters in the presence of my superior officer, the Commander-in-Chief. As long as His Royal Highness takes part in the debates in this House, it would be unbecoming of me to criticize any remarks that may fall from him upon Army subjects with which he is so connected, and of which he is so intimately informed. Experience has proved how right I was in the rule which I laid down in this matter. At the same time, I cannot help feeling—indeed, it is a self-evident fact—that the noble Marquess is right in saying that if I wished to attack Her Majesty's Government I ought to have come down here and have done so. I had no intention to attack the Government. I have to make one statement which, I think, of considerable importance, and it is this—that in this speech, with which so much fault has been found, and which has been, as I consider, so severely, I may almost say unjustly, criticized, there is nothing bearing either directly or indirectly upon the Army that I have not said on previous occasions, not as on the occasion referred to at a private dinner, but in what I may call open court. I expressed my opinions in the evidence given before the Royal Commission some 18 months ago. That evidence has been made public, and has been circulated in Blue Books to every Member of both Houses of Parliament. I know that very few of those who receive these Blue Books open a page when they see they refer to military matters; but if anyone has done so, or if anyone will take the trouble by-and-by to peruse the evidence that I gave to the Commission presided over by Sir James Stephen—the Ordnance Commission—he will find in that evidence, almost word for word, every fact and argument which I adduced in the unfortunate speech which has attracted so much attention. If you will turn to the Reports it will be seen that I was asked—

> "Is it not a fact that we never tell the truth to the English people, and that they never know what our military position is?"

and this was the answer I gave. I said—

> "That we never take the English people into our confidence, we never tell them what are our shortcomings. They have no means of ascertaining what are the military views of the highest military officers they employ. The highest military officers are paid very well; but the English people have no means of knowing what their military views are."

Further on, I said—

> "I consider the position of England, at the present moment, as regards its Army, as very unsatisfactory; and if a hostile force were to land upon our shores of, say, 100,000 men, there is no reason why those 100,000 men, if properly led, should not take possession of London."

It is proper I should call attention to the fact that when I made that statement—not in a hole-and-corner meeting, but before that highly critical and judicial Royal Commission—the present First Lord of the Treasury was Secretary of State for War, and the noble Marquess was Prime Minister, and yet no comment was made upon those remarks, and I was not censured in any way for them. I was never asked for an explanation. I would ask your Lordships if it was possible for me to say, or whether I did say, anything stronger in my recent speech than I said in the evidence I have read? What I said 18 months ago, and what I said lately, I adhere to literally and word for word. As regards the substance of that speech, I have nothing to withdraw, and nothing to be ashamed of. The noble Marquess has forced from me what I may call an exposition of faith. I give it freely for what it is worth. I give it in plain and unmistakable terms, without entering into any of those particulars which the noble Marquess so pointedly objected to in his remarks last Friday. When I make this statement I am fully aware of the responsibility I incur. My statement is as follows:—That as long as the Navy is as weak as it is at this moment, Her Majesty's Army cannot hold its own all over the world, dispersed as it is; that our defences at home and abroad are at this moment in an unsatisfactory condition, and that our military forces are not organized or equipped as they should be to guarantee even the safety of the capital in which we are at this present moment. My Lords, I am well aware of the responsibility I incur in making the statement; but, at the same time, forced as I have been to make this statement, I feel that there is no need whatever for panic. I am not in the secrets of Her Majesty's Government, and, as the noble Marquess observed, I am not aware of all that takes place in the Cabinet; but what I do know leads me to believe there is no imminent danger impending over this country, and that, therefore, there is plenty of time to do all that is necessary to place, at least, the Army in a state of efficiency before its services are required. Panic is the offspring of ignorance. For the people to realize their danger and the power of meeting it, is, in my opinion, the first step towards doing all that is required. For that reason, it has been my desire at all times to take the English people into our confidence, and tell them exactly what the condition of Her Majesty's Army and Navy is, and what is the proportionate strength of our Navy compared with the Navies of foreign countries. If there are wants and shortcomings I should like to tell them what they are. So complete is my confidence in the wisdom of Parliament and in the good sound sense of the English people that I cannot believe anything will be wanting in their efforts to place the two great Services of the country in a thoroughly satisfactory and serviceable condition. If, my Lords, by any action I have taken in this matter I have done anything to further that end, it will be, in my estimation, a most important event in my life, and one I shall always look back to with the greatest possible satisfaction. My Lords, I am well aware that in political life it is the common practice that when a Member of an Administration differs seriously from his Colleagues, or has been censured severely by his Chief in the Administration, it has been the invariable practice for that Member of the Government to resign the position he occupies; but, in my opinion, a subordinate military officer who occupies no political position whatever under the Government takes a wrong view of his position when he follows that example. As a rule, the resignation of a military officer, in these circumstances, answers no good purpose. I have been, I confess, at times sorely tempted to adopt that course myself, and never more so than I was last Saturday morning when I read the severe strictures made upon me in this House by the Prime Minister. It was no love of office that restrained me from doing so; but the view I took of my duty in the position I occupy as Adjutant General. At the same time, I wish it to be clearly understood that, although in my judgment it would be wrong on my part to take the initiative in this matter, I place myself entirely and unreservedly in the hands of the Prime Minister. I believe that the views I have expressed this evening, and upon many previous occasions, are those entertained by nine out of every 10 soldiers and sailors whose opinions are worth having; and I believe they are the opinions of those soldiers and sailors who, if danger comes on this country, will have to lead Her Majesty's Army and Navy—who will be the captains of our ships and the Admirals of our Fleets, the colonels of our regiments, and the Generals of our armies—in fact, the very men upon whom the people of this country will have to rely in case of sudden emergency. I have been careful in the remarks I have made to refrain from referring to details which the Prime Minister, in the course of his observations on Friday last, said it would be objectionable to make public; but I can say, from my own knowledge, that there is no deficiency or weak point in our defences which is not as well known to the Military and Naval Authorities of every great foreign nation as it is to ourselves. My Lords, I thank you for having listened so carefully and so attentively to what I have said. I would wish, in conclusion, to allude to a point I have not yet referred to, and it is this. To my astonishment and extreme regret I read this morning in the papers a speech made by the Secretary of State for War on Saturday, in which he took to himself personally some remarks I made, perhaps in too strong terms, at the dinner to which reference has been made. I wish to assure your Lordships, for his information and for the information of the public, that nothing was further from my mind than to attach any possible slur to the character or the intentions of the Secretary of State for War, whom I have known for so many years as a friend, and lately as a Member of the present Administration. I hope the Secretary of State for War and every Member of the Government will understand that I deeply regret that the words I made use of in that speech, to which reference has been made, could by any possibility be considered as reflecting in any way upon any Member of Her Majesty's Administration. Whatever my course of action may have been, I shall at least have the satisfaction of reflecting that I have acted according to my lights, and that I have been influenced by a desire to do my duty in the interests of my Sovereign and of the English people, whom it has been my earnest endeavour always to serve to the best of my ability.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, the noble and gallant Lord who has just sat down referred at the beginning of his speech to one matter which he spoke of as small, but of which I am bound to take notice. He expressed himself as feeling that he had not been fairly treated in having received no Notice of the remarks which I made on Friday. I can only say that if the noble and gallant Lord feels that, I very much regret it; but I have been in the habit of answering other speeches by Members of this House without giving Notice, and it did not occur to me that it was necessary to do so in this instance. If I have placed the noble and gallant Lord at a disadvantage by taking that course in the present instance I must express my regret for having done so. But when the noble and gallant Lord goes on to say that the strictures which I passed upon his speech at Sir John Pender's dinner were unjust and ought not to have been made, I do not think that he can entirely remember what the character of those remarks was. Nothing could be more handsome than the manner in which the noble and gallant Lord has spoken of the present Administration—nothing could be more complete than the disavowal which he has made of his intention of directing his speech at that dinner against Her Majesty's Government, or any Member of it. But, unless he has been grievously misreported, certainly the first impression which any ordinary reader would attach to the language which he used was that all Secretaries of State for War were men of "a low and vicious standard of morality."

VISCOUNT WOLSELEY: I beg pardon. Will the noble Marquess read that portion of my speech?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I am going to read it; but I say that the impression conveyed by it was not only that, but was that the most prominent offenders were those who had most recently come into Office. I will read the whole passage. It is so vigorous that it is a pleasure to read it, apart from the application it may receive. These are the words—

> "The answer to the question why the Army and Navy are not as strong as they ought to be is to be found in the system of our government by Party—that curse of modern England which is sapping and undermining the foundations of our country—which is depriving our statesmen of the manly honesty which was once their characteristic. What do we see when any new Administration comes into Office?"

Remember that a new Administration came into Office about 18 months before.

> "What directly takes place? It is the same with all Parties. The first thing is an endeavour made by the Minister in Office to obtain some claptrap reputation by cutting down the expenses of the Army and Navy, and if he is able to produce an Army or a Navy Estimate which represents in some degree a smaller sum than that of his Predecessor, he plumes himself upon the victory he has gained; he is proud that he has succeeded better, perhaps, than his Predecessor who sits upon the Bench opposite to him; and as he chuckles over his success he says, 'See what a good boy am I.' This is the result, of what?—the result of a low and vicious standard of morality which is now uppermost in men's minds. In speaking so light-heartedly of such a matter he forgets, this Minister who has just come into Office, in his pride at having reduced the Estimates, the fault he has committed, the crime of which he has been guilty against the country."

Now, my Lords, I must say that I do not think I was hypercritical in thinking that these words apply to all Advisers of the Crown without distinction, or if there was any distinction it was that they applied especially to those who had most recently taken Office. But we are all alike on our defence; and I invoke the sympathy of noble Lords opposite when I say in regard to the last four changes of Office that, as a matter of fact, the result has been that the Estimates have risen, and not that they have fallen. That charge, therefore, cannot be supported. As against us, it is especially hard for us to be accused of the crime of cutting down the Estimates by a lump sum, when a year or two ago we made the greatest sacrifice politicians can make—we sacrificed an important Colleague rather than suffer the very thing which is charged against us. My Lords, I am bound to say that the noble and gallant Lord has disavowed in ample terms any intention of referring to the present Administration. I accept entirely his disavowal; and I can only say that if he had made it sooner I should certainly have not ventured to trouble your Lordships on the subject. The cause of the delay to which he refers was that very correspondence which he has mentioned. I fully expected that after the letter he had written to the illustrious Duke he would have taken some public means of explaining and removing the misapprehension which anybody who read the speech must have formed. I found that he did not do so; and when I found that this speech was having what seemed to me a most disastrous consequence of panic on men's minds I felt it my duty to make the observations that I did. I can only say I heartily accept the disavowal which he has made; and I only hope that if he has occasion to attack us in future he will do it in this House. I do not mean to say that I think that a desirable course; but I think it is propriety itself compared to saying what he did at a dinner to Sir John Pender. Lastly, with reference to some other observations made by the noble and gallant Lord, I hope he will not take this incident too seriously, for I should regard his leaving the Public Service as the greatest blow that could fall upon our military administration. The noble and gallant Lord gave us his confession of faith. I cannot charge my memory with having seen it before; but I can only say that it is a very grave statement indeed, and that it shall receive the closest possible attention and examination that we can give to it with the assistance of the illustrious Duke, the noble and gallant Lord himself, and the Secretary of State for War. I cannot at all coincide with those who think that these matters can be referred to anybody outside the Government. So long as our system of Government is what it is the Government are responsible, and the responsibility must rest upon them. If you are dissatisfied with them you must change them; but you must not think that you can infuse efficiency into them by setting up an independent body by their side to advise them. I would only notice two other observations that the noble and gallant Lord has made. He spoke of the danger which we were incurring owing to the present weakness of our Navy. That seems to me, so far as my judgment goes, an inappropriate phrase. Weakness and strength are relative terms; what I wish to bring before the House, lest they should run away with a false impression upon the subject, is an account of the exertions this country has made now for several years past to place its Navy in a condition fit for the great duties it is called upon to perform. Allow me to read to your Lordships the total sums that have been applied year after year to the new construction of ships and the armaments of ships since the year 1880, the beginning of the last Administration. In 1881-2 the total was £2,100,000; in 1882-3, £2,447,000; in 1883-4, £2,592,000; in 1884-5, £2,927,000; in 1885-6, when the last Budget of noble Lords opposite was introduced, £4,895,000; in 1886-7, £5,095,000; in 1887-8, £5,358,000; and in 1888-9, £5,467,000. The annual expenditure on the new construction of ships and armaments has risen since 1880 from £2,100,000 to £5,467,000. The rise is enormous; and although, of course, you may say that it is not yet enough, it is undoubtedly the fact that our exertions for preparation and our state of preparation are, in my belief, and as those figures show, greater than they have ever been under any previous Government. The noble and gallant Lord treated with some contempt my plea for secrecy. He said that every defect we had was as well known to every foreign country as to ourselves. I hope that that is not the case; but even if it were the case it would not exhaust my reasons. It would not represent the real ground why any public discussion in all its details of our military and naval preparations is an impossibility. We are to make ourselves safe, it is said. But safety is not an absolute term. You cannot write down so many soldiers and so many ships are what will make England safe. They are what will make England safe against some supposed attack; you must know what your enemy is likely to be before you know whether your preparations are likely to be sufficient; you cannot know what force under any possible circumstances can be brought against you without discussing matters which I need not prove to the House it is utterly impossible to discuss in public. The question of defence is a question which involves not only the War Office and the Admiralty, but the Foreign Office as well; and if anybody doubts that fact let him read carefully that great speech of the Chancellor of Germany, delivered at the beginning of this Spring, in which he discussed the defensive and offensive position of Germany, and it will be seen that throughout it there is one point upon which he evidently laid stress. The consideration that was uppermost in his mind was, "Who are our allies?" and "Who are likely to be the enemies with whom we should have to fight?" Therefore, my Lords, I deprecate the idea that it is possible for any Government to lay down an absolute standard of safety. They must place the country in such a position that it will be safe against any danger which it is reasonably likely to incur; and, in so doing, I am sure your Lordships will believe that the more we deprecate publicity the more deeply sensible are we of the intense responsibility that lies upon us. There is no part of the speech of the noble and gallant Lord against which I should wish to enter so earnest a protest as that in which he attributes to public men in England—I care not of what Party they are—that for the sake of making a good Budget and winning a Party advantage they would consciously risk the interests of the Empire. I do not believe that such an accusation could be fairly directed against any public man on any side. We feel that we are working a Constitutional instrument of extreme difficulty. It is a task not a little arduous for men who are, and must be, in the main civilians, and responsible to civilians, to obtain and make use of all the best professional assistance, and to govern for professional purposes professional men of the highest intelligence and skill. That duty is laid upon us, and we shall perform it to the best of our ability. We are deeply sensible of the debt we owe to experts, and how carefully we should consult and weigh their opinions. We feel that the prospect of obtaining any success will, indeed, be jeopardized if the practice should gain of their speaking over our heads to the public, and destroying our authority and shattering the administrative machine we wield by invoking the opinion—the uninformed opinion—of out-of-doors critics against us. I am sure that in protesting against this practice I shall have the sympathy of your Lordships' House; and I feel convinced we shall have the sympathy of the noble and gallant Lord himself in endeavouring, when any difference of opinion arises between experts and civilians, to do our best, to give to each his proper place, to work together for that end which under our peculiar Constitution is so difficult of attainment—that of uniting all the securities of a Military Monarchy with a system which is penetrated through and through by the instincts and practices of freedom.

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, I wish to enter my protest against the attribution of motives to Members of preceding Governments by the noble and gallant Viscount. Such a charge is, I think, entirely unfounded. I do not agree in the advice or the opinion the noble Marquess has given, that the proper course was for the noble and gallant Viscount to come down to the House, and in his place make such an attack upon the Government. It appears to me to be the obvious duty of those at the head of our great Naval and Military Professions to state to the Government, in the fullest and most detailed manner, their views as to the necessities of their Departments. I very much regret to hear from the noble Marquess that no statement was made to him by the noble and gallant Viscount.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: I did not speak quite so strongly. I said that the precise statement the noble and gallant Viscount has made to the House had not been made to the Government.

Earl GRANVILLE: The noble and gallant Viscount stated that he was not a politician, and that he hopes he never will be. On the whole, I am rather inclined to coincide with him in that view; and I certainly do most devoutly hope that he will continue to devote exclusively his extraordinary energy and his remarkable abilities to the Profession which he adorns.

I will not complain that, though the noble and gallant Viscount has made the most ample apology I ever heard to the noble Marquess who so vigorously attacked him, not one word of apology did he offer to us who had remained perfectly silent. Really, the satisfactory thing in this incident, which threatened, in the minds of some persons, to lead to the loss of the valuable services of the noble and gallant Viscount, is that such a possibility is entirely put away by the explanation of the noble Marquess. I will not, on this occasion, go into the much larger and more important question as to what the military and naval defences of this country should be. I certainly feel that it is the duty of military men to state in the strongest manner to the Government of the day, whatever that Government may be, their notions of the deficiencies which exist; but I cannot admit that their views are always to be obeyed. I would remind your Lordships of the old story of Dean Swift who, in his *Instructions to Servants*, advised the servant in a particular department to ascertain the gross amount of his master's income and to endeavour to apply the whole of that amount to his own particular department. The Government of this country must take other facts into consideration, and must think a little of finance. They must take care not to cripple us in times of peace, for that is by no means the safest way of preparing us for war. But with regard to that, I am very much pleased to hear what the noble and gallant Viscount laid down as the principle of the reforms in which he wished to move—not merely to get more money, but to provide for the efficiency and the most complete training and preparation of the Army.

The Duke of CAMBRIDGE: My Lords, in view of the agreeable manner in which this incident has ended, and which I am glad to think will be acceptable to my noble and gallant Friend, I do not know that I have anything to say beyond this—that I feel it to be a duty which I owe to your Lordships and to my noble and gallant Friend to state distinctly that I have always highly appreciated his consideration in not coming and taking part in any debates in this House in my presence. I do not for one moment wish that he should hide his views. Every now and then we may not agree; but we always disagree without quarrelling. If, however, these matters were to be discussed by the Commander-in-Chief in this House in one sense and by the Adjutant General in another I think that would be most detrimental to the interests of the Service, and most serious to the individuals concerned. Therefore, I take this opportunity of assuring your Lordships that I am, perhaps, quite as much to blame as the noble and gallant Viscount, since I have always encouraged him not to take part in debates in your Lordships' House.

PUPLIC HEALTH—SUPPRESSION OF RABIES IN DOGS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

The Earl of CARNARVON said, he desired to trespass on their Lordships' attention for a very few minutes while he put a Question to his noble Friend below him in regard to a much less exciting subject than that which had just engaged their attention. He wished to ask his noble Friend, Whether Her Majesty's Government propose to introduce any Bill, or to issue any instructions, for the more effectual suppression of rabies in dogs, in conformity with the recommendations of the Committee of that House who last year reported on this subject? There was one Member of their Lordships' House who last year was with them, and this year was not with them in consequence of this mortal disease. The case was one which attracted great attention at the time. All the remedies of M. Pasteur were tried, and tried early. Everything that medical skill could accomplish was done, and the greatest courage was shown on the part of the sufferer, but all was absolutely in vain. A Committee was appointed last year with reference to this subject; and the general conclusion at which that Committee arrived was that they were prepared to accept the scientific conclusion that rabies could only be produced by the bite of the animal, and that there were no spontaneous generation of the disease. Consequently, the possibility of dealing with hydrophobia was brought within practical limits. Some countries, he might observe, had established a system of quarantine which had been completely successful.

Lord MOUNT TEMPLE said, the recommendation of the Committee that Local Authorities might order dogs to wear badges and fix the responsibility on owners and not on the dogs, and might receive the dog licences, was amply supported by the evidence. It justified the Bill he had presented last year, which led to the appointment of the Committee; but his Bill was necessarily confined to the Metropolis. Whatever legislation was passed ought to extend to the whole country; and now that the Government were carrying through Parliament a Local Government Bill greater power and improved machinery ought to be at the disposal of the new Local Authorities for the efficient prevention of rabies, independently of the muzzle, which had proved unsuccessful.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK) said, the Government entirely sympathized with the views expressed by his noble Friend behind him (the Earl of Carnarvon); but his noble Friend would recognize that great differences of opinion prevailed as to the remedies for the evil, and that there were many people who valued their dogs more than the public good, and could not always be trusted to take proper steps, or to submit to the rules laid down by authority. His noble Friend had asked what the Government had done. They had issued Orders under the Diseases (Animals) Act, to which dogs were now subject, giving permission to Local Authorities to deal with the question, of which these authorities had largely availed themselves. There had recently been a decrease in the disease, except in Cheshire, and some of the large towns in Lancashire. He did not hesitate to express his own opinion that if muzzling were carried out effectively and universally it would prove a complete remedy; but it would be almost impossible to enforce it, as so many exceptions had to be made. It was quite true that, in certain countries, the disease had been stamped out in this way. While in Mauritius the disease prevailed, in Réunion it had been completely stamped out, and no dogs were admitted, so that there had been no case for years past. In a large district in Prussia a similar policy had proved successful. He would not go through the long list of Local Authorities which had taken action under the Order of the Privy Council; and he had just heard that in Birkenhead and other parts of Cheshire these powers were being employed. He did not, therefore, think it necessary to introduce a Bill. The Government had also, by the kind assistance of the authorities at Somerset House, procured the endorsement on dog licences of the symptoms of rabies, so that they might be easily discerned in the early stages, and precautions taken. It had been proposed to put a badge upon each dog licensed, and that precaution had been useful in some countries; but in England the licence was not for a special dog, and so long as the number of licences did not exceed the number of dogs in an owner's possession they availed. He would remind his noble Friend that the police were already authorized to deal with suspected dogs, which practically enabled them to take strays dogs; and, as he had already stated, considerable powers were vested in Local Authorities. Moreover, the Dog Tax was one of the imposts to be given up to the Local Authorities under the new Bill, and it would remain largely with the Local Authorities to put in force what regulations they chose for the future.

THE EARL OF FEVERSHAM said, that no one who had any experience of the Metropolis could be unaware of the great nuisance from the excessively large number of dogs there. He hoped that the Government would in a future Session see their way to increase the tax on dogs, and so endeavour to diminish the number kept. Many of the dogs kept by people were not only of no use to anybody, but were a positive nuisance. If people could afford to possess dogs throughout the year they could afford to pay a higher tax on them.

METROPOLIS—NEW BUILDINGS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD LAMINGTON said, he rose to call the attention of the House to the new buildings now in progress at Albert Gate, and to ask Her Majesty's Government, When the improvements in Parliament Street would be carried out, and what decision had been come to in regard to the new War and Admiralty Offices? He contented that the new buildings at Albert Gate would utterly destroy the beauty of that part of London. At the very time when there was a great demand for open spaces, light, and air, the authorities had sanctioned the erection of these structures, which he understood would be 20 feet higher than the monstrous and horrible buildings in the neighbourhood of their Lordships' House—Queen's Anne's Mansions. The building at Albert Gate was to be 175 feet high, or within 20 feet of the height of the Monument of London. He wished to know whether the Government had any means of preventing the disfigurement of the Metropolis in this way? He was told that the remedy which the Board of Works had in view to bring pressure upon the builders was to erect a wall to obstruct the view from the basement. That he considered to be a very undignified method of proceeding, and he earnestly recommended those responsible for the good appearance of the Metropolis to consider whether they were altogether without other remedies. Then, with regard to the Parliament Street improvements, he desired to know when it was proposed to carry them out? He disapproved the scheme for the erection of the Admiralty and War Office buildings, involving, as it did, the destruction of a large part of St. James's Park, on which it was proposed to put up a building for Admiralty purposes, leaving the old structure as it was, and the making of a subway under Whitehall to communicate with the new War Office which would be erected on the site once occupied by Carrington House. Of all the schemes in the world, nothing could be worse than that. He asked for some statement upon this question.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, that the late Government were pressed to have a model of the new Admiralty and War Office buildings made, so that people could judge whether or not the new structures would be in harmony with the surrounding buildings. He thought there ought to be a model of the proposed addition to the Admiralty.

LORD TRURO said, he thought it could hardly be intended that buildings of so incongruous a nature should be permitted to be erected near Albert Gate. They were most unsightly and a grievous eyesore, and it was desirable that there should be some public official to whom plans of buildings of such an exceptional character ought to be submitted. With regard to the War Office and the Admiralty, one would not have thought that so long a time would have been taken to decide on those buildings. The delay which had occurred in respect to them entailed heavy expense to the country in the shape of rent for public offices.

LORD HENNIKER said, that the noble Lord opposite had spoken of the National Portrait Gallery being at Bethnal Green, and that such a collection was wasted on the population of the East End of London. He did not agree. He did not intend to follow the noble Lord as to this; but, although he would confine himself to answering the three Questions, he would not pass this by unnoticed, and he must repeat what he had said more than once in their Lordships' House—that three or four times as many people had visited the Portrait Gallery since it had been in the East End in comparison to the numbers who visited it when it was at South Kensington. No doubt the noble Lord who had brought forward that subject had seen the answer given lately in "another place" by the First Commissioner of Works. He had little to add to that answer. The Office of Works was at present in communication with the builders of the proposed structure at Albert Gate, which was progressing. That Office had no direct power to interfere with what any proprietor of land might do in such a case; they had no power to interfere with what any proprietor chose to do with his own land, but it had some considerable power indirectly. In this case they could build a wall or screen to prevent access of light from the public park, because, under the Acts of Parliament governing the Royal Parks, the owners had no absolute right to access of light from that direction. The First Commissioner recognized that a site like that at Albert Gate was of great value, and that if acquired by a builder it must be for placing some considerable building upon it. All his right hon. Friend desired was to secure a reasonable protection to the interests of the public, and to see that the Park which was entrusted to his care should not be injured by the erection of those buildings. The great point was to reduce their height. Queen Anne's Mansions had been mentioned. It was only fair to say that the building at Albert Gate would be of an entirely different character. It was artistic, and, if reduced in height, would be an ornament, rather than a damage, to the Park. As he (Lord Henniker) had said, a screen or wall could be erected; but the First Commissioner was in communication with the builders and the owners of the land, and he had every expectation of being able to make an arrangement for obtaining a reasonable reduction of the height, so that the buildings should not only not be detrimental to the public interest, but should be ornamental. As negotiations were proceeding, it would scarcely be right for him to enter further into details at present; but the House might rest assured that the public interests in that matter would not suffer in his right hon. Friend's hands. With respect to Parliament Street, he had stated in the House before, in answer to his noble Friend, that that question was not at all in the hands of the Government. It was altogether a private undertaking, and therefore, as far as the Office of Works was concerned, they had no power whatever over it. Parliament had thought fit last year to insert in the Bill a provision that before any of the buildings were pulled down £500,000 should be subscribed. If that condition had not been imposed he was told that the money would have been subscribed long before. The First Commissioner had recently been assured by the promoters that they had a very good prospect of securing the necessary capital before long. As to the War Office and Admiralty buildings, the plans were in the Tea Room of the House of Commons. The proposed elevation of the Admiralty buildings was contained in the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons last year. No doubt, his noble Friend on the Cross Benches had seen it. The delay with reference to the Admiralty and War Office buildings did not depend on the Office of Works. It had been caused entirely by the action of Parliament. Two Committees had been appointed, and Parliament had taken up the plans, and the Office of Works simply obeyed their orders. The plans—he spoke of the Admiralty plans only now—which had been prepared were in accordance with the recommendations of the Select Committee of the House of Commons which sat last year. These plans were to make an addition to the Admiralty. It was proposed shortly to ask Parliament to vote the sum necessary to carry out those plans. The War Office plans were in abeyance at present. He had never heard of any plan to build a War Office on the site of the house which once belonged to Lord Carrington, with a subway, as suggested. However, the First Commissioner thought that it was far better to carry out one plan at a time, and not to undertake too much. The War Office scheme, too, depended entirely on the decision come to with regard to the Admiralty, and it was impossible for his right hon. Friend to decide on any scheme with regard to the War Office until the House of Commons had arrived at a decision with regard to the Admiralty buildings. If the plans were approved by the House of Commons, his right hon. Friend would then immediately proceed to consider the scheme for the War Office.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, he would urge the desirableness of having a model of the proposed buildings placed in one of the rooms of their Lordships' House.

LORD HENNIKER said, that the elevation was at the beginning of the printed Report of the House of Commons' Committee, and he thought it showed sufficiently what the effect of the new buildings would be. He could not say that a model was required, because he believed that the drawing gave all the necessary information as to relative height of buildings, and so on. He would, however, ask his right hon. Friend whether he thought it desirable that a model should be accessible to their Lordships?

LORD NORTON asked, was it not a fact that the Home Office had prevented an additional storey being made to the Queen Anne's Mansions, which were not intended to be so high as the Albert Gate Mansion? High buildings of the kind referred to caused not only serious disfigurement to the architecture of a town, but great danger to life, and in the unfortunate event of fire breaking out in the building no engine or fire escape could reach the top.

LORD LAMINGTON said, he hoped that a model of the intended new War Office and Admiralty, and also the model which was prepared in 1886, would be placed side by side in the Library, so that noble Lords could compare them.

LORD BASING observed, that it was scarcely correct to speak of the new plan as concocted by the House of Commons. The First Commissioner of Works was Chairman of the Committee to which reference had been made, and had complete control over its proceedings, so that the new plan, and the substitution of it for the discarded plan of Mr. Leeming, was in accordance with the design and policy of Her Majesty's Government.

LORD HENNIKER did not know whether any power existed at the Home Office with respect to the height of buildings; but, as far as the Office of Works was concerned, the powers of that Office were as he had stated. He thought, for his own part, that a model was unnecessary; but he had said he would ask the First Commissioner whether it would be possible to place a model at their Lordships' disposal, and would also ask whether the previous plan could be set, side by side, with the present, in the form of models as suggested by his noble Friend.

TITHE RENT CHARGE RECOVERY AND VARIATION BILL.—(No. 99.)

(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

REPORT OF AMENDMENTS.

Amendments *reported* (according to Order).

THE EARL OF POWIS said, he considered the clergy were hardly dealt with in being changed at once from a septennial to a triennial average. Pharoah's lean kine only ate up an equal number of fat ones, representing seven good years, but the noble Marquess made three bad years eat up four good ones. It would have been fairer to make the average be taken first on six, then on five, then on four, and finally on three years, dropping only one year at a time. The seven years' system had been adopted for the benefit of the tithe-payers.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, that in the event of the exhaustion of the soil within a certain radius of the seaports of America and the consequent increase in the railway charges upon American wheat, causing wheat to rise in price in this country, the titheowners would gain by having a triennial tithe average rather than a septennial average.

Further Amendments made; and Bill to be read 3ª *To-morrow.*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) ELECTORS BILL.—(No. 103.)

(*The Lord Balfour.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD BALFOUR, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that the measure was of such importance that it would not be courteous to the House if he did not state in general terms the object for which it had been introduced. The Bill really formed a part of another measure which was now before the other House of Parliament, and, had time served, it would doubtless have been more convenient to their Lordships to have them both before them at the same time. Nevertheless, in consequence of the exigencies of time, it was necessary for the Bill to be passed into law as early as possible. The object of the Bill was to extend municipal franchise to counties, with the addition that in future the occupation of land to the extent of £10 a-year should be a sufficient qualification. The register would be made up in the same manner as the municipal register now was. The register of occupiers was made up with three divisions; the first contained those qualified for Parliamentary and municipal purposes; the second list was composed of those who were entitled to exercise the Parliamentary franchise only; and the third division consisted of those qualified for municipal and not Parliamentary purposes. The third division of the register would have placed upon it all the female occupiers duly qualified to vote, and any Member of their Lordships' House qualified to vote for the County Councils. One clause of the Bill made it compulsory that in all the districts of the Metropolis the register should be made up according to the situation of the property, and not alphabetically. A power to do this existed at the present time, and some districts had availed themselves of it. In future the register for the Metropolitan district must be all made up in one way, and this way had been chosen as the most convenient to the greater part. He trusted their Lordships would give the Bill a second reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Balfour.*)

THE EARL OF JERSEY said that he could not allow that measure to pass its second reading without pointing to several defects which he trusted would be remedied in Committee. Under the Bill an owner of property who was not resident would have no voice in the selection of the County Council, and would not be able to sit upon it. He should like to hear from the Government whether they could not reconsider the position in which owners of property would be placed by the Bill in the event of their being non-resident?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he regarded the Local Government Bill generally as being based on a sound principle—namely, that of establishing County Councils, which were to be elected directly by the inhabitants of the county. He should have been glad, however, to have the same franchise for the election of Members of Parliament as for the election of the members of the County Boards; but he fully recognized the fact that there were difficulties which could not be at once overcome. Still, he could not help entertaining the hope that it might be found possible in the future to assimilate the franchises and to simplify those very complicated registers. He also trusted that some improvements would be introduced into the present system of registration, which was exceedingly complicated and unsatisfactory. The object now in view was to put the counties on practically the same footing as the boroughs, and to give the owners a vote in counties would be to introduce an inequality so great that he felt certain it could not be maintained. If their Lordships were not prepared to introduce the owners' vote into all the municipalities, how could they support its introduction in the counties? There was the objection to the proposed franchise that it left untouched another local franchise by which the Boards of Guardians were elected. For his own part, he could not conceive that it would be possible long to maintain those two franchises side by side with each oth without serious questions arising; but he would reserve further observations until the Bill now before the House of Commons came up to them.

EARL BEAUCHAMP said, he admitted that the Government had a fair excuse for asking their Lordships to accept the Bill without discussion; but, as the noble Earl who spoke last showed, the measure in its present shape only touched the fringe of the question, and there must be further legislation in its train. He was anxious that those matters should be fully considered by their Lordships in a future Session, and he therefore gave Notice that he would to-morrow move that the Bill should only continue in force till December 31, 1889. The Government were going to lay down the serious principle that owners should be excluded from a share in electing members of the Local Councils. In endeavouring to attain uniformity between county and municipal government, he feared the Government were sacrificing the substance to the shadow. He hoped their Lordships would not lose sight of the great importance of this Bill because of the larger Bill which was to follow.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) wished to correct a misapprehension which might arise from a remark of his noble Friend who moved the second reading. Peers were not prevented from taking part in elections by a Resolution of the House of Commons, but by the Common Law of the land.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow;* and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.

PHARMACY ACT (IRELAND), 1875, AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Pharmacy Act (Ireland), 1875—Was *presented* by The Earl of Milltown' read 1ª. (No. 112.)

House adjourned at quarter before
Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, a
quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 14*th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered—First Reading* — National Debt (Supplemental) * [264].

Referred to Standing Committee on Trade, &c.— Railway and Canal Companies Charges [49].

Report of Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure — County Courts Consolidation [No. 172].

Committee—Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland [201]—R.P.; Reformatory Schools Act (1866) Amendment [161]—R.P.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS — *Considered as amended* — Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 4)* [218]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 5)* [219].

Third Reading—Local Government* [213]; Local Government (No. 2)* [214]; Local Government (Poor Law)* [215]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 2)* [216]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 3)* [217], and *passed.*

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CORK AND BANDON RAILWAY BILL.

CONSIDERATION.

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said, he wished to have an assurance in regard to the Bill. Various remonstrances against it had reached him from Cork, and among those who complained were the Corporation of Cork and the Cork Harbour Commissioners, both of which Bodies had petitioned against the Bill. He wished to know, therefore, whether, before the Bill was considered and ordered to be read a third time, they were to receive some assurance from the hon. Members in charge of it that the Petitions to which he referred would receive due consideration.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, the Question before the House was "that the Bill be ordered to be read the third time."

DR. TANNER said, he wished to point out that the Bill dealt with very important matters.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, that if the Bill was opposed it must go over until to-morrow.

Bill, as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

ULSTER CANAL AND TYRONE NAVIGATION BILL [*Lords*].

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir James Corry.*)

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) said, he had no special objection to urge against the Bill; and if the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) would give him a satisfactory assurance that the Canal dealt with by the Bill would hereafter be dealt with in a proper manner, and that they would not lend any more money to the undertaking, his opposition to the measure would be very much removed. His special opposition rose from the fact that he had reason to believe the Government might be tempted to lend money to the Company who were promoting the Bill. He had an inherent horror of the lending of money by the English Government to such an undertaking, and he thought the experience which had been gained in regard to such loans in the past was by no means encouraging. In the case of one of these undertakings, which passed through the Northern part of Ireland, it had never yet paid interest upon the borrowed money. In another case, which involved a scheme of reclamation, a Government had lent to those who were engaged in carrying out the scheme more than the value of the property, even if the scheme had been successful. He was, therefore, desirous in this case that the Government should give an assurance that they would make no further advances to this undertaking, and in that case he would not oppose the Bill. He was afraid that, although the Secretary to the Treasury might resist further applications, yet in the end he might be tempted to lend the money. The promoters professed to offer a security; but their security would be entirely at the mercy of the Great Northern Railway Company of Ireland. Certainly, if he were director of that railway, he should use all his efforts to make it impossible for the Canal to be worked in competition, seeing the amount of mischief it was calculated to do the railway without any corresponding benefit. He might further remark that, if this were a *bonâ fide* scheme, there would not be the slightest occasion to go to the Government in order to borrow money, for the reason that the Chairman of the Company was a man of large means and the head of a successful stockbroking firm. His clients would be quite ready to lend the money, and if their security were offered for any loan that was required there were plenty of people belonging to stockbroking firms who would advance the money. Those persons, however, thought it more satisfactory to deal with the Government, because the Government were not likely to enforce payment of interest. He had not only great fear that the Government might be tempted to lend money at once; but he had, however, a further fear that if a commencement were made in the way of lending money, the first loan would not be the last. What would occur would be this—the money borrowed in the first instance would be spent, and then a fresh application for another loan would be made. It was alleged that it was desirable to keep up a certain amount of competition by means of this Canal with the Great Northern Railway Company; but, if that were so, how did it happen that while the Canal was in operation, even before the railway was made, other people were able to compete with it satisfactorily? For instance, Mr. John Quinn, a successful carrier, found himself in a position to make a good business by conveying goods to and from Dungannon in competition with the Canal. Therefore, it was difficult to adduce any argument in favour of the Bill. There was another matter which only came to his knowledge a short time ago. It appeared that there was certain property now held under lease from the Government which it was proposed to transfer into a new Company, so that the tenants, instead of being under a landlord like the British Government, might find themselves dealt with in a harsh and arbitrary manner. He thought such a transference would inflict a very great hardship upon those unfortunate persons who held terminable leases which expired in 13 years. In the first instance, they had obtained the property at a very moderate rent, on the condition of paying a small fine on the renewal of the lease. If, instead of being under the British Government, they were compelled to deal with a Company which was trading for a profit, they would run the risk of having their entire property confiscated. In one case, the tenants of John Stevenson and Company paid a rent of £10, and professed to have laid out £6,000 upon the property; another tenant paid £10, and professed to have laid out £5,000. The property brought in a total revenue of £50 14*s*. a-year, and the tenants professed to have spent upon it no less than £30,000. It would be hard for them to find that their property was confiscated, and it must be remembered that these were not agricultural holdings that would come under the provisions of the Land Act. On the contrary, when the leases expired the tenants would be liable to be called upon to pay an unreasonable rent, or to find themselves evicted. Under those circumstances, and seeing that the Bill was one which was calculated to give rise to a considerable amount of discussion, he thought it would be better that it should be postponed until after Whitsuntide, when there would be more time to consider its provisions. He would, therefore, move that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he had had some expectation that when the hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Armagh (Sir James P. Corry) rose, not from his usual place, but from a responsible seat on the Government Bench, to move the second reading of the Bill, he would have said something in support of it. As the hon. Baronet had not done so, his (Mr. Healy's) hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) had felt himself compelled to offer some reasons why the discussion should be deferred until a later date. Nobody could know better than Mr. Deputy Speaker how important this question was, and what an amount of discussion it might give rise to. This question of the Ulster Canal had for some years excited great attention, and it was altogether impossible that adequate discussion should take place upon it that day, for this reason—that Irish Business had been put upon the Paper. Most important matters were down for consideration, and it was not to be expected that the House would address itself to a calm consideration of the present Bill. He had given Notice on Friday to the First Lord of the Treasury sury (Mr. W. H. Smith) that the Bill could not be properly discussed that day; and he would now appeal to the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) whether it was not desirable to postpone it for a few days? He would give his reasons for making that suggestion. The Bill itself was drawn on the principle of the Bills which had preceded it, all of which had been brought in by the Government. It was a Private Bill, not brought in by the Government on their responsibility. He did not complain of the course pursued by the promoters in endeavouring to obviate discussion in that House by bringing forward the Bill as a private measure; but he did think it an unreasonable course that the Government, who were the immediate parties concerned, and who were really engaged in getting rid of their own property by means of a Private Bill, should not themselves have taken the action implied in the answer which was given by the First Lord of the Treasury to the Question addressed to him on Friday, and have asked the hon. Member for Mid Armagh to postpone the Bill, in order to see whether a short postponement might not have the effect of getting rid of all opposition. He knew that there was considerable anxiety in North Armagh for the passing of the measure, and he had received telegrams requesting him to support it. He was quite ready to do so, if he found that it was possible; but, in the first place, he was anxious to see whether the Government would not make such a promise as would insure the withdrawal of all further opposition, and would allow the Bill to pass with all reasonable speed. But, before withdrawing the opposition, hon. Members should be allowed an opportunity of expressing their views to the Secretary to the Treasury. They had not yet had that opportunity, and he would suggest that a joint deputation consisting of the promoters of the Bill, such as the hon. Baronet (Sir James Corry) and some others, together with some of the opponents of the measure, like his hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan, and persons like himself (Mr. Healy), whose opposition was of a very modified character, should wait upon the Secretary to the Treasury and make representations which would be the means of enabling them to arrive at an agreement that would get rid of all opposition. He would, therefore, support the Motion for the adjournment of the debate, so that the opponents might have an opportunity of placing their views before the Government better than they could possibly have that day. If that step were not taken, of course the opponents would be obliged to enter into a debate upon the merits of the Bill. He himself should strongly deprecate any hostile demonstration against the measure at the present moment; and he had a strong hope that if the Bill were postponed until a later period, all the opposition now raised against it would disappear. If he were in Order upon the Motion for the adjournment of the debate, he would suggest to the Secretary to the Treasury that he should put into the Bill certain clauses that would have the effect of entirely modifying the objections now entertained to it. For instance, an assurance ought to be given that if the purchasing Company should be enabled to turn the Canal to useful purpose, their rights would be transferred to the County Boards of Armagh, Derry, Monaghan, Antrim, and Tyrone, should such Boards be constituted in the future. In that way, he thought, they would get rid of the opposition which his hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan felt disposed to offer to the Bill. Therefore, apart from the consideration whether to-day was a fitting day for the consideration of the measure, he thought the Government might see their way to a compromise, with the view of putting some provisions in the Bill which would have the effect of getting rid of all the difficulty. He, therefore, ventured to support the Motion of his hon. Friend. He certainly thought that the Great

Northern Railway Company should never, by any possibility, be allowed to come into possession of this Canal; but the Bill, as it stood, gave no guarantee upon that point. He felt surprised that the Government had not themselves proposed the postponement of the Motion for the second reading. He asked the Secretary to the Treasury to concur in the adjournment of the debate, so that a friendly conference might take place between the Irish Members, seeing that this was a Bill upon which Irish opinion should essentially prevail—whether it was Conservative or Home Rule.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he hoped the hon. Member for Cavan would not persist in his opposition to the Bill; and he would point out to the hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), who had made an appeal to him, that the passing of the Motion for the second reading of the Bill would not prevent any arrangements from being made which it might be necessary to make. He could assure the hon. and learned Member that personally he should be glad at any time to receive any communications or representations which either he or his Friends desired to make in reference to the amendment of the Bill. Hon. Members must be aware that the Bill had been before the House for a long time—[Mr. T. M. HEALY: Not this Bill.]—well, a Bill for the same purpose had been before the House on more than one occasion, and all the present measure did was to give the Lagan Navigation Company power to acquire the Canal. No terms were as yet fixed in the Bill, and therefore it was entirely open to hon. Members opposite and their Friends to make any reference to the Treasury which they thought desirable. He, therefore, hoped that the Motion for the Adjournment would be withdrawn, seeing that the second reading of the Bill would not prevent proper precautions being taken to secure that the interests of the Treasury and the interests of the district should be duly considered, and also to secure that provisions should be introduced into the Bill to make it impossible for the Canal to be acquired by the Great Northern Railway Company. He thought that all those questions might be met without any difficulty after the Bill had been read a second time.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he also ought to have suggested that if the County Board system were established in Ireland, the Canal should be transferred to that Body.

MR. JACKSON said, he was not in a position to give an answer upon that point, as the question, which was raised now for the first time, was a somewhat important question. The proposal was that the Government should make terms or impose conditions in the event of a certain thing taking place. It was on the supposition of a County Authority being established that it was suggested by the hon. and learned Member that that County Authority should take over the Canal. No doubt, at the proper time, that question would be considered. He would only point out that the people of the district had had an opportunity of making known their wishes, but they had not signified any opposition to the Bill. He might say, in answer to the hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar), who was good enough to inform him the other day that there had been a quantity of land let on lease by the Board of Works, that he had made inquiry upon that matter, and was told that there were some tenants in that position; but although there were a considerable number of tenancies the rental value was only £40 a-year. Some of the tenants held very long leases, and the Bill did not, in any way, affect the position of their holdings under the leases, and, of course, the leases would hold good, whatever arrangement might be made; certainly it would be the duty of the Treasury or the Commissioners of the Board of Works, who would have to make the conditions under which the Canal Company would acquire the property, to take good care, as far as was necessary, that those tenants were left in full possession of their rights. He trusted, therefore, as there was really no substantial opposition to the Bill, that the second reading would be taken at once, so that the present opportunity might not be lost for making progress with the measure. In the meantime, he would undertake that those points which had been very properly raised by hon. Members opposite should receive full consideration.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, that, as the Representative of a county which was vitally interested in the Bill, he should like to say a word or two in regard to its provisions.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Question before the House is the adjournment of the debate, and the debate ought to be confined to that Question.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he only rose for the purpose of expressing a hope that the debate would not be adjourned. He quite agreed with the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) that all the points which had been brought forward by hon. Members below the Gangway could be considered quite as well at a later stage of the Bill as now. As that was to be a night devoted to Irish Business, he hoped that hon. Members below the Gangway would allow the Bill to be taken at once, so that they might be able to proceed to more important Business.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) said, he thought the reason which the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. T. W. Russell) had given—namely, that that was to be an Irish night, ought to be a reason for postponing the second reading of the Bill. The Bill, as it stood at present, contained provisions which were of an eminently contentious character. It was quite evident that sufficient time could not be devoted to it that day, the more especially as the merits of the Bill could not be discussed on the question of adjournment. That being so, and having regard to the fact that two Bills of much interest to Ireland, one of which involved the payment of a salary to the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, were upon the Paper, he hoped the Motion for the postponement of the debate would be assented to. He certainly thought that the reasons which the Secretary to the Treasury had given for opposing that Motion were somewhat inconclusive. No doubt, the hon. Gentleman had dealt very fairly with the objections which had been raised, and he had intimated that considerable concessions would be made. He had, however, understood that all matters could be considered at a later stage, and there was no reason why the second reading should not be taken that day. He (Mr. M. Healy) would point out that that would not be the case; because, if the promoters were placed in the position of having got this stage of their measure, they would be much less disposed to consider any objections that might be raised to the scheme, or any point that might be submitted to them, than they would be if the House had not assented to the second reading. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had not questioned the fact that as regarded many of the matters which had been raised—for instance, the position of the leaseholders, the ultimate disposition of the property, the control of the County Boards in the event of their being established, and others matters—were matters which must be carefully considered. It was most desirable that an agreement should be come to upon those points, and, if so, there would be a great deal more prospect of arriving at such an agreement and compromise if the Bill were not read a second time. He did not propose to discuss the merits of the Bill, nor did he desire to defeat the Bill. On the contrary, he was disposed to facilitate its passing into law, if that could be done consistently with proper attention being paid to the various interests involved. For his own part, he thought that it was an unreasonable thing to press the second reading upon the House that day.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. M. Healy) said that there were highly contentious matters involved in the Bill; whereas the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) had pointed out that the Bill was one upon which all sections of the Irish Representatives ought to agree.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, his point was, that in that part of the House, as far as he could see, there was a disposition to come to an agreement, if possible, on the subject, although there were contentious matters involved.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said, he had listened to the various reasons which had been urged against the Bill; but the only serious objection was that which had been made by the hon. Member for West Cavan, who protested, as far as he could see, to the money of the State being advanced upon what he regarded as indifferent security. [Mr. BIGGAR: Hear, hear!] For his own part, he was always glad when the State was prepared to advance money to any undertaking that was calculated to develop the resources of Ireland and give employment to its people. So far from its being an objectionable Bill, he would point out that the measure was one which dealt with one of the few questions that were of the most vital importance to the North of Ireland.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. and gallant Member must confine himself to the Question of adjournment.

Colonel SAUNDERSON said, he had understood that the argument in favour of adjournment was that the Bill contained contentious matter. He would simply venture to submit that, knowing a good deal about the Bill, and about the course which had been pursued in the part of Ireland in which he lived, a part of the country which had the advantage of being represented, he believed, by the hon. Member for West Cavan, that so far from being contentious all persons who lived in the locality, with the exception of the hon. Member himself, were of opinion that the Bill would be of great advantage to the North of Ireland. He asked the House to concur with the Secretary to the Treasury that all the objections which had been urged against the Bill, and the reasons which had been given for the adjournment of the debate could be met when the Bill got into Committee. So far as he and his Colleagues were concerned, they were quite ready to meet hon. Gentlemen opposite, and so frame the Bill as to bring it in harmony with the wishes of the people of Ireland and the Representatives of Ireland on both sides. He denied that the Bill was in any way contentious, and he thought it could be easily shown that the Bill was really for the improvement of the North of Ireland. He hoped that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway would see that that was one of those rare occasions on which they could all join in supporting a measure which would be for the advantage of a considerable portion of the Irish people. He, therefore, trusted that the hon. Member for West Cavan would withdraw his opposition to the second reading of the Bill, and reserve the consideration of any Amendments he might suggest until the Bill came before the Committee. He could assure the hon. Member that the promoters would be glad to consider any proposals that might be made. The effect of the measure might be imperilled, if the second reading were not taken then.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just addressed the House (Colonel Saunderson) told them that if the second reading were not proceeded with then, the measure itself might be lost for the Session. He would, therefore, point out that the Bill was a Private Bill, and it could be brought on in the House at the commencement of Business at any time the Authorities chose; that there was no serious opposition offered to it; and that, on the contrary, it had met with approbation on all sides of the House. Nevertheless, as one who approved of the principle of the Bill, he joined with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) in supporting the Motion for the adjournment of the debate. They had been promised by the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) that when the Bill went into Committee, some of the suggestions which had been made would be accepted; but they were told not to put their trust in princes, and he was inclined, from the performances of some Members of the Government in other matters, not to repose the strictest confidence in the performance of the promises of the Government. For that and other reasons, he would strongly support any Motion that would succeed in extracting from the Ministry some special promise that the principles and suggestions which had been put forward by his hon. and learned Friend would be accepted before the second reading of the Bill was agreed to. He should certainly join with his hon. Friends in opposing the second reading of the Bill, until the House had some better assurance from the Secretary to the Treasury, that the suggestions which had been made to him would be carried out. For that reason, he trusted that the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would not insist upon opposing the Motion for the Adjournment of the Debate.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he had understood from the observations of the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) on Friday last, that he would seek an opportunity for conferring with the hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Armagh (Sir James Corry), with a view of seeing whether the measure could not be postponed from that day until a subsequent evening, having regard to the Business upon which the House wished to be engaged that day. He would put it to the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) whether it would not be proper on the present occasion to accept the proposal for the Adjournment of the Debate, that proposal certainly being in keeping with the promise of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. [Mr. JACKSON said, there was no promise.] If there were not a positive promise, the First Lord of the Treasury said he would consult with the hon. Baronet, and see whether some arrangement might not be made for the despatch of Business which would prevent the present Bill from being put down that day. On his own account he joined in the appeal to the Secretary to the Treasury to consent to the adjournment of the debate, for this reason—the Bill had been introduced for three or four years in succession from the Treasury Bench, and he had consistently opposed the Bill on every occasion. The Bill now before the House was a different Bill, and the provisions contained in it were very different from some of the provisions which were included in past Government Bills. In consideration of the alterations which had been made, he was no longer disposed to oppose the transfer of the Ulster Canal to the new Company. He was bound to admit that, so far, he had not made up his mind to vote either for or against the Bill. That was a most unsatisfactory position to take up on the part of one who had for several years strongly objected to the Government Bills, and he therefore hoped that a little further time would be afforded for consideration.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 101; Noes 158: Majority 57.—(Div. List, No. 105.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he would appeal to his hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) not to offer further opposition to the second reading of the Bill. They had made their protest against it, and they had received some promise in the nature of a suggestion that the Secretary to the Treasury would undertake, between this and the next stage of the measure, to devote some consideration to the views which had been put forward that day. He would, therefore, simply ask for some information as to what the future course of procedure in regard to the Bill would be. He would suggest that the course to be taken should be similar to that which was taken in the year 1886—namely, that the Bill should be referred to a Committee of Irish Members. He did not know whether that would be possible under the Rules of the House, or whether the Committee of Selection possessed the power of referring it to an Irish Committee or not. As, however, the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir James Corry) had the matter in hand, he would suggest to him that a Select Committee should be appointed to consider the provisions of the Bill, that it should consist of Irish Members only, and that it should include Members from both sides of the House. He believed that such a Committee would be better able to deal with the Bill than any other, and that the consideration it would undergo would have a valuable effect. The Bill involved an entirely new departure in the history of Private Bill legislation. It seemed to him that the Government were handing over to a private Company a sort of *damnosa hereditas*. Government property to the value of tens of thousands of pounds was proposed to be handed over to a private Company by Her Majesty's Government. He believed there was no instance in the history of Ireland in which the State, finding that it had made a bad investment of the public money, and that it was impossible to make a profit out of it, proposed to hand it over to private individuals. If that was to be the way in which the State cow was to be milked for the Irish people, he entirely repudiated being a party to the transaction. All that he could see in the matter was that the Government had made a bad investment, and that they were now seeking to get rid of their responsibility by handing it over to private individuals. He maintained that if the canal was to be handed over to private individuals, it should be done only with proper safeguards, the first of which was that neither the Great Northern Railway Company, nor any other company, should, under any circumstances, be allowed to get hold of the canal; that it should be vested in some persons who would work it to a profit; and that if the unfortunate Lagan Navigation Company found they could not work it, it should then be handed over to a representative Board, and that the Lagan Navigation Company should not be allowed, having got the property for nothing, to apply to the Irish Courts for a winding-up order, so that the assets of the Company, including themselves, might become assets for the benefit of their creditors. He did not see why that canal property should ever be allowed to become an asset so far as the debts of the Lagan Navigation Company were concerned. On the contrary, it should be preserved intact. He would further suggest, as a third point, that wherever private rights existed, as in the case of the Tyrone Tile Making Company, they should be duly protected. His hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan had made a fourth proposition—namely, that no further sums of money should be lent by the Government. His hon. Friend thought that if money were lent, it would be lent on very bad security. The Government might think that in getting rid of their liabilities for a payment of £1,000 a-year they might be making a good bargain; but he was of opinion that if they were going to give away the money at all, they should give it frankly, and not as a loan; because he could assure them that they would never receive one penny of the money back again, as long as any water continued to flow in the Lagan, which he was advised would not cover a very lengthened period. It was quite evident that the Government had made a bad investment, and it would be just as well that they should treat the matter frankly, and part with the property with a good grace. He certainly trusted that the Secretary to the Treasury would give the House an assurance that no more money would be advanced by the Exchequer to that undertaking. Perhaps, if a strong feeling prevailed among Gentlemen who represented the minority of Ulster Members opposite, he might not feel called upon to oppose their wishes; but as the Government were making a new departure, and were proposing to hand over the assets of the State to a private Body, he thought the best course they could follow would be to provide that the provisions of the measure should be considered by a Committee composed entirely of Irish Members.

Sir CHARLES LEWIS (Antrim, N.) said, he was prepared to oppose the extraordinary suggestion which had been made by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. T. M. Healy). That was a private Bill and unopposed, and the question before the House was that it should be read a second time. He apprehended that under those circumstances there was only one course which the House could pursue, and that the Bill must take its ordinary and legal course. It had been suggested that the Government had placed themselves under certain pledges, and that a certain understanding had been come to; but that was no reason why the measure should only be considered by a Committee composed of Irish Members. The Question before the House was, whether the Bill ought to be read a second time or not. He did not think that it was possible for the House to come to any understanding such as that which had been suggested by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford—namely, that the Bill should be referred to a Special Committee of Irish Members. He understood that it could only go before the Chairman of Committees in the usual form, with one Member of the House sitting with him, and he entirely repudiated the suggestion of the second reading being taken on any understanding whatever. Why any hon. Member should object to the ordinary course being taken, he could not for the life of him understand, and he should be glad to hear definitely from the Government what they intended to do. He had understood the Secretary to the Treasury to say that he would endeavour to mediate between the promoters of the Bill and certain persons who might not have a *locus standi* to oppose it, but with whom it might be desirable to make some arrangement before the Bill received the sanction of Parliament. That was a perfectly fair course, and it might be desirable to insert certain safeguards in the Bill, but he altogether objected to any proposal to take the Bill out of the ordinary course.

Mr. JORDAN (Clare, W.) said, he was most anxious that the Bill should pass as quickly as possible; but, at the same time, he must join with his hon, and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) in endeavouring to arrive at some understanding by which, if the Bill did pass, and the canal were handed over to the Lagan Navigation Company, it should not be possible for the Great Northern Railway Company or any other Railway Company to purchase or lease the canal hereafter. He thought that the Secretary to the Treasury should give some sort of assurance to that effect, or otherwise the canal would be of very little use. It was of no use at present, although it might be of great value if it were put in order. If, however, it were put in order at the expense of the State, and then allowed to be purchased by the Great Northern or any other Railway Company, it would be of very little advantage to the North of Ireland. So long as it could be used as a competing line with Northern Railways, it would be of much advantage to the commercial community in securing the lowering of rates and the price of the carriage of provisions and other goods. But if a loop-hole were left by which Railway Companies could purchase the canal, it would be of no use whatever, but would rather be in direct opposition to the interests of the North of Ireland. Representing as he did the commercial interests of that part of the country, he protested, anxious as he was that the Bill should pass, against the canal being handed over to the Lagan Navigation Company for the purpose of selling it. No one could be more anxious than he was, that the measure should pass. He had supported the provisions it contained in various forms, locally and otherwise, for many years, and he was glad that the Bill had now arrived at the stage it had reached in that House, but he thought there ought to be some guarantee before they consented to pass it, that it should be worked in the interests of the people of the North of Ireland. He thought it was not unreasonable to ask the Secretary to the Treasury to give an assurance to those who were anxious that the Bill should pass, that it should not be handed over to a Railway Company which up to the present time had saddled the people of the North of Ireland with very high and prohibitive rates. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) had also made another valuable suggestion—namely, that if it could not be worked with advantage it should not be permitted to be sold, or thrown into a bankrupt estate; nor was the suggestion unreasonable that the Committee appointed to consider the provisions of the measure should consist of Irish Members only. He thought it was only fair that Members from the North of Ireland, whose constituents were most interested in the measure, should be selected to consider the Bill. If it were found that it was a measure for the good of the country, it would certainly not be against the interests of the Lagan Navigation Company or the North of Ireland that the Committee should be composed of Irish Members. He therefore approved of the suggestion that the Committee should be an Irish one, and he would further press upon the Government the propriety of giving a guarantee that the canal should never be handed, by lease or otherwise, over to the Great Northern or other Railway Company, but maintained as an independent competing medium.

MR. JACKSON said, a question had been asked as to the desirability of inserting provisions in the Bill, to take care that in handing over the canal to the Lagan Navigation Company, they should be prevented from transferring the property they acquired to a Railway Company. He regarded that suggestion as a most reasonable one, and he had no hesitation, therefore, in saying, in view of bringing the present discussion to a termination, that he would himself undertake to say that no such provision should be inserted in the Bill, or in the agreement which it would be necessary to make for carrying it into effect. He need hardly point out that in regard to forming a Committee composed of Irish Members only, that was a matter that was not in his power to control. The Bill stood at present as an unopposed Bill, and in the ordinary course would be before the Chairman of Committees. What he had promised the hon. and learned Member for North Longford was, that he would be prepared to accep. any information in regard to the measure which he or his Friends were prepared to place before him.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY (Oxford University) said, it would not be in the power of the Committee of selection to do what the hon. and learned Member for North Longford desired, or to place on the Committee to which the Bill would be sent, any one interested in the matter. If the hon. and learned Gentleman desired something out of the ordinary course, it would be necessary for him to make a Motion to that effect to the House.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he wished to ask as a question of Order, whether it would be regular to give Notice that day, that he would move to-morrow that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member can give Notice; but he cannot make such a Motion now.

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (CONVICTION OF MR. CONDON).

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following Letter, relating to the Conviction of a Member of this House:—

Limerick,
10th May, 1888.

Sir,

I have the honor to report that on the 7th instant, at Mitchelstown, Mr. Condon, M.P., was tried and convicted before a Court constituted under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," of which I was a member, and sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment without hard labour. The offence charged was for taking part in an unlawful assembly, under Sec. 2 of said Act.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
J. B. Irwin, R.M.

To the Right Honble. the Speaker,
House of Commons.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (CONVICTION OF MR. DILLON).

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following Letter, relating to the Conviction of a Member of this House:—

County of Louth.
Drogheda,
12th May, 1888.

Sir

I have the honour to report that on yesterday, 11th inst., at Mells, in this county, before a Court of Petty Sessions, under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," of which I was Chairman, found Mr. John Dillon, M.P., guilty of having on 8th ulto., in this country, taken part in the "Plan of Campaign," and the sentence of the Court was that Mr. Dillon be imprisoned in Dundalk Gaol for six months, without hard labour.

Mr. Dillon was again tried to-day, before the same Court, on a charge of having on the same occasion incited others to take part in the "Plan of Campaign," on this charge he was also found guilty and sentenced to the same term of imprisonment, to run concurrently with first sentence.

From these orders Mr. Dillon has appealed to the County Court Judge, to be heard on 20th June next.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedt. servt.
Thos. Hamilton,
Resident Magistrate.

Right Honble. Arthur Wellesley Peel, M.P.,
Speaker, House of Commons.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—DILL MILL FARM CROFTERS—APPEAL.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is true that an appeal to the Court of Justiciary has been lodged at the instance of the Procurator Fiscal against the recent judgment of Sheriff Fraser acquitting certain crofters tried before him on a charge of criminal mischief at Dill Mill Farm; whether he can mention any instances of an appeal to a Higher Court taken by a Public Prosecutor against a judgment of acquittal pronounced on the merits of the case and after proof; and, whether the Procurator Fiscal, at whose instance the appeal is said to have been taken, is agent for the proprietor of the farm in question, or connected with any firm of agents who act for the proprietor?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): An appeal was lodged to keep the matter open till Crown counsel could be consulted. The appeal is not to be proceeded with. There have been cases such as are referred to in the second paragraph; but of course they are rare, and are not raised with a view to a second trial before the Summary Court, but only to obtain an authoritative decision on points of law, which is the only matter on which appeal is permissible in summary cases. The Procurator Fiscal is not agent for the proprietors. His partner is the local agent. The criminal proceedings in the case were not at the instance of the proprietor, but at the instance of the tenants, for whom neither the Procurator Fiscal nor his partner acts as agent.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL, SCHEDULE 4—MUNICIPAL BOROUGHS (TRANSFER OF POWERS, &c.)

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, having regard to the representations that have been made to him on behalf of the Municipal Boroughs, he proposes to make any additions to the boroughs to be included in Schedule 4 of the Local Government Bill?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Government are sensible of the strength of the representations which have been made to them on the subject referred to by the right hon. Gentleman. The matter is now being carefully considered; and I propose, when the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James), which is one of the first Amendments in Committee on the Bill, comes on for consideration, to make a statement on the subject. I am afraid I cannot do so until then, as it is essential that I should enter into particulars, which could not satisfactorily be done in answer to a Question.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION, SUB-COMMISSIONERS' AND CIVIL BILL COURTS—FAIR RENT.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If the Land Commission will in future Returns state the number of applications to fix fair rents under the Land Acts of 1881 and 1887 brought before the Sub-Commissioners, as also the number of fair rents fixed, distinct from the fair rent applications brought and fixed by the Civil Bill Courts; and, if he can state the number of fair rents fixed respectively by the Sub-Commissioners and by the Civil Bill Courts for the three months ended December 31, 1887, as also for the three months ended March 31, 1888?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): The Land Commissioners inform me that it is their intention to make in future monthly Returns the distinction indicated in the first paragraph of this Question. The number of fair rents fixed during the three months ended December 31, 1887, was, by Sub-Commissions, 2,573; by Chief Commissioners on reports of valuers, 8; by Civil Bill Courts, 62—total, 2,643. The number of fair rents fixed during the three months ending March 31, 1888, was, by Sub-Commissions, 3,423; by Chief Commissioners on reports of valuers, 41; by Civil Bill Courts, 404—total, 3,868.

NEWFOUNDLAND SALMON FISHERIES—FRENCH ENCROACHMENTS.

Mr. SAMUELSON (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, it is a fact that last year the French erected, or caused to be erected, for the taking of salmon, a weir in the River of Ponds, on the West Coast of Newfoundland, which barred the said River, and prevented the ascent of salmon to its upper waters; whether such obstruction exceeds the fishing rights possessed by the French by virtue of Treaties; whether the British naval authorities in those waters have power to remove the weir; and, whether the Report of the officer commanding H.M.S. *Emerald* on the weir at River of Ponds has been taken into consideration by the Government, with a view to prevent the erection of a similar obstruction next summer?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): These matters are at present the subject of correspondence between the Governments, and I would rather be excused from making any statement regarding them. Many questions relating to fishing on the coasts of Newfoundland have been discussed between the Governments of Great Britain and France, and difficulties connected with them have been obviated by mutual forbearance. Delays have, undoubtedly, occurred in the settlement of pending questions through the disinclination of Newfoundland to adopt the arrangement arrived at in Paris.

EDUCATION (IRELAND) — CATHOLIC SCHOOL AT ANNALITTON, CO. MONAGHAN.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it the fact that, upon a Catholic school being opened at Annalitton, Castleblayney, County Monaghan, the parents of several Catholic children who attended, and who had hitherto been obliged to go to a Protestant school kept by an Orangeman, were visited by the police and asked to explain why their children were sent to a school of their own denomination?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The District Inspector of Constabulary reports that it is not the case that the parents of any of the Roman Catholic children who recently left the Annalitton National School—which, though taught by a Protestant, is a mixed school—have been visited by the police for the purpose mentioned in the Question.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: If I supply the right hon. Gentleman with the names of the parents so visited, will he make inquiry?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Certainly, I shall be glad to make inquiries. I think that certain parents were visited; but, as far as I can make out, not with the object stated in the Question; but I will give the hon. and learned Gentleman all the information I have.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman state what was the object with which they were visited?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: What I understand is this—that the Roman Catholic clergy objected to the National school, presumably on the ground that it was taught by a Protestant, and started a new school in the place, to which all the Roman Catholics went over, with the exception of three families who were in the employment of a Loyalist (Mr. H. Cuming). It was stated that Father Gaughran, C.C., was bringing pressure to bear on these three families to make them send their children to the new school, and it was on this subject the police made inquiry.

SOUTH AFRICA — SOUTH AFRICAN (TRANSVAAL) REPUBLIC AND THE NEW REPUBLIC TREATY OF UNION.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the case that a Treaty of Union has been entered into between the South African (Transvaal) Republic and the New Republic; and, whether, in accordance with Treaty rights, the sanction of Her Majesty's Government was given to such union?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Such a Treaty has been entered into, and it will be found in the Papers relating to Zululand lately presented to Parliament. The sanction of Her Majesty's Government has not yet been given.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT — RAILWAY CONCESSION.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is a fact that a concession has been granted by the Transvaal Government to a Dutch-German Syndicate for a railway from the Portuguese border to Pretoria; whether one of the conditions of the concession is the right to take in goods free of Customs Duty; whether Her Majesty's Government consider such a concession is consistent with the Treaty rights secured to this country; and, whether any Correspondence has taken place between the two Governments regarding the matter; and, if so, when it will be laid upon the Table?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: The answer to the first two paragraphs of the Question is in the affirmative. Her Majesty's Government have under their consideration the question whether such a concession is consistent with the Treaty rights secured to this country. Correspondence is in progress with the South African Republic on the subject; but no decision can be arrived at as to presenting it to Parliament until it is concluded.

GREAT BRITAIN AND THE COLONIES —TREATY OBLIGATIONS.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, When the Government will lay upon the Table of the House the promised Return of the Treaties in force which stand in the way of reciprocal concessions in one another's favour by the Mother Country and the Colonies?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The Return is now in the printers' hands, and it is hoped that it may be ready to be distributed to hon. Members in a week or 10 days.

TRADE AND COMMERCE — INVOICES ON SHIPMENTS FROM GERMANY TO THE UNITED STATES — CONSULAR FEES.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has yet received information from Berlin as to the absence of any charge for declarations in connection with invoices on shipments from Germany to the United States; and, if so, whether the Government will take the necessary steps to relieve shippers from England of the payment of 2*s.* 6*d.* at present levied on each invoice?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The inquiry has been made through Her Majesty's Minister at Washington—not at Berlin. There has not yet been time to receive a reply.

LOTTERIES — PRIZE DRAWING FOR FUND OF CATHEDRAL OF SAINT MACARTAN, MONAGHAN.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a "Bazaar and Grand Art Union Prize Drawing," which has been announced to take place on the 11th, 12th, and 13th of September next, for the benefit of the fund for the completion of the Cathedral of Saint Macartan, Monaghan, at which a carved money box containing £150 is offered as a prize; and, whether he intends to take any steps with regard to this infraction of the law as to lotteries?

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) said, that before the right hon. Gentleman answered the Question, might he ask him whether he was aware that the Act referred to provided that one-third of the fine imposed should be paid to the person who gave the information to the Government?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am not acquainted with the provisions of the Act to which the hon. and learned Gentleman has called my attention. The attention of the Attorney General for Ireland has been drawn to the case referred to by my hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Waring); and he is now looking into the matter, and finding out what are the precedents for action in such cases—that is to say, what has been done under like circumstances on other occasions.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—INCREASE OF EXPENSES.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the Rule issued by the Irish Land Commission, under the date of the 24th of March, 1888, whereby the expenses of proceedings before the Land Commissioners, which are already felt to press heavily on suitors, are seriously increased?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that the increase of solicitors' fees under the Rule of the 24th of March, 1888, which was laid on the Table on the 11th of April, was sanctioned by them in consequence of the Incorporated Law Society having brought under the notice of the Commissioners the small scale at which costs were fixed in ordinary cases of tenants from year to year, and the inadequacy of remuneration where leases existed which involved further labour and expense unless the scale of costs was increased.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — IMPROPER CONVICTION AT LOUGHREA COURT HOUSE — COLONEL TYNTE, R.M.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that, in spite of an assurance given to their solicitor that the cases had been adjourned, three persons were tried and convicted, when absent from Court through the refusal of the constabulary to allow them to enter, by Mr. Tynte, R.M., at Loughrea Courthouse, of participating in the proceedings at Loughrea, on the 8th of April; and, whether such a practice of trying and convicting persons in their absence has the sanction of the Government?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Resident Magistrate named reports that this Question does not accurately represent the facts. The cases against the three persons referred to had been originally entered for hearing at Petty Sessions on the 19th of April, before Mr. Paul, R.M., who adjourned them, informing the counsel for the defence that they would not be taken until after a Crimes Court case, which was also adjourned, on the application of the defendants' counsel, to the 26th of April. On the latter date Colonel Tynte, R.M., unaware of what Mr. Paul had stated on the 19th, came to the Court at the usual hour, and began to hear the ordinary business. He heard the cases against the three defendants, their names being first duly called in Court. The District Inspector of Constabulary reports that there is no ground for the allegation that the defendants were refused admittance by the police. Later on, the counsel for the defendants appeared, and stated that he had a promise from the presiding magistrate on the previous occasion that the ordinary Petty Sessions business would not be taken until after the Crimes Court case. Colonel Tynte, having satisfied himself that there was a misunderstanding as to the time for the defendants to appear, and, not having signed the order, ruled that these cases should be re heard.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: Then am I to understand that Colonel Tynte had come to a decision?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If he gave his decision, he evidently rescinded it, because the cases are to be re-heard.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: Did he not come to a decision?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no further information.

Mr. J. E. Ellis

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked, was it not the fact—as he was present in the Court—that these three persons were excluded from the Court and kept out of the Court when their own trial came on; and that, notwithstanding that, Colonel Tynte proceeded with the cases, and that it was only after the appeal of counsel that he rescinded his decision?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he understood that there was no foundation for the allegation that the police refused admittance to the defendants; and it was perfectly clear, from the facts he had laid before the House, that the defendants suffered no loss in the matter, and that full justice was done them.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, would the right hon. Gentleman give an undertaking that no person would be tried under such circumstances; because, had it not been for the intervention of counsel, Colonel Tynte would have signed the order, and great injustice would have been done?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, no one will be intentionally tried under such circumstances.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): May I ask, whether the Government will grant these men compensation for the loss of time for having been brought to the Court, and their cases not having been tried?

[No reply.]

GAME ACTS—SALE OF RUSSIAN PARTRIDGES AND HARES.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Why Russian partridges and hares may be sold in Leadenhall and Central Markets but not by licensed retail dealers?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): So far as I am aware, there is no difference as to the right of selling foreign game in Leadenhall and Central Markets, or in any retail shop. The same licences apply to wholesale and retail dealing in game, and the same restrictions apply to both.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—CHRIST'S HOSPITAL SCHEME.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the Vice President of the

Committee of Council on Education, Whether the Christ's Hospital Scheme, which has been for two years in the hands of the Education Department, has yet been dealt with; and, if not, why not; and, when the scheme will be finally approved?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): Points of some importance in connection with the scheme have still to be finally disposed of; but the decision of the Department will be made known before very long.

IRISH INDUSTRIES — LECTURES IN LACEMAKING.

MR. R. POWER (Waterford) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Lord Lieutenant has been able to give a favourable answer to the communication addressed to His Excellency from the School of Art at Waterford, and the branch Art Class at the Carmelite Convent, New Ross, respecting the continuance of inspections of, and lectures on, lace making, by Mr. Alan Cole?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Irish Government are giving the matter consideration.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS—DARENTH ASYLUM.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) asked the President of the Local Government Board (referring to Return on Lunatic Asylums, No. 101), Whether he is able to say what is the explanation of the annual cost per head at Darenth Asylum being higher than that of any other asylum in England, and more than £10 per head higher than the cost at either Leavesden or Caterham?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): As regards the first part of the Question, the annual cost per head in the case of the County and Borough Asylums in the Return referred to applies only to the cost of maintenance. In the case of the Metropolitan Asylum District Asylums, however, the cost includes items which are not included in the cost of maintenance at the other Asylums. With regard to the cost at Darenth, as compared with the Leavesden and Caterham Asylums, it is to be observed that the latter asylums provide for a very much larger number of inmates than the Darenth Asylum. As regards the actual cost of the food of the patients, it is practically the same at Darenth as in the other asylums. The excess of cost arises under other heads of expenditure, and is to some extent accounted for by the fact that the Darenth Asylum has not had its full number of inmates; and also that the expenses of maintaining an establishment are not necessarily in proportion to the number of inmates which it provides for. I am not prepared to say, however, that these circumstances satisfactorily explain the difference in the cost, and I will direct the attention of the Managers to the matter.

LAND COMMISSION OFFICE, DUBLIN—PAYMENT OF FEES IN STAMPS.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that there is no stamp distributor attached to the Land Commission Office at Dublin, and that persons requiring copies of orders or other documents there are obliged to pay the fees in stamps, and cannot obtain any stamps at the Land Commission Office; and, whether, considering the inconvenience and delay involved thereby, he will take into consideration the appointment of a stamp distributor at that office?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): This Question should be addressed to the Secretary to the Treasury, as also should the Question of the hon. Member (Mr. Kilbride) in reference to loans to The MacGillycuddy.

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—CAPTAIN L. S. PAYNE AT FERMOY—REMOVAL OF BANNERS, &c.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the report in *The Cork Examiner* of the 8th of May of the trial of Captain Ludlow Strange Payne, at Fermoy, on a summons charging him with tearing down after midnight certain banners and decorations erected across the streets of Fermoy in honour of the visit of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien); whether the evidence showed that Captain Payne was caught in the act by the night watchman; whether, although the summons was dismissed on the ground that the complainant should have been the Town Commissioners, the presiding magistrate stated that—

> "So far as the emblem was concerned there was nothing to object to in it. We cannot understand why Captain Payne interfered with them;"

and added, in giving judgment,—

> "That both Mr. Furlong and himself considered that Mr. Payne had acted not only with very bad taste but with the most extreme imprudence and danger. By the insult he committed he not only placed himself in danger, but also other people who might be supposed to regard Mr. Payne's action with favour; but on the legal point they did not see their way to a conviction;"

to what military command is Captain Payne attached; and, do his superiors intend to take any notice of his conduct?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (A LORD of the TREASURY) (Wigton) (who replied) said: The gentleman referred to in this Question is a Militia officer, whose battalion is not out for training. He is not employed on any military duty, and nothing is known of the matter by the Military Authorities in Ireland beyond what they have seen in the newspapers.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he considered that a very unsatisfactory reply. There was a captain of the Militia who committed so grave an offence that the magistrate who tried the case said—

> "So far as the emblem was concerned there was nothing to object to in it. We cannot understand why Captain Payne interfered with them;"

and added, in giving judgment—

> "That both Mr. Furlong and himself considered that Mr. Payne had acted not only with very bad taste, but with the most extreme imprudence and danger. By the insult he committed he not only placed himself in danger, but also other people who might be supposed to regard Mr. Payne's action with favour; but on the legal point they did not see their way to a conviction;"

I beg to ask, whether Her Majesty's Government will allow the gentleman to remain in the Service?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, he was prepared to make further inquiries into the case; but he doubted whether the Military Authorities could do anything to a gentleman who was not on military service at the time.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS —THE HORSE TAX—INCUMBENTS OF PARISHES.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY (Oxford University) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, having regard to the fact that clergymen going on duty did not pay turnpike tolls, he will exempt from taxation horses kept by incumbents in charge of parishes with large area, who are compelled to keep such horses for the pastoral visitation of their parishes?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): It is provided in the Bill that duty be repaid in respect of one horse used by a minister of religion in the course of the year; and beyond this I do not think that any concession should be made.

INLAND REVENUE — MEDICINE STAMPS TAX—LEGISLATION.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If, in view of the widespread dissatisfaction existing at the manner in which the Medicine Stamps Tax has lately been enforced, especially in Scotland, he would be prepared, pending the introduction of a Bill dealing with the whole question, to repeal the clauses which apply to medicines not coming under the head of patent or secret compounds?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am not aware that there has been any expression on the part of the chemists and druggists of the "widespread dissatisfaction" which the hon. Member's Question assumes to exist. In fact, the leading trade journals have on more than one occasion expressed an opinion that these duties are administered in a considerate manner. There is no difference between England and Scotland in the mode of enforcement. The adoption of the hon. Member's suggestion would destroy the greater part of the produce of the duties.

WALES — RATES ON TITHE-RENT CHARGE—THE VICAR OF LLANFIHANGEL, DENBIGHSHIRE.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Secretary of State for the

Home Department, Whether the Vicar of Llanfihangel, near Cerrig-y-Druidion, Denbighshire, declines to pay his rates to the overseers of the parish; whether Mr. W. Kerr, a magistrate of the Petty Sessional Division of Cerrig-y-Druidion, refused to sign the summons to bring the case before the Petty Sessions; and, whether such a refusal on the part of the magistrate is in accordance with the law, and, if not, whether he will bring the conduct of the magistrate under the notice of the Lord Chancellor?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I am informed that the Vicar did decline to pay the rate on the tithe rent-charge, on the ground that it had not been paid to him. The magistrate did refuse to sign the summons. I have no authority to express opinions on points of law. If the magistrate has claimed to have a discretion in the matter of issuing the summons, which the law does not give him, a simple remedy is provided by 11 & 12 *Vict.*, c. 44, s. 5.

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—ADVANCES TO THE MACGILLYCUDDY OF THE REEKES.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kerry, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How much money has been advanced to the MacGillycuddy of the Reekes by the Board of Works since the year 1879; what is the Poor Law valuation of the property on which this money is chargeable; how much, if any, of this loan has been paid back into the Treasury; who inspected the works for which this money was advanced; and, what provision is made to satisfy the Board of Works that money advanced for drainage purposes is so expended?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.), in reply, said, he had made inquiries on getting Notice of the Question; but had not yet got the information which would enable him to answer the Question fully.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) — INSTRUCTION IN THRIFT.

SIR JOSEPH BAILEY (Hereford) (for Mr. NORTON) (Kent, Tunbridge) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, If his attention has been directed to the following passage in the Report issued last year by the Select Committee on National Provident Insurance:—

> "Your Committee are of opinion that it is highly desirable that the Legislature, which has made education compulsory, should cause instruction in sound principles of thrift and insurance to form part of that education;"

and, whether he has considered the propriety of introducing an elementary text book on the principles of provident insurance into the routine of elementary schools?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): The Department have had under consideration the passage referred to by my hon. Friend; and will place no difficulty in the way of managers exercising their discretion as to the choice of such a reading book as he describes if it fulfils the ordinary conditions.

VACCINATION ACT, 1871—HALESOWEN PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received a letter, dated March 11, 1888, from Enoch Harper, of Quinton, Staffordshire, making complaint that he was not allowed to appear to a vaccination summons at Halesowen Petty Sessions by a representative, duly authorized in his behalf, under Section 11 of "The Vaccination Act, 1871," and that the Chairman, having refused a hearing to his representative so authorized, proceeded to impose a fine of 20*s.* and 9*s.* costs; whether the statements in Enoch Harper's letter are correct; and, whether such fine and costs were legally imposed; and, if not, whether he will take steps to cause the amount of fine and costs to be refunded to Mr. Harper?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have received such a letter. The statement is correct that the Bench refused to hear Mr. Harper's representative. Under these circumstances, the proceedings were, in my opinion, irregular; and I have accordingly advised the remission of the fine, and have written to the Justices that the defendant should also be re-imbursed the costs.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—CLAUSE 3—TOWN COUNCILS.

Mr. HULSE (Salisbury) asked the President of the Local Government Board, What will be the future position of the Town Council under Clause 3, Sub-section 4, of the Local Government Bill; and, whether the County Council will maintain and have entire control over buildings in boroughs which are used for the Assize Courts, now belonging to the Council of such boroughs, and in which Assizes may be, and are, held?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, that neither the County Council nor the Joint Committee of the Quarter Sessions and County Council will have transferred to them any powers with regard to any Assize Court which are not now possessed by the Quarter Sessions of the county. The Local Government Bill will not interfere with the powers of the Town Council of a borough as to their control over buildings which belong to the borough, and which are used for the Assize Courts.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—JOHN S. DEANS, OF THE ENNIS POLICE FORCE.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why Constable John S. Deans, of the Ennis Police Force, has been dismissed; and, whether, on the occasion of his dismissal, any cause was assigned?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): This man was discharged, on the ground that his retention in the Force would no longer be of advantage to the Public Service.

Mr. CONYBEARE asked, if the Chief Secretary would state on what ground that conclusion was arrived at.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was afraid he could not go into the question.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, he should again call attention to the matter.

Mr. Matthews

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (INDIA)—OFFICIALS IN SERVICE OF PRIVATE COMPANIES.

Mr. MALLOCK (Devon, Torquay) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, What number of officers belonging to the Public Works Department in India are now in the employment of Private Companies or private persons in whose undertakings the Indian Governmen has no pecuniary interest?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): Twenty-eight. Of these, 22 are employed in Native States, mostly in connection with railways, and six are lent to the Government of Egypt.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SITTINGS AT CARRIGALLEN.

Mr. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there were 71 applications recently listed for hearing before the Land Commission from the district of Carrigallen; whether the Land Commission was applied to to fix Carrigallen as the place for hearing these applications; whether that request was refused, and on what grounds; and, whether, in consequence of this refusal, the suitors were obliged to walk 14 or 15 miles, and most of them to be absent from their homes from Tuesday to Saturday, being detained to suit the convenience of the landlord, who did not attend when the cases were called?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that the number of applications listed from the Carrigallen District was about 71. The Land Commission has been applied to to fix Carrigallen as the place for hearing these applications; but they were of opinion that the balance of convenience was against selecting that place, and that it would conduce to the more rapid discharge of business to hear the cases elsewhere. The cases taken up and heard each day were fixed in advance, so as to avoid the possibility of any loss of time.

INLAND REVENUE—EXCISE—BREWERS' HOUSES.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Government could obtain and give the House a Return of the number of public-houses owned by brewers in half-a-dozen typical towns in England and Wales?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said, he was afraid that the Return could not be granted, because if the information could be obtained it would not be of a reliable character.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM said, he had been able to obtain the information from the Mayor of Bath, and asked if it could not be obtained from other towns?

[No reply.]

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (INDIA)—THE CALCUTTA MUNICIPALITY BILL.

MR. ARTHUR WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the new Calcutta Municipality Bill, now before the Bengal Legislative Council, contains novel features unknown to like legislation in the United Kingdom; for example, giving the power of voting under the municipal franchise to the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce and to the Calcutts Trades' Association, the members of which Bodies already possess the right of voting in their private capacity as citizens; and multiplicity of votes, it being alleged that plurality voting according to property qualification and by the cumulative system obtains in English municipal franchise procedure; whether he is aware that the proposed measure is unpopular with a large majority of the inhabitants of Calcutta, owing partly to the inclusion on arbitrary grounds of certain suburban places within the future municipal limits of Calcutta, although such places are already included in a local municipality; and, whether the Secretary of State will instruct the Viceroy in Council not to sanction the Bill until the inhabitants of Calcutta have had an opportunity, by deputation or otherwise (advantage to be taken of such opportunity before the close of the present Session) of expressing to the Secretary of State their objections to the measure as at present framed?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Calcutta Municipality Bill, which contains provisions of the kind referred to by the hon. Member, has been for two years under discussion in the Bengal Legislative Council; and the inhabitants of Calcutta have had ample opportunities of expressing their objections to the measure and making representations to the Secretary of State, if they thought fit to do so. No such representations have been made; and the Secretary of State has no intention of interfering with the discretion which the Governor General possesses under the Indian Council Act of assenting to or withholding his assent from the Bill after it has passed the Bengal Legislative Council.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT—OFFICERS, &c.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the "officers of the Central Criminal Court," mentioned in section 23, sub-section (k.) of the Local Government Bill, include the Recorder, Common Serjeant, and Commissioner; and, what are the authorities of the Metropolitan Board of Works to incur costs mentioned in section 37, sub-section (3)?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, that the term "officers of the Central Criminal Court," was not intended to include the Recorder, Common Serjeant, and Commissioner. The authority referred to was conferred on the Metropolitan Board of Works by the Metropolitan Management Act, the Acts amending the same, and numerous other Acts. The Metropolitan Board of Works had no power to rate the City under the Artizans' Dwellings Act; the authority for administering which in the City was the Commissioners of Sewers. The City was also not rateable for the administration of the Cattle Plague Acts, for explosives, offensive trades, and slaughter houses.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE—PROMOTIONS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that the specific promise made by him on the 28th of February, 1887, in relation to Central Telegraph Office promotions, is now being departed from, in that it is proposed to promote certain transferred telegraphists to the first class over London men of longer service; and, whether this new departure has his approval?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have no recollection of the specific promise to which the hon. Member alludes. I find that on the 28th of February, 1887, I answered him to the following effect:—

> "I am not quite sure that I understand the Question; but if the hon. Member will call at the General Post Office, I will take care that he shall receive the fullest information."

On February 23 last, in answer to the hon. Member for South Down (Mr. M'Cartan), who asked me a similar Question, I stated—

> "That since January 1, 1882, 84 telegraphists have been transferred from the country to London; that out of this number eight have been promoted in advance of London telegraphists of equal or longer service; and that all these promotions have taken place since March 1 of last year. The 84 telegraphists, most of whom have been brought to London at a time of extreme pressure, and who were all transferred in the direct interest of the Service, were incorporated into the London Establishment according to their qualifications and pay; and in the case of the eight to whose promotion the hon. Member refers, it happened, owing to the fact of their having joined the Department as skilled telegraphists, that both their qualifications and pay were higher than those of their Metropolitan colleagues of equal service, who had joined as learners direct from the School of Telegraphy."

This seems to show the practice of the Department in the matter, which has not since been varied, and I have no present intention of varying it.

THE TRUCK ACT—BRISTOL.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Inspector of Factories for the Bristol District has made any further Report on the alleged breaches of the Truck Act within such district, and if he will state the nature of the Report; what further action is being taken in the case; and, whether he will state the date and substance of any Circular issued to Inspectors of Factories since the passing of and relating to the Truck Law Amendment Act of last Session?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; a further Report has been made. The matter has been placed in the hands of the Solicitor to the Treasury, with a view to the immediate prosecution of the offenders. An abstract of the Truck Act was circulated among the Inspectors of Factories for their instruction in January last.

DISPENSARIES (IRELAND) — LOCAL DISPENSARIES COMMITTEE, CLONES UNION—JOSEPH GRAYDON.

MR. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a bailiff named Joseph Graydon, residing at Rosslea, County Fermanagh, is a member of the Local Dispensary Committee in Clones Union; is his house used as a dispensary; is he in receipt of rent from the Union for the use of the house; is it the fact that he is paid by the Union for permitting his servant to act as attendant to the medical officer; does he also receive a salary for acting as Deputy Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages; was the rent of the dispensary increased some time since; and, if so, on what grounds; is it true that this man's son is a shopkeeper in Rosslea, and that it is to him the people requiring tickets entitling them to medical relief have to apply; and, whether, if the facts are as stated, he will take steps to remedy the matters complained of?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The answer to the first three paragraphs of the Question is in the affirmative. It is the case that the rent paid by the Union included remuneration for the servant's attendance. Mr. Graydon did not receive any salary from the Union, or any other public fund, for acting as Deputy Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages. The rent of the dispensary has not been increased since 1878, when it was raised from £8 to £12. The Board of Guardians appeared to be unanimous in granting the increase, on the ground that the accommodation was equal, if not superior, to that at Rosslea. It is the case that Mr. Graydon's son is a shopkeeper at Rosslea. He has no legal authority to issue tickets for medical relief.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked, if the Chief Secretary, when he said that this man received no salary from a public fund for acting as a Deputy Registrar, was aware that the salary which was given to him was portion of that given to him by the Registrar who employed him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, if the Registrar chose to remunerate someone to assist him he was not aware that that should be considered as coming out of the public funds.

MR. H. CAMPBELL asked, on what grounds had the rent of the dispensary been raised?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, on the ground that the accommodation, in the opinion of the Guardians, was superior to that which was being paid for already by them.

MR. H. CAMPBELL asked, whether this man, while in receipt of rent from the Union, was eligible to be a member of the Dispensary Committee?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not imagine that his receiving rent disqualified him.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he understood the Chief Secretary had stated that it was not legal that the son of this man to issue medical relief tickets. Did the right hon. Gentleman, then, approve of the fact that the people who required medical relief were obliged to go to his shop?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he had told the House that he was not aware there was any ground for believing that the son did issue tickets.

MR. H. CAMPBELL asked, was it not the fact that Graydon's son actually did issue these tickets; and would the right hon. Gentleman ascertain whether he did so or not?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was not aware that he did; but if the hon. Member would give him any evidence of the fact he would make further inquiry.

WAR OFFICE—"FORTRESS AND RAILWAY ENGINEER CORPS" FOR EDINBURGH AND LEITH.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Secretary of State for War, What has been the cause of the great delay, extending over two years, in giving the sanction of the War Office to the proposed "Fortress and Railway Engineer Corps" for Edinburgh and Leith; and, whether he will take steps to have a definite decision given at the earliest possible moment?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (A LORD of the TREASURY) (Wigton) (who replied) said: Provision has been made in the Estimates of this year for the formation of four companies of the Fortress and Railway Engineer Corps for Edinburgh and Leith. The existing Volunteer battalions and regiments at Edinburgh and Leith have strongly protested against the formation of this corps, on the ground that it would be likely to interfere with recruiting. The matter has been referred to the General Officer commanding in North Britain for further Report.

TURKEY (ASIATIC PROVINCES)—ARMENIA — PERSECUTIONS OF THE CHRISTIANS.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to a statement circulated by the Armenian Patriotic Association setting forth the horrible sufferings and persecutions of the Christians of Armenia, owing to which many of the Southern and Eastern Districts of the Province of Van are nearly depopulated of the Christian element; whether it is true, as alleged, that the British Consuls in Armenia are well aware of the facts set forth in the said statement, amongst others, that in certain districts—

> "The prisons are filled by numberless Armenians (many of whom are clergymen), all of them arrested for groundless reasons."

That—

> "Some of them have been kept more than 40 hours without food and water, their hands, feet, and necks in chains extended cruciform on the wall, in a dark, cold, damp underground cell;"

whether, under the 61st Article of the Treaty of Berlin, Turkey did not engage to ameliorate the condition of its Christian subjects, and to introduce indispensable reforms; and, whether the Government has addressed any remonstrances to the Turkish Government on the subject, and with what result?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): A copy of the statement in question has been communicated to the Foreign Office. The particular facts mentioned in the Question have not been reported by any British Consular officer. A previous Memorial of the Armenian Patriotic Association was forwarded to Sir William White, who has replied that the statements contained in it go over so much ground, and that the means of testing their accuracy at his disposal are so limited, that he must ask for time before he can report upon them. The engagements of the Porte contained in the 61st Article of the Treaty of Berlin are contracted with all the Signatory Powers in common. No useful object would be attained by official representations to the Porte unless they are made upon well-substantiated facts, and in common with the other Powers.

ISLANDS OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC —SAMOA.

MR. W. A. M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, so long ago as 1886 or early in 1887, the British Government agreed with the German Government to give them practically a free hand in their dealings with Samoa; whether the United States Government, as one of the parties to the agreement between Great Britain, Germany, the United States, and Samoa, was consulted prior to the decision of the English Government being communicated to Germany; whether any attempt was made to ascertain the opinions of the Colonies of Australia and New Zealand before taking a step so important to their interests; whether, when the Conference on Samoa met at Washington, the United States Government were informed of the agreement of Great Britain with Germany; if not, when was that information given to the United States Government; what were the instructions given to our Commissioner at the Washington Conference; whether any remonstrance has been addressed to the German Government as to their treatment of our faithful ally Mahitoa, and whether any guarantee has been asked for, or given, that he shall be well treated by the Germans at the Cameroons; and, whether the Government know if it is proposed to detain him permanently in that unhealthy district?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I answer the first two Questions in the negative. But the policy of Her Majesty's Government was stated at the Colonial Conference early in 1886. It will be found on page 167, vol. ii., of its proceedings—namely, Sir John Thurston, Her Majesty's High Commissioner for the Pacific, advised Her Majesty's Government that—

> "The only satisfactory mode of preventing the peace of the Islands from being disturbed by rival Native claimants to the Throne, and of securing the interests of the three civilized nations on an equal footing, would be found in an agreement between Great Britain, Germany, and the United States, that one of them should, as the mandatory of the other two, exercise for a limited term, to be renewed if it should be so determined at its expiration, supervision and control over Native affairs in the Islands;"

and although, as was stated at the Colonial Conference—

> "Her Majesty's Government had arrived at the same opinion, and were prepared to advocate at Washington an agreement of this nature,"

no "decision" could be taken by Her Majesty's Government before the conclusion of the Conference for the consideration of Western Pacific affairs. (3.) The Colonial Representatives were so informed on the 23rd of April, 1887. (4.) On the meeting of the Conference at Washington, the proposal was laid before it. (5.) Until that Conference has been concluded its proceedings, and the instructions given to our Representative, cannot be made known. (6 and 7.) Her Majesty's Government have no doubt that Mahitoa is treated in a proper manner.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SECONDARY SCHOOLS —REGISTRATION OF TEACHERS.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether the Government will consider the question of registration of teachers of secondary schools at an early date, in order to insure their greater professional efficiency; and, whether the Government will offer to inspect those private secondary schools, the proprietors or masters of which may desire to submit them to inspection?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): The questions raised by my hon. Friend form part of the whole subject to which the Government are pledged to give their attention, and are, therefore, being considered in connection therewith.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT.

MR. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it be true that, in consequence of not having been paid their wages, the labourers who were in the employment of Mr. J. S. Eyre, of Kiltormer, County Galway, refused to continue working for that gentleman, and that they informed the Constabulary, who strove to influence them, that they were quite willing to return to work if Mr. Eyre paid them their wages out of the £95 he had got from the Board of Works for such purposes; and, whether Constable Boardman spent three days last week ploughing and harrowing Mr. Eyre's land, and was also engaged on the 7th instant putting out manure for that gentleman; and, if so, is it allowable that constables may supplement their incomes by wages earned as day labourers, or has instructions been issued which would compel members of the Police Force to work for landlords who may be unable or unwilling to pay their labourers?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): All, or almost all, of the statements of fact in this Question are declared to be incorrect. It is not true that these workmen left their employer for not having been paid their wages, having been paid in advance. The reason they left him appears to have been that they desired to Boycott him. They did not complain to the police; and the police did not try to induce them to remain with, or return to, their employer. It was not a fact that Constable Boardman had done any agricultural work for Mr. Eyre.

MR. HARRIS: I fear very much that the right hon. Gentleman is very much misinformed.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—CHELMSFORD GOAL.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether any Report has been received from Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons on the alleged defective ventilation of prison cells at Chelmsford?

THE SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No Report has been received from Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons on this matter; but in consequence of representations made by the Visiting Committee last year, such steps were taken as seemed necessary to make the means of ventilation act properly. The medical officer of the prison has since reported, and has not suggested the necessity for any further provision being made, as the sanitary condition of the prison is, as far as he can judge, satisfactory. The subject, however, will continue to be kept in view.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—HAWKERS' LICENCES.

MR. JACOBY (Derbyshire, Mid) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If a retail draper who travels with a horse and trap, but sells from samples only, will be considered by the Excise Authorities to be a hawker?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): In strictness he would be liable; but it has not been our practice to require a hawker's licence to be taken out in cases where a draper called for orders with samples only on his regular local customers.

INLAND REVENUE—EXCISE—LICENCES TO BREWERS' HOUSES.

MR. CALEB WRIGHT (Lancashire, S.W., Leigh) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return of victuallers, beerhouses, and other licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors that have been refused during the five years ending 1886, on the ground that they were not required; and, whether he can give the number of public-houses and other licensed premises for the sale of intoxicating drink that belong to brewers and spirit merchants?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have no information as to the number of cases in which licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors have been refused on the ground that they were not required; neither can I give the number of public-houses and other licensed premises for the sale of intoxicating liquors that belong to brewers and spirit merchants.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked, whether it would not be possible to get some such Return before the Local Government Bill came on for discussion in Committee?

Mr. RITCHIE said, the matter was one with which the Home Office was concerned; but he would make inquiry.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—THE SUNDAY CLOSING ACT—MR. A. E. FLEURY AT LISBURN.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether A. E. Fleury, reported in *The Lisburn Standard*, of the 14th of April last, as having been appointed incumbent's churchwarden, at a meeting of the annual Easter Vestry of the parish of Christ Church, Lisburn, held on the 4th of April last, the Rev. Arthur J. Moore, M.A., in the chair, is the Constabulary District Inspector of Lisburn; and, whether Mr. Fleury was present at said meeting, when a Resolution in favour of the continuance of the Irish Sunday Closing Act and its extension to the five cities now exempted was passed unanimously; and, if so, whether it is in conformity with the regulations of the Service for a member of the Constabulary Force to accept or hold any such appointment, or to support or assist in the passing of a Resolution at any meeting condemnatory of any Act of Parliament which it is his duty to enforce?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have not yet been able to get the necessary Report to enable me to answer the Question. Perhaps the hon. Member will put it on a subsequent occasion.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—RECEIVING HOUSE FOR PICCADILLY.

Mr. W. BECKETT (Notts, Bassetlaw) asked the Postmaster General, What is the reason of his not having yet re-established a Post and Telegraph Office in place of the one abolished a year ago by the demolition of houses in Down Street, Piccadilly; and, if he is aware of the great inconvenience caused by there being no Post or Telegraph Office in Piccadilly from Burlington House to Knightsbridge?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): All efforts to find a person to undertake the duties of receiver in or about Down Street, Piccadilly, or to obtain premises for a branch post office at an expense which the amount of the business would warrant, have hitherto proved unsuccessful. I can assure the hon. Member that I shall be ready to entertain any proposal for providing an additional post office between Burlington House and Knightsbridge at a reasonable cost.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—COMPENSATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the recent decision pronounced under the Land Law Acts by the Sub-Commissioners sitting respectively in the Counties of Dublin and Cork—namely, that where a lease contains a clause precluding a tenant from claiming compensation for improvements at its determination, all improvements made by the tenant are to be treated as the property of the landlord, and that on the tenants applying to have a fair rent fixed under the lease-breaking clause of the Act of last year, the landlord is entitled to claim rent on such improvements, though he has not in any way contributed to the cost of them; whether he is aware that nearly every lease made in Ireland since the Land Act of 1870 contains such a clause, where the valuation of the holding exceeded £50, and that the result of the decision in question, if upheld, will be to confiscate tenants' improvements to an enormous extent, and in the case of the most improving class of tenant; and, whether the Government will take the opportunity provided by the Bill now before the House to redress this injustice?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): I have ascertained that a decision to the effect mentioned in the first paragraph of the Question was pronounced by one of the Sub-Commissioners referred to, and I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the entire paragraph. I have no information as to the matters of fact stated in the second paragraph; but I cannot admit that the operation of the decision referred to, whatever be its extent, can fairly be described as confiscation. It is not the intention of the Government to introduce any legislation for the purpose of nullifying clauses in leases defining the respective rights of landlord and tenant with regard to property in improvements effected by the tenants.

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—THE MITCHELSTOWN INQUEST.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) (for Mr. Labouchere) (Northampton) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether in view of the fact that two old men and a youth were killed by shots fired by the Irish Constabulary from their barracks at Mitchelstown; that a Coroner's Inquest found a verdict of murder against certain of the constables who fired from the barracks; that this verdict and the proceedings at the Coroner's Inquest were quashed upon technical grounds in regard to the proceedings; it is intended to direct that a second inquest be held upon the bodies of the three persons who were killed; or to prosecute the constables who killed them; or to hold any sort of public inquiry, at which the evidence of the constables and of those present at these deaths may be forthcoming, in order that a *primâ facie* decision may be arrived at in respect to the legality of the action of the constables concerned in this matter; and, whether, in the event of such inquiry taking place, it will be entrusted to persons who have not expressed an opinion upon the matter under investigation, and who were neither directly nor indirectly responsible for what occurred?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): Having regard to the fact that the Coroner's Jury, while inculpating some members of the Constabulary for firing in the Mitchelstown affray, wholly exonerated the District Inspector, who ordered the firing, and to the fact that the inquisition as regards those members of the Constabulary who were inculpated was quashed by the unanimous decision of the Court of Queen's Bench, not alone for technical errors, but for matters of substance—namely, the misconduct of the Coroner—and to all the circumstances of the case, it is not intended to hold another inquest, or to prosecute the constables, or direct any other inquiries than the Departmental one already held.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman what was the misconduct of the Coroner?

[No reply.]

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE ALLEGED INSURANCE FRAUDS AT BELFAST.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, with reference to the insurance frauds at Belfast, Whether he can now state if the Government intend to make any inquiry or to take any proceedings in connection with the forgery of the name of Mr. Finlay M'Cance, J.P., Belfast, as proven by that gentleman during the recent trials at Belfast, and by means of which a policy of assurance was obtained on his life in favour of Mr. James Henderson, proprietor of *The Belfast News Letter*, notwithstanding that Mr. Henderson had no insurable interest in the life of Mr. M'Cance; and, whether, considering the shocking practices which have been recently carried on in Belfast with respect to assurances by certain persons on the lives of others who were supposed to be in delicate health, and in whose lives the assurers had no insurable interest, the Government will make a searching inquiry into these cases, and take steps to have the offenders brought to justice?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): I must again deprecate being called upon to answer Questions relating to individuals whose names have been mentioned in the course of the proceedings to which the Question relates. In answer to a former Question I have already stated that the Attorney General for Ireland has assumed the conduct of the prosecution on behalf of the Crown; that a searching investigation is being made into the entire matter; and that no effort will be spared to bring all guilty persons to justice.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) ELECTORS BILL—RATING OF OCCUPIERS.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) (for Mr. LAWSON) (St. Pancras, W.) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it will be necessary for each occupier to be separately rated in order to secure the municipal franchise under the Local Government Electors Bill?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): In my opinion, as the Bill at present stands, it will not be necessary for each occupier to be separately rated, provided that he is, in fact, the occupier of buildings which are separately rated to the poor.

THE SWEATING SYSTEM—THE LORDS' COMMITTEE.

MR. KENRICK (Birmingham, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the fact that the "sweating system," now being inquired into by a Committee of the House of Lords, is not confined to London, the Government will consent to the reference to the Committee being extended so as to include the chief Provincial towns in the scope of the inquiry?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W.H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Committee referred to being one of the House of Lords, any steps to be taken for an extension of the powers of the Committee must be taken not here, but in "another place."

METROPOLITAN POLICE — ALLEGED BLACKMAILING.

MR. DARLING (Deptford) (for Mr. HOWARD VINCENT) (Sheffield, Central) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, having regard to the serious nature of the public charge made on the 19th ultimo by the hon. Member for Dundee (Mr. Firth)—

> "That the London police levy blackmail on the great distributors of goods in London,"

Whether the promise to furnish Her Majesty's Government with the grounds of the allegation has been fulfilled; and, in such case, if all possible inquiry has been made into the facts, and with what result?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): On the 19th ultimo, when the hon. Member for Dundee (Mr. Firth) made in this House his charge against the police of levying blackmail on the great distributors of goods in London, he was at once challenged by my right hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), by me, and by other Members for the authority on which this grave charge was made. The hon. Member then said that, of course, the charge was not against the police as a body, and went on to say that he would give me the names of his informants. I at once said that if the names were given it must be under such conditions as would enable the Government to test the accuracy of the statement; and the hon. Member, as I understand, and as I think the House understood, accepted my conditions. Some few days having elapsed, I wrote to the hon. Member to remind him of his promise, and on the 25th ultimo he gave me the names of his informants, but said they objected to have their names brought into public notice, "unless the whole police system is subjected to a public inquiry." I replied that it was not for his informants to make such conditions, and asked him to carry out the pledge given in the House. The hon. Member, in answer, said he understood that I objected to a public inquiry, and expressed approval of the conditions imposed by his informants. My reply stated that I had never objected to a public judicial inquiry into any specific charges against the police; that the accusation was a criminal one; and if he would bring it forward, or if his informants would do so, the Public Prosecutor would at once be directed to take such measures as were necessary to bring the incriminated to justice. The hon. Member, in reply, stated that his charge was merely meant as an illustration to his speech; that he always understood a Member of Parliament took the responsibility of his own statements; and that his informants adhered to their decision. The House has now all the facts before it; and I must leave it to hon. Members to judge how far the hon. Member has redeemed his pledge, and how far "illustrations" which contained criminal charges against a large body of public servants, and which are made on grounds apparently not sufficient to stand judicial investigation, are justified.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) was bound to say, with regret, that he took the statement of the right hon. Gentleman as amounting to a suggestion that he had not completely fulfilled the undertaking into which he had entered. He trusted he should always be prepared, when he gave an undertaking upon certain allegations, to withdraw both undertaking and allegations unequivocally if he could not, or did not, fulfil them. Throughout he had taken the advice of men whose judgment upon questions of Order in that House they all respected, amongst them being the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), and they were all of opinion that he had completely fulfilled the letter and spirit of his undertaking. He wished to draw the attention of the House to what had passed between the First Lord and himself. Challenged by the First Lord of the Treasury to produce his authority, he wrote to his informants and then to the right hon. Gentleman, telling him that they were prepared to prove the truth of the allegations, but that they objected to their names being brought into public notice unless the whole police system were subjected to a public inquiry. The First Lord of the Treasury wrote back, saying that his informants had no right to impose the condition which they had laid down, and that he (Mr. Firth) had failed to fulfil his undertaking. He then submitted the case to several Members of the House, who all said that, in their judgment, he had fulfilled, both in the letter and in the spirit, the undertaking which he had given. He wrote again to the right hon. Gentleman, pointing out that as the matter was one of public importance it ought to be inquired into publicly; and that the unsatisfactory nature of the recent police inquiry was hardly such as should encourage a repetition of proceedings of the kind. The right hon. Gentleman subsequently wrote, saying that he had never objected to a public judicial inquiry into specific charges; and that if he was prepared to bring forward any specific charge the Public Prosecutor would at once take steps. That letter he brought to the notice of his informants, and they replied that they were not prepared to modify the conditions on which they would give evidence; that they did not think that a prosecution would succeed; and that their names must not be made public unless a public inquiry were allowed into the whole system. That letter he sent on to the First Lord of the Treasury——

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER (interposing) said, the hon. Member was, of course, entitled, as a personal explanation, to give his version of the occurrences referred to by the First Lord of the Treasury; but he must not introduce exraneous matters.

MR. FIRTH, in conclusion, said, that he pointed out to the right hon. Gentleman that a Member of Parliament might be satisfied as to the truth of statements laid before him without being able to control the decisions of his informants; but that if at a future time the public inquiry which had been asked for were granted, he had no doubt that the evidence of his informants would be forthcoming.

MR. W. H. SMITH: By what I said just now I did not wish to cast any reflection upon the hon. Member. My original request to him was to furnish me with evidence on which judicial action could be taken, and judicial inquiry made into the criminal charges brought against the police; and I understood the hon. Member, from his place in the House, to promise that I should have that information.

MR. FIRTH said, there was nothing in the right hon. Gentleman's statement as to the judicial inquiry. What he (Mr. Firth) said was that he would give the names under such conditions as to test the accuracy of what he had said.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON AND MR. PARNELL—PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Will the Government lay upon the Table of the House the written communication, stated by the Earl of Carnarvon in the House of Lords to have been sent by him to the Prime Minister in 1886, on the subject of the interview between the Earl of Carnarvon and the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), relating to the future Government of Ireland, together with a copy of the reply of the Marquess of Salisbury, and any further Correspondence on the subject?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. and learned Member will see that the Correspondence to which he refers, if it exists, was obviously of a private and confidential character as between Colleagues in the Government, and it would be entirely contrary to all precedent to produce it.

WAR OFFICE—MANUFACTURE OF GUNS.

MR. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) asked, Whether the Secretary of State for War had seen the letter from Lord Brassey, published in *The Times* of Saturday, in which the writer said that the resources of the Whitworth Company's works were being largely applied to the manufacture of guns of the heaviest calibres for the French Government; and whether there was any foundation for the statement?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (A LORD of the TREASURY) (Wigton) (who replied) said: My right hon. Friend has communicated with the Whitworth Company, and has received a reply, stating that they are not making any guns for the French Government, and have not any intention of doing so.

NEW MEMBER TAKING HIS SEAT—MR. BRADLAUGH'S MOTION ON FRIDAY.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which I have given him private Notice. I wish to ask, Whether he is aware that on Thursday last the Attorney General intimated to me that if the words "unless the House otherwise resolve" were inserted in my Amendment on going into Committee of Supply, the Government would accept the Amendment; whether such words were inserted; and, whether, in spite of the insertion, 17 Members of the Government voted against the Amendment, and only four in favour of it?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): It is a fact that the Attorney General, with my sanction, did give the hon. Member to understand that, as far as I was concerned, and as far as my Colleagues were concerned, the course which the hon. Member has described would be taken. I am not aware that so many of my Colleagues as 17 voted against the Resolution. As I stated in the House on Friday I was obliged to be absent from the debate, having to attend elsewhere to matters of urgent public importance. It was only after the Division that I was made acquainted with the circumstances that had occurred.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question with reference to the course of Public Business. I understood from his answer on Friday that after 10 o'clock to-night the Resolution with reference to Imperial Defences would not be brought forward, and that if that Order were not reached before 10 o'clock there would be a Morning Sitting to-morrow. Now, in that case the very important Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) will be postponed to a 9 o'clock Sitting, which will be the second time within a very few days that an important public Motion will have been so postponed. I wish to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will not consent at 10 o'clock to-night to proceed with the Imperial Defence Bill, whatever may have been the progress made with the two Irish Bills that precede it upon the Order Paper, and so to obviate a Morning Sitting to-morrow?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am anxious to consult the convenience of the right hon. Gentleman opposite; but we cannot consent to interrupt the proceedings upon the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill or the Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill at 10 o'clock to-night. We shall be bound to endeavour to pass those two Bills through Committee; and if we do not succeed in getting them reported before 10 o'clock we shall have to take the Imperial Defence Bill at a Morning Sitting to-morrow. It is very important that we should adhere to that arrangement.

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE.

RESOLUTION.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he wished to bring before the House a question which affected the Records of the House. The Deputy Speaker had read out a letter apprising the House that one of its Members—

the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon)—had been sentenced to imprisonment on the following charge—"For having taken part in the Plan of Campaign." He (Mr. T. M. Healy) wished to ask, whether it were possible in case of inaccuracy, or, as he would charge, a deliberate misstatement, or to the legal effect of the conviction, on the hon. Member for East Mayo, it would be in Order to move a Motion on the subject? The practice was to move that such letter be inserted on the Journals of the House; but he proposed to move that as it contained a falsehood such record should be deferred, and that the Clerk of the House should communicate with the Resident Magistrate, and the exact terms of the sentence on Mr. Dillon be communicated to the House. He referred to the informations on which the hon. Member for East Mayo was charged. He was not charged on any summons, but was arrested on April 18 by a District Inspector, and brought before Mr. Kilkelly, R.M., charged with taking part in an illegal assembly and criminal conspiracy to induce certain persons not to pay their rents, and upon that charge only could he have been convicted. The Magistrate invented a charge, which was not a legal charge, with the deliberate object of prejudicing his hon. Friend, and chiefly, it might be, in regard to a recent Papal document. The statement which this Resident Magistrate wrote was as follows:—

> "County Louth, Drogheda,
> "12th May, 1888.
>
> "SIR,—I have the honour to report that yesterday, the 11th instant, at Mells, in the county of Louth, before a court of petty sessions, under 'The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887,' of which I was chairman, found Mr. John Dillon, M.P., guilty of having, on 8th ult. in this county, taken part in the Plan of Campaign."

Now, there was no such offence known to the law. The law under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act took cognizance of and enabled magistrates to convict the Members of that House and non-Members of taking part in an illegal conspiracy. There was no other offence known to the law, and he therefore submitted that as formerly the practice of the House always was, when these letters were read by the Chairman, for some Member of the Government to move that they be laid on the Table of the House. Where a gross and deliberate misstatement was made by a responsible Executive officer as to the charge upon which an hon. Member was convicted, it ought not to appear that the House gave its sanction to its insertion on the Minutes. He wished to know whether he should be in Order in moving—

> "That as it was alleged this letter from the Resident Magistrate conveyed a false impression as to the ground on which the hon. Member for East Mayo was convicted, that the Clerk do communicate with the Resident Magistrate as to the exact terms of the conviction, and that in the meantime the letter be not inserted on the Minutes."

If he was in Order, he begged to make that Motion.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he wished to call the attention of Mr. Deputy Speaker to the fact that the hon. Member for the Loughborough Division of Leicestershire (Mr. De Lisle) drew the attention of Mr. Speaker to the fact that the Crimes Act last year was described in a Question to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) as a Coercion Act, and the hon. Gentleman asked the ruling of Mr. Speaker as to whether it was right to apply to the Statute the popular instead of the legal title, and Mr. Speaker ruled that that title was out of Order.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! As far as I am aware, it is not the practice to make a Motion to lay such a communication on the Table of the House. Many communications are made to the Speaker, such as, for instance, those of Election Judges. They are read from the Chair as a matter of Order, and inserted as read from the Chair. They can be inserted in no other fashion. If the hon. Member desires to make on a subsequent day any Motion in respect of this, he will be in Order to do so; but having been read in discharge of a Ministerial duty from the Chair they appear on the Journals as a matter of course.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Then I would ask you, Sir, whether in the meantime, a deliberate statement having been made by me as a Member of this House that this letter must be false on the face of it, whether the Clerk will insert it in the Minutes pending the moving of such a Resolution?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The letter will appear with the authority of the signature appended to it, with the Votes of the day. I have no doubt the statement of the hon. and learned Member will reach the ears of the public in the usual way.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): Are we to understand, Sir, that when a communication of this kind has been made to the House, and has been read by Mr. Speaker to the House, and the truth of this communication is challenged on the spot by Members having cognizance of the facts connected with the case, that as a necessity this untruthful statement must forthwith be published as if by Order of the House? I do submit that under these circumstances the matter at once becomes a question of Privilege. If the House, through Mr. Speaker, directs the printing of a false document, I submit that the document in question and the fallacy concerned in the document in question at once become a question of Privilege; and I would ask you, Sir, with reference to the opinion you have just expressed, that it will be within the competence of any Member to move a Resolution with reference to such matter, whether the question of Privilege would not be lost sight of in postponing such a Resolution to a subsequent date, and whether it would not be necessary, in order to preserve the character of Privilege, that immediate action should be taken?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, Privilege must undoubtedly be defended by prompt action, but he did not think it need be defended by instantaneous action.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, he would put this possible case. Supposing a person reported to Mr. Speaker that a Member of that House had been convicted, and such a Member had never been convicted at all, and it was notorious, and could be proved by persons in the House, that no such conviction had ever take place, would it then be tolerated that under this authority upon the Journals of the House should be entered a statement that a Member of the House had been convicted of felony, whereas he had not been convicted at all? It was impossible to conceive a grosser insult either to the Member or to the House itself. Then there was another case which might be put. Supposing a Member had been convicted of one offence, it might be a minor offence, and a report was made to the House that he had been convicted of a totally different offence of a higher and graver character, was it to be tolerated that upon the Journals of the House there should be entered a false statement, and that the friends of the Member should have no remedy of vindicating his character and position at once and upon the spot; but that the Clerks at the Table should be the instruments of entering on the Journals of the House what, under the hypothesis he had put, might be the grossest libel on a Member?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The letter has already been read, and, having been read, it must appear on the Journals of the House. No doubt attention may be called to the matter as a point of Privilege, and a Motion may be made to expunge the record.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Then I will call attention to the matter as a gross Breach of Privilege. Last Session Parliament passed the so-called Criminal Law Procedure Amendment Bill, which gives to certain Resident Magistrates of Ireland power to try summarily persons charged with certain offences. These offences are defined by Statute, and the power of trying prisoners is a statutory power, and every statutory power must be strictly within the limits of statutory authority. No one can step outside those statutory powers for any purpose whatever, and the Resident Magistrates are only empowered to try prisoners for offences committed under this Act. By Sub-section 3A they are empowered to convict any person who has committed any of the offences mentioned in the sub-section anywhere in Ireland, and the offenders may be prosecuted in a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. The 2nd section defines the offences, one of which is taking part in any criminal conspiracy now punishable by law, and the acts which amount to the criminal conspiracy are defined. No Resident Magistrate in Ireland has the power to convict or to deal with any criminal conspiracy except in the direct words of the Statute. Yet exists this fact—a Resident Magistrate "of whose legal knowledge the Lord Lieutenant has satisfied himself"—namely, Mr. Thomas Hamilton—sends to this House a communication which is not only a Breach of Privilege, but a gross libel in every sense of the term, and he sends it away hot-footed the moment the conviction has taken place. I beg, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to call your attention to the letter which you read to the House in your Ministerial capacity. (*See page* 139). The sentence of the Court was that the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) should be imprisoned for six months without hard labour. Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say that that statement in itself is a falsehood. Either the hon. Member for East Mayo was convicted or he was not. If he was convicted, he must have been convicted of an offence within the terms of the section; but this section takes no cognizance of the Plan of Campaign. I myself could not, without having legal evidence before me, and this House could not, determine without legal evidence what the Plan of Campaign is. The Plan of Campaign may be a thing good, bad, or indifferent; but no magistrate is empowered to go outside the Statute. Yet this magistrate, for the purpose of creating a prejudice, debauching public opinion, and misleading this House, has committed a deliberate and wilful falsehood. I submit to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the records of this House ought not to be tainted by having placed upon them a corrupt and wilful falsehood of this kind, although it be invented by a man of whose legal knowledge the Lord Lieutenant is satisfied. I maintain that it was invented for a deliberate purpose, and that the only purpose for which this communication was made was to incite prejudice in this House, and to convey a false impression as to what the hon. Member for East Mayo had been convicted of. This House considers it wise and prudent that it should be made acquainted with any offence of which one of its Members has been convicted, and yet here we have a case in which a solemn judicial sentence has been passed upon a Member of this House of six months' imprisonment with hard labour. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, six months without hard labour; but the difference is so slight that I do not think my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo will appreciate it. Immediately after the conviction has been made, this magistrate, of whose knowledge of the law the Lord Lieutenant has satisfied himself, sends off a notification to Mr. Speaker that my hon. Friend has been convicted of taking part in the Plan of Campaign. I would ask the House to observe the effect of that statement. If this House had on its records under a process of *certiorari* a certificate of the conviction of one of its Members, and my hon. Friend, instead of appealing, had applied for a writ of *habeas corpus*, if the *certiorari* was found to be bad, there would be no power residing in any of Her Majesty's Courts to detain my hon. Friend; and if it could be shown that my hon. Friend had been convicted by the Resident Magistrate of an offence not sanctioned by the Statute, but an offence which did not exist, and that appeared in the certificate of conviction, my hon. Friend would be entitled to walk out a free man. No magistrate has a right to obtain cognizance on *certiorari* of a crime that does not exist, and yet the legal knowledge of this Resident Magistrate is such that he has penned a letter which is not only false, but which shows that he does not understand the Statute. I submit that the sending of this document to the House by Mr. Thomas Hamilton is a Breach of Privilege, that we should compel Mr. Hamilton to appear at the Bar and apologize for this libel on a Member of the House, and also for this insult and flagrant deception which he has endeavoured to practice on the House itself. This man has acted deliberately. I do not know whether he penned the letter in conjunction with any of the Law Officers of the Crown, I do not know whether the letter is one which has been drawn up as part of a common form suggested by the Law Officers of the Crown, but, at any rate, I think that the distinct withdrawal of the letter by Mr. Hamilton is absolutely necessary. Further, I am of opinion that the letter should not only be withdrawn, but apologized for, and that the author of the libel should appear at the Bar in person to make such apology. We may gather what the character of the persons is, of whose legal status the Lord Lieutenan~~t is~~ satisfied, when we find one of them writing a document which is not only false in law, but false in fact in every way in which you may view it. What chance would any unfortunate persons have who might be brought before such a Resident Magistrate who has such slight attachment to the forms of law. When, Sir, I heard you read the letter of Mr. Hamilton, I could not help being startled at such a declaration from the hands of a gentleman who has been entrusted with the power of life and death, for a sentence of six months' imprisonment for a man in the position of my hon. Friend the Member for Mayo may very well involve death. As soon as I heard the letter read I proceeded to the Table and obtained a copy of the letter, and I found that it bore out, in every respect, the reading of the Chair. That being so, I considered that it was necessary for some hon. Member to take action in the matter in view of requiring in future that the legal form of Procedure under the Crimes Act should be carried out with common decency. I beg to move—

> "That it is a Breach of the Privilege of this House to communicate to Mr. Speaker a letter containing an inaccurate and untruthful statement concerning the arrest and conviction of a Member of this House."

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Longford that the Motion he has submitted is purely an abstract Resolution, and in order to raise the question of a Breach of Privilege, there ought to be attached to the Resolution some reference to a specific Breach of Privilege.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: May I ask if it has not been the practice in most cases of Breach of Privilege to have, in the first case, a general allegation of Breach of Privilege, and then to allow it to be followed up by a specific Motion afterwards.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I will move the Resolution in the following form:—

> "That the letter of Mr. Thomas Hamilton, Resident Magistrate, dated the 12th May, addressed to Mr. Speaker, is a Breach of the Privilege of this House, as containing an untruthful statement in regard to the arrest and conviction of a Member of this House."

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the hon. and learned Member bring up the corrected Resolution?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Certainly.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That the letter of Mr. Thomas Hamilton, Resident Magistrate, dated the 12th May, addressed to Mr. Speaker, is a Breach of the Privilege of this House, as containing an untruthful statement regarding the arrest and conviction of a Member of this House."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Perhaps it would be for the convenience of the House if the letter of Mr. Hamilton were read again by the Clerk at the Table, as many hon. Members have not heard it read.

Letter again read. (*See page* 139.)

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) has taken occasion from the reading of this letter to make accusations against the magistrate who presided at the trial of the case against the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) of the most serious, and, I may say, of the most unfounded character—accusations which ought not to have been made, and insinuations of motives which I submit ought not to be made in this House upon such grounds as the hon. and learned Member has alleged. The hon. and learned Member has complained that the magistrate, to use his own expression, went on "hot foot" from the trial to write this letter. Now, surely it was the bounden duty of the magistrate, when he had convicted, to lose no time in apprising Mr. Speaker of the fact, and if all the grounds which the hon. and learned Member had for the suggestions he has made are as unfounded as that, I submit to the judgment of the House whether they ought to be made against a magistrate who writes a letter in the simple discharge of his duty. Now, Sir, what is the nature and character of a letter of this kind? It is a notification given to Mr. Speaker of a certain alleged state of facts. If it be the case of the hon. and learned Member that in this instance the hon. Member for East Mayo was convicted of what was not an offence, and for which the Court had no power to convict and sentence him, I need hardly say that the legality of the sentence would depend not on the notice given to the House, but on the record and certificate of conviction. If the certificate of conviction is for a something which is not an offence, and if the hon. Member for East Mayo has been convicted for taking part in a criminal conspiracy, that would appear on the certificate of conviction and will speak for itself. If he has not been so convicted, the hon.

Member will have the benefit of it in any proceedings which he may institute. It has, however, been suggested, and I earnestly protest against the suggestion, that because it does not appear from the letter that the hon. Member has been convicted of criminal conspiracy, but of taking part in the Plan of Campaign, that, therefore, the writer was influenced by motives of the basest kind. Whether the letter to Mr. Speaker should be expressed with all the accuracy of the certificate of conviction or not, can any human being doubt what was the meaning and purport of the communication? Is it not the fact that the Court took judicial notice that the Plan of Campaign has been pronounced by the Lord Chief Baron in a recent case to be a criminal conspiracy? The Plan of Campaign is perfectly well understood, and every Court must take judicial notice that it has been pronounced a criminal conspiracy. Can anybody say that the Resident Magistrate, in describing the offence as the Plan of Campaign, when he knew that the Judges of the land had pronounced the Plan of Campaign to be a criminal conspiracy, has been guilty of wilful and deliberate falsehood, because he has not followed the exact language of the certificate of conviction? Whether the magistrate ought to have followed the terms of conviction or not, I will leave to be discussed by hon. Members more experienced in the Forms of this House. But if no offence has been committed, no letter to Mr. Speaker from the magistrate convicting can make it so, and the suggestion which has been made by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford is, I think, not one which will commend itself to the judgment of any fair-minded man on either side of the House.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.): The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) has not, I think, touched the real point of this matter. As I understand the hon. and learned Member (Mr. T. M. Healy) who brought forward the Motion which the House is now considering, his contention is that by the law of Parliament any magistrate or judicial functionary who proceeds by sentence against any Member of this House is bound by the Rules of Parliament to communicate the cause of his action to the House. I need hardly point out that that can only mean the true cause of the conviction. The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland tells us that it is a mere matter of extreme technicality to follow the precise words of the Act of Parliament. Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I humbly submit that it is a great deal more than that. It is perfectly true that certain Judges in Ireland have expressed opinions with reference to what is called the Plan of Campaign. But they have been for a great part *obiter dicta*, and not decisions of the Judges at all. Does the hon. and learned Member opposite mean to say that the House is to accept these *obiter dicta* pronounced by certain learned Judges in Ireland as applying beyond the particular case in which they were uttered, or to take anything which any removable magistrate chooses to call the Plan of Campaign as necessarily covering a legal offence? I dispute that altogether, and I must say that hon. Members on the other side of the House must not be surprised if we on this side take every legitimate opportunity which may present itself of bringing before the House and the public the action of these magistrates, and the mode in which the law is being administered. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite well knows that I never concealed my view of this Act—namely, that it is noxious in its inception, and injurious every day in its operation. So far from serving the purpose for which it was stated to have been introduced—namely, the putting down of real crime as we understand it, it is not being so directed. This is our justification for the Motion—namely, that the Act is being insidiously directed against matters with which it was never intended to deal.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) said, he was not astonished that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) should take every possible opportunity of attacking the Act which was passed by Parliament last Session, and the way in which it was being administered by the Irish magistrates. What, however, the House had a right to expect was that the attacks of the hon. and learned Gentleman should be moderately reasonable. The question now before the House was that of a Breach of Privilege; and what was the allegation? It was that one of the magistrates of Ireland, in the fulfilment of his duty, had written to inform the Speaker of that House what he had done, and it was maintained that in doing so he was not to use popular language which would be intelligible to Mr. Speaker, and intelligible to every Member of the House, but that he was to use some technical terms which were to satisfy the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), and, as had been said, to stand the test of a special demurrer. That was the only question the House had to settle. There was no pretence for saying that the certificate of conviction when it came to be examined would not accurately describe the offence.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: How do we know that?

Sir JOHN GORST: The magistrate has written to Mr. Speaker to say that he has convicted the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) under this Act, that he has convicted him for an offence which he describes in popular language as taking part in the Plan of Campaign; and the only question before the House is whether that letter is to be declared by the House to be a Breach of Privilege? Having now said what the real question before the House is, I do not think the matter is further debateable.

Mr. PARNELL: I would like to ask the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) if he could inform the House what is the object of communicating this information to the House at all? Does it not indicate that the House desires to know the offence of which the person tried has been convicted, and not some other offence of an imaginary character coined for the political exigencies of the moment, which the magistrate or Judge may assign as having been the offence, but which really has not been the offence at all? Now, Sir, I will assume that the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) has made a mistake in supposing that this is not a communication to the House, but a communication to the Speaker only, for it is a communication to Mr. Speaker as a servant and agent of the House, and is for the information and judgment of the House as the highest Court of the Realm. Undoubtedly the House desires to know, if a Member of the House has been convicted, why he has been convicted; and I submit that a mistake and error of this kind, which would not have been committed by one of the humblest Petty Sessions clerks in Ireland, should not be passed over in silence when committed by a magistrate, who has the responsibility of meting out cumulative sentences of hard labour for political offences. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Hon. Members say "No!" I contend that this magistrate has shown his entire ignorance of all law by writing to the House, and informing us that the hon. Member for East Mayo has been convicted for the offence of taking part in the Plan of Campaign. He is a magistrate who is entitled to inflict cumulative sentences of imprisonment with hard labour for any number of years that he may choose to inflict them. His power is an unlimited power, and, as was very fitly stated by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), it is absolutely a power of life and death, because we have it on the authority of one of the Irish Judges that a sentence of two years' imprisonment with hard labour is the severest sentence which can be inflicted by the Criminal Law in Ireland. Now, Sir, here is this Irish Magistrate who has sent to this House an incorrect and inaccurate statement; and who is he? He is a Mr. Hamilton, of whose knowledge of law the Lord Lieutenant —who knows, by the way, a great deal about law—is satisfied, because he has chosen him as one of those magistrates who had a sufficient knowledge of the law to administer the Act. This magistrate is not a barrister; he has never passed a legal examination in his life; and yet in a case of this extreme delicacy, involving the liberty, and perhaps the life, of one of the most important of his political opponents, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant is not ashamed to entrust such issues as this to such a man in order to show his utter flippancy and disregard, not only of the decency of the law in Ireland, but of the lives of his political opponents, by entrusting the consideration and decision of such questions as these to a man who has been obliged to admit that he has had no legal education, and never passed even an examination in law. These are the kind of men whom the Government put over us in Ireland to carry out the notions of the Front Bench as to the administration of law and justice. How can you expect that the Irish people, even if this House chooses to swallow such a letter as this, written as it is in such colloquial phrases—how can you expect the Irish people, after such evidence as this of the utter incapacity of these persons to fulfil judicial functions, to have any regard for your law or your administration?

MR. LOCKWOOD (York): I should not have joined in this debate had it not been for the way in which the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) has chosen to deal with the remarks of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) and the late Attorney General. The hon. Gentleman, whose more recent experience in connection with India may possibly have led him to forget some of the extensive experience he had at the English Bar, addressed this as a matter of no importance. Now, I venture to think that it is a matter of much importance both inside the House and out of it. It is a matter of importance inside of this House that we should see that the Privileges of the House are complied with by those who have duties to discharge, and if it is part of the duty of a judicial officer to return to this House an account of the conviction of a Member of this House, surely it is the duty of the House itself to see that the record of conviction is accurately returned. Now, Sir, on the face of this letter, we know that we have no such accurate record of the conviction of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), because we know perfectly well that it returns a conviction for that which is not known as any offence under our statutory law. Then surely the House is entitled to take notice of the matter, and I think the House would best consult its own dignity by communicating to the person who has made this statement to the House, and requiring him to give accurate information to the House of the conviction which has taken place before him. It is almost too much—although the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) has drawn a picture which made one's mouth water —to expect to see a Resident Magistrate standing at the Bar undergoing the process of apology. I am afraid that that is too much to look forward to, but I think we are entitled to have from the Resident Magistrate an accurate account of the conviction which has taken place. So much for the view which I think this House is entitled to take, so far as it is itself concerned. But what will be said outside the House when persons read the letter which contains the record of a conviction for an offence which is not an offence at all as known to our statutory law? They will say this—that the Resident Magistrate in writing, aye, with hot foot, such a letter, showed by the terms he used that he had got the Plan of Campaign on his brain. It was the Plan of Campaign he was thinking about, and it is not what I may say of this judicial officer, but it is what people will say outside the House. In order to protect responsible judicial officers from having reflections of a serious character made upon them outside the House, I think this Resident Magistrate should be required to make an accurate return of the conviction which took place before him.

MR. DARLING (Deptford): Sir, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for York (Mr. Lockwood) is concerned to know what will be the opinion of people outside the House with regard to this question. I am quite sure that the first thing they will say will be that those inside the House have their feelings remarkably well under control, and that they have been able to get into a terrible passion about a very little matter. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] I take the interruption of hon. Gentlemen opposite as a distinct compliment. The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) has simply described as incorrect and inaccurate a statement which the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) has described as a corrupt and wilful falsehood, intended to convey a false idea. I think that is a tolerably warm description of what the hon. Member for Cork has described as incorrect and inaccurate. But what is there incorrect or inaccurate in the statement of the magistrate? I venture to say that to his statement neither the term inaccurate or incorrect is applicable. That an hon. Member of this House has been convicted of taking part in a criminal conspiracy there is no doubt. If any one doubts that statement, he must first of all pretend that he does not know what the Plan of Campaign is. It is not denied that the Plan of Campaign has been pronounced by the highest Courts in Ireland to be a criminal conspiracy. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) said that that was an *obiter dictum*. Happily for the right hon. and learned Gentleman, his remarks are *obiter dicta*, and he has made many remarks on this subject that are of that character. The question in the case which was to be decided was whether the Plan of Campaign was a criminal conspiracy or not, and it was decided that it was so. We must therefore shut our eyes very hard if we pretend not to see that the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) has been convicted of taking part in the Plan of Campaign. We must pretend very much that we do not learn that the hon. Gentleman has been convicted of taking part in a criminal conspiracy from the letter sent by the magistrate to Mr. Speaker. But I do not know that the magistrates are told anywhere to make their reports in the technical language of an indictment. The material part is to know that the hon. Member has been convicted. [*Interruption.*] If hon. Members have not yet appreciated the point, I will state it again. The material point is to know that the hon. Member for East Mayo has been convicted of an offence against the law, for which he has been sentenced to undergo treatment which will seclude him for a time from this House. No doubt, it is convenient that the House should know whether the offence committed is that of burglary, conspiracy, or larceny, or anything else; but there is no need of such accuracy in the communication of the magistrate to this House, and the hon. and learned Member for North Longford himself well knows that no *certiorari* lies to this House. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] I am glad that my remark has called forth that manifestation. The material point is that a Member of the House is absent, and how long he is likely to be absent. But so far as the language of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford is concerned—namely, that this is a corrupt and wilful falsehood, I say that even the language of the hon. Member for Cork, which is by comparison a temperate statement, does not represent the case correctly. We are told that the hon. Member has been found guilty of taking part in the Plan of Campaign, and we all know, and have known before, that the Plan of Campaign was the hon. Member's own invention. Everyone knows the law, or is presumed to know it, and if the hon. Member did not know it he has not done his duty by himself as a subject. We are told that the Plan of Campaign is a criminal conspiracy, that he has taken part in it, and therefore that he has taken part in a criminal conspiracy. But we are told something more—namely, what that criminal conspiracy is, and because the magistrate has told us this, we are asked to bring the magistrate to the Bar of the House to apologize for what has been called a libel on a Member of the House. But does not the House know that the hon. Member for East Mayo started the Plan of Campaign; do we not know that he gloried in devoting himself to taking part in it; and is the House to be told that a magistrate has written a libel upon him when he says that he has done what he has been constantly boasting of doing? That, I say, is asking the House to take up a ridiculous position. It is quite true that the magistrate has not written the letter in the words of a legal indictment; but I submit that he has told the House in decent, becoming, and perfectly comprehensible language all that the House need to know, and it is, therefore, an abuse of language to call the letter a libel, or corrupt, or even inaccurate.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I thought that the comments which the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) made upon this letter were the most unfortunate comments that it was possible to make; but when the hon. and learned Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling) got up I found out my mistake. I do not think I ever heard a counsel make a case much worse than the hon. and learned Member has done in the case which he was defending. This matter is a very plain one. When a Member of this House is arrested or convicted, notice has to be given of such arrest or conviction. A Member of this House is not to be kept away from it without the House knowing he cause why he is kept away. For that purpose the cause, and the true cause, must be stated in order that the House may know whether there is any justification of the conduct of the tribunal or authority who detains an hon. Member. This was according to the ancient law of Parliament, and in former days the judgment of a Court for Contempt, by which a Member was imprisoned, was not recognized by the House of Commons as a valid ground for his detention, and it was disputed and resisted. I do not mean to say that this law in recent times has not been altered. I put it forward as an illustration. Supposing that the old law was in operation in these days, when a Member was detained, and it was not stated that it was for Contempt, the House would be ousted of its right to know the cause of the detention of the Member. Therefore, it is necessary that the true cause of detention should be stated in order that the House may judge whether or not it should take cognizance of what has been done; and, therefore, to send to Mr. Speaker a letter which does not state any legal cause or cause known to the law on which the House can proceed is, on the face of it, an insult to the House. It is as much as to say—"I have detained the Member, and I will not give you any legal cause whatever for his detention." The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India says—"Oh, it was done out of consideration for your understanding, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and for fear that if the cause had been stated in the statutory language of the Act of Parliament, you might not have understood it; it was couched in popular language in order to meet the feebleness of your apprehension." This is the only defence we have heard offered by the Government for this act. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India said that the letter should be couched in popular language. I think that advice a little dangerous to those unlearned gentlemen who are called Resident Magistrates; and I feel that a more extraordinary comment on the learning of those gentlemen could not have been given. But I will suggest another form of popular language, which will be perfectly familiar to the House, and perfectly satisfactory, no doubt, to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour). Suppose a Resident Magistrate were to write a letter and say—"Mr. Speaker, I have got hold of a Nationalist Member, and I have sent him to prison." That is a very popular way of expressing exactly what is going on in this case. It would be perfectly intelligible even to your intellect, Mr. Deputy Speaker; you would then know exactly what had happened, and the House and the country would also know; while the Resident Magistrate would be spared the trouble of exhibiting his ignorance of the law. In order to save the trouble of writing such a letter, I suggest that there should be a common form lithographed, and that a parcel containing them should be supplied to Resident Magistrates—a dozen or so might be served out, and they might be in this form:—"We have got hold of a number of Nationalist Members; we do not exactly know what we are to try them for, but we have sent them to prison, and I beg to inform you of the fact." Now, that is exactly what has been done in this case, and that is what the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India calls popular language. Hon. Gentlemen on these Benches raise their protest against, what I will call, the unbecoming levity of the hon. Gentleman in adopting this form of defence of the present transaction, which, however, is the only defence that has been offered. There has not been the smallest attempt to offer any serious explanation to the House. I do not impute anything to the Resident Magistrate, except crass ignorance. The Resident Magistrate did not know what it was that Mr. Dillon was sent to prison for; and, therefore, we cannot impute to him any bad motive—[*Cries of* "Order!"]. He is described here as Mr. Dillon.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is usual in this House to refer to an "hon. Member."

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: All I complain of is that the magistrate, in informing the House that he had committed the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) to prison, has not adopted the ordinary form of satisfying the House of Commons that he had sent him to prison for some offence known to the law. It was all very well for the hon. and learned Member for Deptford to say that we knew all about the Plan of Campaign; but it is necessary that the magistrate should state that the hon. Member had committed some offence of a statutory character. But he has not done that, and therefore, not merely with reference to this case alone, but with reference to future cases in which Members of this House may be detained, I think that we ought to take some proceedings to assert that a legal offence should be stated as the cause of imprisonment of a Member of this House.

Sir HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, he was desirous of narrowing the discussion to the only question which ought to be brought to the attention of the House—namely, whether a Breach of Privilege had been committed or not. He did not quite share the views enunciated by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling), and he quite agreed with his right hon. Friend the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) that if the House had had such a flippant communication as he had sketched, stating that a Member had been caught and sent to prison, the writer of such a communication would deserve the greatest possible censure of the House. He (Sir Henry James) would ask the House to take into consideration what it had before it, not from outside sources, but from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy). The House would agree that if they had had from this Resident Magistrate the most technical statement of the offence that he learnt from the hon. and learned Member for North Longford had been committed, he should have sent to the House a communication that "Mr. Dillon had been convicted of taking part in a certain criminal conspiracy—to wit, the Plan of Campaign."

Mr. T. M. HEALY: No, no! According to the report in *The Times*, informations were sworn by District Inspector M'Donnell, before Mr. Kilkelly, R.M., charging Mr. Dillon with taking part in an unlawful assembly at Tallyallen—that was afterwards departed from—and in a criminal conspiracy to induce certain tenants to refuse to pay their rents.

Sir HENRY JAMES said, they were asked to find that a Breach of Privilege had been committed on the statement of a newspaper that there had been a conviction for a particular offence. If the letter of the magistrate had stated that Mr. Dillon had been convicted of taking part in "a certain criminal conspiracy —to wit, the Plan of Campaign," there would have been no Breach of Privilege. All that the magistrate had done was to omit the words "a certain criminal conspiracy—to wit." No doubt, looked at from the narrow view of a lawyer, the letter was couched in slipshod language; but persons who were not lawyers would simply say that the result had been stated briefly without reciting the legal means by which it had been arrived at. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby did not impute any motive to the magistrate, and only charged him with ignorance; but was an error committed in ignorance to be treated as a Breach of Privilege? He was afraid that he and others had often committed Breaches of Privilege in ignorance. Taking the admission that this gentleman had not intended any insult to the House, and that he had to satisfy the Lord Chancellor of his legal knowledge—[Mr. T. M. Healy: No; the Lord Lieutenant]—it was scarcely worth the while of the House to consider what penalty should be imposed upon him for a Breach of Privilege committed in ignorance.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) has come to the assistance of the defence of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) in this matter with his usual gallantry. He has stepped into the breach on behalf of the Government, and endeavoured to induce us to dispose of this matter on the ground that there was no intention or apprehension of giving offence to this House. I do not know whether my right hon. Friend is right in so pronouncing upon this matter; but I believe that I am quite right when I say that in debates on this question, whether it is a Breach of Privilege or not, we have nothing whatever to do with the intention of the person who has committed it. The intention of the person is a matter for after action. The custom of this House is first to decide whether a Breach of Privilege has been committed or not, and subsequently it is the duty of the House to consider whether it has been innocently committed or not—whether it has been an innocent or a guilty Breach of Privilege, and on this head the House takes what course it may in its wisdom deem right. In considering the conduct of Mr. Hamilton, we have to look at the facts by themselves. I do not want to go into the motives that my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) and others think they see in what has taken place. I want to restrain them from looking at any motive, or of presumed innocence, there may be associated with the whole matter at this stage. What are the facts with which we have to deal? It appears to be supposed by the hon. and learned Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling) that there is nothing to be done in a case of this kind except to certify a certain fact to the House, that the House is *minus* one of its own Members, and that when they are put in possession of that information as *functi officio* in the matter, they had nothing to do but to receive it and to record it, and to have nothing whatever to say upon the proceedings that have taken place. I think, Sir, that this is one of the gravest matters in which we can possibly be engaged. I think I see a smile on the face of some of the right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench, but I do not think that I have said anything in my utterance which should have provoked that smile. Sir, there is no question that can come before this House more important than the personal liberty of the Members. If this House is bound to respect the tribunals of this country, then the tribunals of this country are bound to respect this House. When we have had to deal with the Judges of the land in matters of this kind, not one of those Judges failed in the proper discharge of their duty; but we are here dealing with a case where the Judges of a Court have infringed the Privileges of this House, and I want to know, after the smiles I have observed on the Front Government Bench, if the Government does not consider the question raised of the highest Constitutional importance that this House should be made aware of what has happened to one of its Members according to legitimate authority, and whether the powers vested in the magistrates by the law have been properly exercised, and how can the House know that unless the Judge states a legal offence? This, I say, is a matter of the highest Constitutional importance. I do not say that the House ought now to enter into the merits as to whether the magistrates were actuated by right motives or not; but what we have a right to know is, whether the magistrate has acted within the limits of the law. My right hon. and learned Friend (Sir Henry James), with his boundless ingenuity, has, hypothetically, patched up a form of expression which the magistrate might have used, but which, as he says, the magistrate has not used.

SIR HENRY JAMES: What I said was that the magistrate ought to have used certain words which I stated. What I did say was, that if he had used certain language which I repeated, he would have accurately described what took place before his tribunal.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I confess that when I heard that from my right hon. and learned Friend I did not then estimate the high importance of it; but I think the way in which the magistrate has communicated with this House is one of the most extraordinary, strange, and unnatural that it has ever before experienced. But my right hon. and learned Friend says that the magistrate has omitted only four or five words, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman asks whether we were going to find that there was a Breach of Privilege because of the omission of those words; but it so happens that those are the only words that are in the slightest degree material. It is the duty of the House to know that the magistrate has been acting within the law; but the magistrate left out the words that would afford the information, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman said—"I will supply them." What the House desires to know is why the hon. Member has been prevented from attending in his place in this House. If it is necessary that the intimation should be made to the House, we ought to know that the ground of the conviction is a legal offence; but no statutory knowledge, no judicial knowledge of the legal offence on which the hon. Member for East Mayo has been detained, is conveyed by the magistrate's letter. It is the duty of the House to maintain with strictness the regularity of these proceedings; and unless it does so it will be better that these letters should be discontinued altogether, for they will become a mockery if they are to convey to the House, in what is called popular language, only what the newspapers have already conveyed. We want to be assured of the legality and the regularity of the proceeding. This is the purpose of the letter. If the letter does not convey such an assurance, the writer of the letter, however innocent, seriously failed in his duty to the House, and it is the duty of the House to take note of the Breach of Privilege; and if inquiry into the circumstances justifies the conclusion of innocence, which has been prematurely assumed, the honour of the House will have been vindicated. I so regard it.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The hon. and learned Member for York (Mr. Lockwood) in his desire to place this question clearly before the House, asked what would be said by those outside the House when they read this debate. I think, Sir, that those outside will say that a great many and very learned and distinguished Gentlemen have been occupied in discussing a very trivial and frivolous question; that the storm which has been raging has been a storm in a tea-cup, and that it is really difficult to believe that the avowed motive of the debate to which we had been listening is the real one. It will also, perhaps, be said that the House by this debate has shown no very great anxiety to approach the Business which appears next on the Paper. They will probably say, when they read the speech of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) and the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), and, of course, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), that the hon. Members opposite could not lose an opportunity—however ill-chosen that opportunity might be—for the purpose of attacking a Resident Magistrate. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford has taken the opportunity which this debate allowed him to use language not only of extreme violence but absolutely and totally without foundation with regard to this magistrate (Mr. Hamilton). He has attacked his morals and attacked his learning. There is not the slightest ground, as far as I know, for believing that this gentleman acted otherwise than in the most perfect good faith. As to his learning and his qualifications, and as to the Lord Lieutenant testifying to them, I do not say much, but what I say will be sufficient—namely, that if any Lord Lieutenant is to be attacked on the question at all, that Lord Lieutenant is Lord Spencer. For not only was the appointment of Mr. Hamilton one of Lord Spencer's appointments, but it was Lord Spencer who declared that he had adequate legal knowledge. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby gave us his view of the object with which these letters are written to the House. They are written to the House in order that the House may become cognizant of the reason why it is deprived of the service of one of its own Members. That is the reason, and I apprehend that every letter couched in respectful language giving the House that knowledge is a proper letter. It may not satisfy the appetite for technicalities which consumes the legal mind, but it may well satisfy the lay mind; and I would ask, have those who have made a most violent attack on the magistrate concerned maintained for a moment that he has misled the House with regard to the detention of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon)? Can anybody, even under the influence of the violent passions which the very name of Resident Magistrate excites in the breasts of hon. Members below the Gangway, maintain for a moment that any deception has been practised on the House of Commons by this gentleman? I humbly admit that I approach this question as a layman, and without that refinement of technicality which the right hon. Gentleman opposite regards as of so much importance. Surely when you say that a man is convicted of taking part in the Plan of Campaign, if it be admitted that the Plan of Campaign is an illegal conspiracy, do you not assert by implication that he has been proved to be guilty of an illegal proceeding? If it be true that the Plan of Campaign is an illegal conspiracy, for the magistrate to state that the hon. Member has been convicted of taking part in the Plan of Campaign is to say that he has convicted him of illegal conspiracy. The Plan of Campaign has been distinctly stated by more than one Judge of the High Court to be illegal without qualification or drawback, and what has been stated by a Judge of the High Court in

Ireland may surely be stated by a Resident Magistrate and accepted by this House. This debate is a happy illustration of the kind of language which hon. Gentlemen opposite are prepared to use with the very smallest provocation when they think any political capital can be made out of it. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford thinks he has a good opportunity of attacking a Resident Magistrate and myself because a political opponent has been sentenced to imprisonment. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Exactly; in those cheers lies the explanation of the debate. It is not the dignity of this House, it is not the Privilege of this House which hon. Gentlemen have at heart. They are animated, not by love of this House, but by a hatred of the tribunals in Ireland. That is the motive and that is the mainspring of the whole debate; and I think it is really wasting the time of the House to pretend for one instant that any great question involving the dignity or Privilege of this Assembly is concerned in the fact that one Resident Magistrate has, in perfectly clear language, but not in language technical enough to suit lawyers, explained to Mr. Speaker that the hon. Member for East Mayo has been sentenced to imprisonment.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had, as usual, infused into the debate a spirit of bitterness. [*Ministerial cries of* "Oh!"] Yes; he had deliberately imputed the lowest motives to his opponents that he could possibly find; he had said that the public would see that hon. Members below the Gangway and right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench had been actuated solely by a desire to make a little political capital, and were determined to lose no opportunity of discrediting Resident Magistrates. He (Mr. John Morley) maintained that they ought to lose no opportunity of bringing before the scrutiny of the House every act committed by every Resident Magistrate done in pursuance of the Coercion Act of last year. If he could be amazed at anything after the circumstances of the passing of that Act, he was amazed that hon. Members opposite should think that anything relating to the arrest of a Member of that House could be a light and frivolous matter, and could only be made the subject of debate by hon. Members from frivolous, vexatious, and partizan motives. The right hon. Gentleman had attempted to make the point which he was always attempting to make, in referring them to something that had been done by Lord Spencer. The right hon. Gentleman had said that it was Lord Spencer who appointed Mr. Hamilton. He (Mr. John Morley) was prepared to believe that that was perfectly true; but it was not the point. Lord Spencer might have appointed Mr. Hamilton; but his selection was for duties very different to his present course of action, for his action now was action taken by virtue of what the present Lord Lieutenant had done pursuant to a clause in the Coercion Act of last year. The question was not the original appointment of Mr. Hamilton, but the selection of that gentleman by the Lord Lieutenant as a person of whose legal knowledge and competency to administer the Crimes Act he was satisfied.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that his point was that Lord Spencer had certified to Mr. Hamilton's legal knowledge.

MR. JOHN MORLEY said, he must be allowed to question whether Lord Spencer had certified to the legal competency of Mr. Hamilton in respect of a legal subject so delicate and intricate as conspiracy. Conspiracy was not an offence under the Act of 1882, and, therefore, the allusion of the right hon. Gentleman to Lord Spencer had no bearing whatever upon Mr. Hamilton's present position. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Well, the truth was, that the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen behind him, who were so ready to make light of these arrests of Members, were only showing the same arbitrary and reckless disregard of the spirit of legality which they showed at every stage of the discussion of the Act of last year. If the case were that of an English Member the Party opposite would be as earnest as any of those on his (Mr. John Morley's) side of the House in taking care that every formality and technicality was scrupulously followed. But their views regarding hon. Members from Ireland were well known. Anything was good enough for an Irish Member. It was against that view that he and his hon. Friends protested, and they would lose no opportunity, however light and frivolous hon. Members opposite might regard it, of insisting that every formality should be strictly and scrupulously respected. It was clear that in the present instance, the formalities had not been observed. It was not even contended by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) that the magistrate had used the proper language. He had not done what he ought to have done, and had therefore been guilty of a breach of the Privileges of this House. The circumstances were so serious—[*Laughter*]—the circumstances of the arrest of any of their Colleagues were so serious, that they ought to let no opportunity ever pass without insisting that the letter of the law and the usual practice should be rigidly and strictly observed.

Sir HENRY JAMES: I desire to make one correction of my statement. I spoke from memory when I said that the legal knowledge of the Resident Magistrate was certified by the Lord Chancellor. I find on reference to the Act, subsequent to that which I referred to, that this rested with the Lord Lieutenant. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford was, therefore, correct in saying that it was not as I stated.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: The slight explanation we have just heard from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) is an instructive commentary on his appearance in this debate. The right hon. Gentleman got up with the air which he always assumes in speaking on affairs of Ireland; he contradicted the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), and his ignorance is exposed. The House, however, will not expect that the exposure of the right hon. Gentleman's ignorance will lead to any diminution of that self-confidence with which he always speaks on Irish affairs. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, if he has not succeeded in getting a portion of that programme carried out—which, in a moment of singular and unexpected frankness, he expressed with regard to Mr. Blunt,—has at least succeeded in getting the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) sent to jail, and, therefore, he has an opportunity in carrying out that Christian, gentle, and courteous policy of torturing, but not killing a Member of the Nationalist Party. On one occasion I endeavoured at Question time to draw the attention of the House to the fact that Mr. Speaker would not allow popular terms to be employed in Questions addressed to Ministers in the House of Commons. A Member on these Benches put a Question on the Paper relating to the Crimes Act which was referred to as the Coercion Act. Attention was called to the fact, and the Speaker ruled that the term "Coercion Act," although popular, was not a term that ought to be used in this House. Why should not we apply the same test to a letter sent to the Speaker by a Resident Magistrate as we apply to a Question addressed to a Minister in the House of Commons? If the Speaker rules it to be necessary not to employ popular language in a Question addressed to Ministers, *à fortiori*, it is necessary in Reports made by Resident Magistrates to the House with regard to the conviction of Members of Parliament. The hon. and learned Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling) is in the habit of giving the House legal disquisitions. I rejoice at the fact, but the more I hear these disquisitions the more I wonder how the constituency which he represents could have chosen him in preference to Mr. Blunt. The hon. and learned Member for Deptford laid it down that the terms of the report did not matter, and that the only thing that the House wanted to know is that the Member was convicted.

Mr. DARLING: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. Those are neither my words, nor do they represent the sense of what I said.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I should like to know what was the sense of the hon. and learned Member. But I think it is in the knowledge of the House that I represent the meaning of the hon. and learned Member with sufficient accuracy, when I say that his point was, whether the hon. Member for East Mayo was in prison or not. This admirably sums up the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland that the charge is immaterial on which the Resident Magistrate has convicted the hon. Member. The opinion of the magistrate is not the question under discussion. We have first to decide whether or not he has given an accurate representation of the case. If we decide that he has not done this, we can by-and-bye summon him to the House and compel him to make an apology. But I say there is a corrupt intention in sending this letter. Why does he use the term Plan of Campaign? Because he knows that it is a term discredited in this country, and that it has been discredited by the Holy Office, which might, I think, be better employed than in interfering in the political affairs of Ireland, an intervention which will be repulsed by Irish Members with emphasis. We know that the words Plan of Campaign are what Jeremy Bentham would call an odious term. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) said the letter would have been all right if the words "criminal conspiracy" had been put in after the words "Plan of Campaign." Why did the Resident Magistrate not say that the hon. Member for East Mayo was convicted of a criminal conspiracy to induce people in Ireland not to pay rent? It was because if he had used the words "criminal conspiracy to induce people not to fulfil their contracts," he would show that a man can be convicted in Ireland for doing that which a man in England is entitled to do. There is no such thing in England as criminal conspiracy of this kind. I will go further, and say that under the Trades Union Acts an artizan is distinctly entitled to induce others to break their contract; he is safeguarded in doing so, and that is the reason why Mr. Hamilton used the words "Plan of Campaign" instead of the legal term "criminal conspiracy to induce people to break their legal contracts." The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has said that Mr. Hamilton was appointed by Lord Spencer. I am not prepared to say that Lord Spencer did not make many appointments in Ireland that were not very good; but surely it is one thing to appoint a man as Resident Magistrate for a particular kind of work, and another to appoint him for work of an entirely different character. If he appointed a Resident Magistrate to do the humble work of Petty Sessions, is it to be held that he is competent to go into a Court of Equity and decide questions of a very delicate kind? Why did not the right hon. Gentleman inform the House that under the Coercion Act which Lord Spencer administered Mr. Hamilton could not have tried this case? Mr. Hamilton was employed on Coercion work by Lord Spencer, but in the Crimes Act of 1872 there was no conspiracy section. The only section analogous was that which dealt with intimidation, which has nothing to do with conspiracy; and because Mr. Hamilton was employed by Lord Spencer for this comparatively trivial work of trying Coercion offences, we are to be told that he was also employed by Lord Spencer in trying important and delicate questions of criminal conspiracy. This is only another specimen of the way in which these affairs are conducted in Ireland. I find that in the enactment, which the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury did not take the trouble to peruse, it is provided that some of the Resident Magistrates are to be certified as competent by the Lord Lieutenant and others by the Lord Chancellor. Mr. Hamilton has been certified to be legally competent by the Lord Lieutenant, but not so by the Lord Chancellor. This is a remarkable circumstance, because the Marquess of Londonderry, although probably qualified to give his judgment on a racecourse, is wholly incapable of forming any opinion as to a man's legal knowledge. Then, he asked, why was Mr. Hamilton sent to try this most delicate and most important case; delicate because of the nature of the charge involved, and important because of the person brought before the Court. Why was Mr. Hamilton, who was an uncertificated lawyer, if he might use the phrase, but who, possibly, was a certificated judge of horseflesh — why was this man sent to try the case of the hon. Member for East Mayo? Mr. Harrington, the counsel for the hon. Member for East Mayo, asked in Court which of the Resident Magistrates he was to regard as legally qualified to try the case, and Mr. Hamilton replied that he was to be regarded as legally qualified. What were his qualifications; he was Lieutenant of the Revenue Police, and, secondly, he was a Constabulary Officer, but he certainly never passed a matriculation examination. This was a man legally qualified to try one of the most trusted and important Members of the

Irish Party. Why was he sent there at all; not because of his legal knowledge, because he had none; not because of his impartiality, because he had none; but he was sent there by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary because he was thought the best instrument to do the dirty work of the Government.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 189; Noes 250: Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 106.)

QUESTIONS.

—o—

ARMY (INDIA) — THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS—CAMP FOLLOWERS.

MR. STANSFELD (Halifax): I wish, Sir, to ask the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he is now prepared to make the statement he promised as to the recent correspondence with the Government of India on the subject of the Contagious Diseases Acts?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): (1.) In consequence of the action taken by the Secretary of State upon the Questions put to him in "another place" last year by the Lord Bishop of Lichfield, what is known as the regimental system has been absolutely stopped. The Commander in Chief has prohibited women from accompanying regiments on march or to camp, and also from residing in regimental bazaars. (2.) The administration of the Contagious Diseases Act in Bombay, Madras and Bassein, the only places in which it is in force, has been suspended by the Government of India under a power contained in the Act. (3.) The Government of India is now engaged in a revision of the Regulations made for preventing the spread of venereal disease in cantonments, under Section 27 of Act III. of 1880; and a despatch is going out to India from the Secretary of State in Council which will prohibit the compulsory examination of women, and the making of any regulations which can be justly construed into a legalization of prostitution.

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS.

In reply to Dr. CLARK (Caithness),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, that whether he should move the adjournment of the House on Thursday or Friday depended entirely on the pleasure of the House. If it were to be on Thursday, it must be understood that the Government Business would be disposed of, and that the Motion would be made at a late hour, and agreed to without discussion. If not, and the Motion was to be made on Friday, it would be necessary to have a Morning Sitting on that day. It would be necessary to take a Vote on Account before the adjournment on Thursday.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY TO THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND BILL.

(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Jackson.*)

[BILL 201.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Office not to disqualify for seat in Parliament).

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, he rose to move an Amendment to this clause, which empowered the Treasury and the Lord Lieutenant to provide a salary for the additional Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. He objected altogether to the proposal to establish and endow what he believed to be an useless and unnecessary Office, and he proposed to strike out what he regarded as the essential words of the clause, the words "to be" in order to raise the whole question again, as he considered the vote taken on the second reading was not taken on the merits, or perhaps, he should say, on the demerits of the Bill, but was taken rather for personal reasons on account of the personal and political controversial points which were introduced into the discussion. This was not the first time that a Bill had been dealt with in this way. A Bill of a very similar character was brought in in 1884, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). In that Bill there were proposed annuities to Lord Wolseley and Lord Alcester. The House then allowed the second reading of the Bill to take place, because they thought it would be a disparagement to those officers if the

Bill were opposed on the second reading, but immediately the Bill was set down for Committee the hon. Member for Staffordshire put down an Amendment to strike out the word "annuity" and thus raised the whole principle of the Bill. The Government opposed the Amendment for some time, but afterwards finding that the feeling in the House was strongly against the measure, they withdrew it. He did not believe there was ever a stronger feeling on all sides of the House against a Bill than there was against this Bill. He believed that nearly every Member sitting on the Opposition side of the House looked upon it as a most objectionable measure from every possible point of view, and he did not believe there was the slightest support of it on the other side, but that hon. Members opposite would gladly have got rid of it long ago if they could have done so. What was the case for this new Office? Did the Lord Lieutenant require any further assistance in Dublin? What were the duties which the Lord Lieutenant and the Attorney General for Ireland had to do which they could not now perform? These gentlemen were always resident in Dublin, neither of them had any Parliamentary work, they had not to take journeys to and from London, they had no Cabinet meetings to attend, they had the whole of their time at their own disposal to do the work of their respective offices. The present Lord Lieutenant was in a much better position than his Predecessor, because the Lord Chancellor of Ireland was a Cabinet Minister, and he could, with all the responsibility of a Cabinet Minister, not only assist in the Government of Ireland, but he could go over to London and move Bills, or take part in the debates in the House of Lords. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) told them that he required assistance in that House. Now, he (Mr. Heneage) believed that no Irish Secretary was ever in a better position than his right hon. Friend. The right hon. Gentleman had very little to trouble him in Dublin; indeed, he hardly ever went there.

The CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman's Amendment upon the Paper does not appear to prevent the creation of the Office, but provides that the salary shall be paid out of moneys already provided by Parliament for the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary. If that is the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment, he must direct his argument to it.

Mr. HENEAGE said, that, of course, he would bow to the Chairman's ruling; but he imagined that the question before them was whether the Under Secretary was worth the salary which was proposed to be given to him. He maintained that the country would derive no benefit whatever from the payment of this salary. He proposed to show that there would be no work for the Under Secretary to do; because those Ministers who were already doing the work, or ought to be doing the work were perfectly competent to perform that work. If that line of argument were out of Order, of course he must depart from it; but he did not see how it was possible for him to prove that the salary was not required unless he proved that the Office itself, to a certain extent, was not required also. He asserted that the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not only in as good a position to perform his duties, but in a better position to do that than any of his Predecessors; because he had very few journeys to Ireland to undertake in comparison, for instance, with the late Mr. Forster; because he had no heavy legislation on hand, and because the hours during which the House sat had been considerably curtailed.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I must point out to the right hon. Gentleman that he must speak to his own Amendment. He proposes that the salary of the Parliamentary Under Secretary shall be taken out of the salaries of the Lord Lieutenant, and the Chief Secretary. It is not pertinent to that to argue the question of the creation of the Office.

Mr. HENEAGE said, that he was in great difficulty as to how to argue the question; because, if he could not argue that there was no work for the Under Secretary to do, he must admit that every man was worthy of his hire, and so he was bound to admit that the salary ought to be paid. Perhaps the best course he could take under the circumstances was not to move the present Amendment, but to wait until the end of the clause, and move to omit the clause entirely.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, that he agreed with the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Heneage), and he felt justified in making a proposal to him, which was that he should stick to his Amendment. As he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) understood the ruling of the Chairman, they were not entitled to discuss the creation of the Office of Under Secretary, but they were entitled to discuss whether the Under Secretary should be paid by means of a new demand upon the Exchequer, or paid out of funds already at the disposal of the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary. He would take up the argument which the right hon. Gentleman had endeavoured to enforce upon the House—namely, that the present Chief Secretary for Ireland was so sparsely employed as compared with his Predecessors that it would only be decorous in him, not to say, generous, if he gave up so much of his salary as would pay for the employment of the new Under Secretary. He had said that the present Chief Secretary was less employed than previous Chief Secretaries, but he did not intend to make any allusion to the tenure of Office of his right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) who probably would take part in the debate, and would be better able to speak concerning his own period of Office. But he would point to the example of the late Mr. Forster; he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was a very fierce opponent of the late Mr. Forster, but at the same time he did not think there was ever a public servant more devoted to the discharge of his duties. What did the late Mr. Forster do compared with the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour)? He was here at Question time almost invariably, and the Questions then were very different to the Questions now; in those days there were 10 Questions put to every one asked now. The right hon. Gentleman had a much more disturbed Ireland to deal with than the present Chief Secretary, and he was interrogated constantly as to the administration of the Coercion Act then in force; whereas the present Chief Secretary was shocked if even a couple of hours were occupied, as there were to-night, in discussing the merits or demerits of the imprisonment of a Member of Parliament. The late Mr. Forster attended to business in Ireland; but one of the most remarkable things about the present Chief Secretary was the absolute want of attention on his part to the duties of his Office in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman never took an opportunity of going to Ireland in order to remove a certain small proportion of that gigantic ignorance under which he laboured. He did not say that the right hon. Gentleman should go to Ireland while the House was sitting, though he might remark that the late Mr. Forster went no less than 13 times in the course of half a single Session, and in spite of the enormous work he had to do in the House of Commons. But the right hon. Gentleman opposite did not go to Ireland during the Session, neither did he go to Ireland during the vacation. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) saw it announced in the public Press that the right hon. Gentleman was going to spend the forthcoming vacation by the sounding sea. That might be a very pleasant way of spending the vacation to the right hon. Gentleman, but he thought that the right hon. Gentleman would be better discharging his duties if he would go to the country over which he was at the present moment almost as supreme as if he were appointed by the Russian Autocrat as Governor General. The right hon. Gentleman received a very large salary indeed; £5,000 a-year was an extremely good salary, and it was a salary which very few other Ministers of the Government got. Everybody knew that £5,000 a-year was confined to one or two Secretaries, like the Colonial Secretary, the Foreign Secretary, and the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Under these circumstances, he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) thought the right hon. Gentleman might very well afford to cut out of his salary £1,000 or £1,200 a-year for the benefit of the Gentleman who discharged his duties; duties which were discharged by all his Predecessors, but which he was either too lazy or too unwilling to discharge himself. If the right hon. Gentleman were a poor man, he could quite understand his opposing this Amendment, but the right hon. Gentleman was well known to be a man of wealth.—[Mr. A. J. Balfour dissented.]—Well, he would regard the right hon. Gentleman's income as establishing the title of wealthy; but, perhaps, his (Mr. T. P. O'Connor's) tastes were humbler and more modest than the right hon. Gentleman's, certainly he would very willingly exchange incomes with the right hon. Gentleman. But his point was that the right hon. Gentleman was what modest people regarded as a man of considerable substance and wealth; he was also, so at least his friends were always saying, a patriot; being a patriot he could afford to do all his work for nothing. But he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) did not make so heroic a proposal as that, but he thought that under all the circumstances, they might confidently look forward to the right hon. Gentleman following into the Lobby the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage).

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 7, after the word "moneys," to leave out the word "to be," and insert the word "now."—(*Mr. Heneage.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'to be' stand part of the Clause."

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he did not propose to follow the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T.P. O'Connor) in his strictures upon the excessive salary paid to the Chief Secretary. To do so would perhaps be unbecoming in one who had been Chief Secretary, but he intended to vote for the Amendment of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Heneage). The salary of the Chief Secretary did not appear to be at all in excess when they considered the harassing duties the Chief Secretary had to perform, and when they considered the conditions under which he lived in London or in Dublin. But there was an officer of the Irish Establishment whose salary and allowances were well capable of diminution if the creation of another Office required remuneration. The salary and allowances of the Lord Lieutenant were, no doubt, on a scale entirely out of proportion either to the duties of the Office or to the condition in the matter of wealth of the country over which he governed. It had always seemed to him (Mr. John Morley) to be one of the most extraordinary things connected with the Government of Ireland that the Lord Lieutenant should be remunerated as if he were ruling one of the richest, instead of one of the poorest, parts of the dominions af the Crown. Therefore, he was fully of opinion that if it were necessary to create this Office, and into that question the Chairman would not allow them to enter—if it were necessary to create this Office, the emoluments which the Parliamentary Under Secretary might claim ought to be provided from the resources already at the disposal of the Lord Lieutenant. The expensiveness of the Irish Establishment was one of the scandals of our Administration. In the judicial Establishment, and in nearly every branch of the Irish Establishment the expenditure was enormously in advance of the requirements of the Public Service; and it was, it appeared to him, an aggravation of the existing scandal, which had for many years been recognized on both sides of the House—it was an aggravation of that scandal to create a new Office, and to apportion to it a salary. He would be out of Order in referring to another Bill which they were to discuss, probably at a later period of the evening, but they could not forget that by that other Bill a still further aggravation was to be made of the charges of the Irish Establishment. There were two Bills before them to-night, each of which very largely, very considerably, added to an expenditure which was already admitted to be, as he had said, of the nature of an administrative scandal. As they could not secure the rejection of the proposal for creating this Office, the next best thing they could do was to vote for the proposal which would at least protect the public Treasury from an increased demand upon it for the remuneration of a public officer, whom they regarded as entirely superfluous and unnecessary. That being his view, he should certainly support the Amendment of his right hon. Friend.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, that as he understood the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, he approved of one-half of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) and not of the other half. The Amendment consisted of two parts, one of which proposed to mulct the salary of the Chief Secretary, and the other to mulct the salary of the

Lord Lieutenant for the purpose of providing the salary for the new official.

Mr. HENEAGE said, that what he proposed was, that the salary should be paid out of monies now provided by Parliament for the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary. Therefore, the salary of the new Office might be taken out of either one or the other, or both.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Heneage) proposed to cut down the salary of both the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary, but he understood the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. J. Morley) to restrict this mulcting process to the salary of the Lord Lieutenant. The Amendment, however, would not carry that out, because the salary of the Lord Lieutenant was not voted by Parliament, but came out of the Consolidated Fund. The Amendment, therefore, would require to be entirely recast, in order to carry out the object which the right hon. Gentleman who moved it had in view. He would, however, leave that point to go to the substance of the Amendment. Now, the salary proposed to be given to the Under Secretary was not an addition, as some Members supposed, of £1,500 a-year to the cost of the Irish Establishment. The new burden thrown on the Irish Establishment would be £300 a-year, because they took power, in a latter clause of the Bill, to abolish an Office which now cost £1,200 a-year. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne went on to say that the cost of the Irish Administration had long been a scandal. Let him (Mr. A. J. Balfour) remind the House that if the cost of the Irish Establishment was at one time excessive, or was even now excessive, it was far less excessive than it used to be. In other words, the amount of work thrown on the Irish Administration was enormously greater now than it was at the time when these salaries were fixed. He apprehended that no one would doubt that. There was a well known story told of Mr. Horsman, who was Chief Secretary about 30 years ago, but never found it necessary to go to the office at all. He declared he had nothing to do in his office, and lounged down to the House, and had, practically, an extremely easy time of it. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was not sure that at that time the salary was not even greater than at present; at any rate, it was higher in the earlier part of the century. No one would say that the Chief Secretary was not, at that moment, a tolerably hard worked official. Of course, he could not please the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor). The hon. Gentleman was unhappy when he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was in London, and he was unhappy when he was in Ireland; when he was here the hon. Gentleman regretted that he was not in Ireland; and when he was in Ireland the hon. Gentleman regretted he was not in England. He was sorry he could not oblige the hon. Gentleman by being in the two places at one time; but he did not think that the hon. Gentleman, even in his higher flights of eloquence, would go the length of saying that the Office of Chief Secretary was not a tolerably hard worked Office. Leaving the question of the salary of the Chief Secretary, and leaving the general question of the cost thrown on the Irish Establishment, which he had shown was extremely small—namely, £300 a-year, he came to the main point urged by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, which was that the new salary should be taken out of the salary of the Lord Lieutenant. The right hon. Gentleman said, was that not an enormous salary, considering the Lord Lieutenant was Governor of a poor country. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) frankly admitted—he had never concealed it from the House before, and he did not conceal it now—that the whole question of the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland was one which might at the proper time require revision. He was far from considering that that was a closed question; but let not the House make a mistake—it was rather a big question, and they could not at one stroke of the pen abolish the Lord Lieutenant's Office. It was an immemorial Office, around which there had collected an incrustation of duties, social and otherwise, which they could not destroy at a blow without making a great social revolution—well, he would not say a great social revolution, but a social revolution on a scale which made anyone hesitate before he engaged in it.

The right hon. Gentleman described the salary of the Lord Lieutenant as an excessive and an enormous salary, but it entirely depended upon what they expected the Lord Lieutenant to do. If they expected the Lord Lieutenant to do that which all Lord Lieutenants had always done up to this time, as Lord Aberdeen and Lord Spencer had done—he would not go through the long list of distinguished men who had filled the Office—then he contended that the salary evidently was not an excessive one, but was an extremely meagre salary. Everyone who knew the facts knew that the Lord Lieutenant was not only out of pocket, but enormously out of pocket always. [An hon. MEMBER: What about Lord Abercorn?] He did not believe there had ever been a Lord Lieutenant, certainly there had not been one within his experience, who did not lose money by being Lord Lieutenant. Much as the salary of £20,000 might appear to the Committee, and much as the salary, no doubt, was, he was sure there had been many years in which the Lord Lieutenant had spent out of pocket another £20,000. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Yes, he did not exaggerate in the least when he said that. Therefore, when the right hon Gentleman opposite (Mr. John Morley) said that the Lord Lieutenant had too big a salary, he was pointing to a revolution which would abolish the Lord Lieutenant as they had always known him. This Bill was a much humbler measure, and he asked the House to reject the Amendment, not because they thought that the Lord Lieutenant's Office must necessarily for ever be kept up at its present scale, but because the Bill did not deal with that Office, and the idea of getting £300 a-year out of the salary of the Lord Lieutenant in order to supply the deficiency caused by the salary of the Under Secretary seemed to be tinkering with a question which ought to be dealt with in a very different spirit by the House. He hoped the House would reject the Amendment. He thought he had given reasons, not reasons wholly undeserving of consideration, why they should reject the Amendment and refuse in this Bill to touch the question of the Lord Lieutenant's salary, which was not voted by Parliament and which was a charge on the Consolidated Fund.

MR. JOHN MORLEY said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had said that this Bill would make an addition of £300 a-year. That would be true but for the latter part of the 2nd clause. The assumption of the right hon. Gentleman was that one of the members of the Local Government Board would disappear, and that the Parliamentary Under Secretary would do his work.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he ought to have stated that the Bill would make no permanent addition.

MR. JOHN MORLEY said, that the Government took power to employ an Inspector, from time to time, if it should be necessary, and they said that such an Inspector should be paid an allowance or salary such as the Lord Lieutenant might think fit. Unless he was very uncharitable to Dublin Castle, that Inspector would be very soon found to be wanted, and that allowance or additional salary would be very soon proposed by the Lord Lieutenant, and assented to by the Treasury. He could not assent to the statement that there would only be the difference between £1,500 and £1,200 a-year.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) thought the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) had made a very sensible and practical proposal to the Government. He was very glad the right hon. Gentleman had stuck to his guns, though he had been disappointed in the delivery of his speech, with which he intended to support the proposal. The object of the Amendment was to provide that the salary of the Under Secretary should be paid out of the moneys provided by Parliament, or out of the salary fixed for the Lord Lieutenant, which was at the present time a charge on the Consolidated Fund. He should hope to show that, in his and his hon. Friend's opinion, at least, there was ample ground for the Amendment proposed, and ample room enough, both in the salaries and allowances of the Lord Lieutenant and of the Chief Secretary, to take out the little slice wanted for the patronizing job of the Government in creating an Office for their pet, the forthcoming

Under Secretary for Ireland. The Lord Lieutenant received a salary of £20,000 a-year. He supposed it would not be very generous to say the Lord Lieutenant did not earn such a salary; but, certainly, to their mind, he did not, even having regard to the ornamental dignity supposed to be attached to the Office of the Lord Lieutenant. They believed that a salary far less than £20,000 a-year would meet the exigencies of the case. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had remarked that Lord Lieutenants spent in entertainments £20,000 a-year in addition to their salary. Granting the truth of that statement, whom did the Lord Lieutenant entertain and feast? Let anyone look at the list of those who partook of the Lord Lieutenant's entertainment and hospitality, and they would find that they were such men as Mr. Hamilton, who had sent the Speaker a letter that evening, and men of that class who were known for their antipathy to the Irish people. Something had been said by the Chief Secretary in regard to the duties of the Lord Lieutenant. In mercy's name they ought to talk common sense when talking of these things. What duty had the Lord Lieutenant to perform? He had merely to register whatever was the policy which the Chief Secretary for Ireland wished to put forward as the mouthpiece of the Cabinet. They never heard of the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland having an opinion of his own in regard to the government of Ireland. His most onerous duties seemed to be to engage in the game of golf, or to indulge in that manly English game of cricket, or to have his photograph taken in one of the principal streets of the City of Dublin. If the Government thought such duties worth £20,000 a-year, he (Mr. Harrington) and his hon. Friends did not; they believed that out of that £20,000 a slice might be taken for the salary of the Office which it was now wished to create. He could not now enter into the question of the propriety of creating that Office, that had been justly ruled out of Order; but he might say that they were totally against the creation of the Office, and that was the justification of the demand that the salary of the new official should not be made a burden upon the taxpayer. It was said that the Lord Lieutenant lost by the very lavish hospitality he indulged in. He (Mr. Harrington) did not think that the history of the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland would bear that statement out. But even if the present Lord Lieutenant had dispensed something over his £20,000, he received dignity and status and office in return for it, and could save in his rents. It was a well-known fact in the North of Ireland that the proclamation of the Plan of Campaign in Ireland was issued the very day after the present Lord Lieutenant's tenants had announced their intention of combining for the protection of themselves, and that was a scandalous fact that might claim the serious attention of the Executive Officers of the Irish Government. Now, turning to the Chief Secretary, they found that he had a salary of £4,225 a-year. They considered that the duties of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Balfour) were not very serious duties, but that such as they were, they were to be considerably lightened by the Bill. What did the Bill propose to do? It was proposed by the Bill to give power to transfer from the Chief Secretary to the Under Secretary the privilege of signing certain documents, and performing certain functions which would altogether lighten the burdens of the duties of the Chief Secretary. It was very hard to dissociate the two lines of argument, one of which was not in Order, and which applied to the nesessity or non-necessity for the introduction of this measure, and the other which applied to the payment of the salary of the Office being made out of the moneys provided for the Chief Secretary and the Lord Lieutenant, and for the reason, as he had said, that provision was made in the clauses of the Bill for the transference of duties to the Under Secretary which were now discharged by the Chief Secretary himself. He could not discuss the propriety of having those duties discharged by one whom he must describe as an underling, though he said that with all respect. As the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was to retain his salary intact, he ought te continue to perform his duties. Certainly, it was only fair to propose that if any of his duties were transferred or delegated to a new officer, that officer should fairly, in return for the functions he performed, receive a portion of the salary of the Chief Secretary, instead of the payment made to him being made a charge upon the public funds. What was the argument the right hon. Gentleman advanced that night? It was the argument always advanced in respect of Irish appointments. The Chief Secretary had said the Office would only entail a trifling additional expense. That argument had been time out of mind advanced in favour of offices created for those place hunters, who clung on a parasitical way to every Party in power. In the case of the appointment of Resident Magistrates, even of Judges, and of every other kind of official, the same argument had been used. New office after new office had been created. Day after day they had added to the expenditure of the Government of Ireland until the cost of that Government had become a scandal. Many items might be carved out of the Chief Secretary's office, which, put together, would make a very decent salary for the Parliamentary Under Secretary. Besides the Chief Secretary there was an Under Secretary, who was paid £2,500 a-year. There was the Assistant Under Secretary, Clerk of the Council, and Deputy Keeper of the Privy Seal, and he received £1,350 a-year. There were several principal clerks, and they got £1,825 a-year. There were first clerks and second clerks; and there was a washerwoman who was paid £15 a-year. He did not object to attention being paid to the sanitary arrangements of the office, because the office really required a lot of washing and renovating. There were allowances for cost of lighting, &c., and there were special allowances for the cost of the Chief Secretary's alternate residence in England and Ireland. He ventured to say that any man who had in his mind the intention of advancing economic reform in this House would support this Amendment, and he very much regretted that, on an occasion of this kind, when economy was in question, those hon. and right hon. Members, who from time to time asked such stinging Questions here, either about the pay of a sergeant in the Army, or some small matter of that kind, had not thought it worth while to attend to support the arguments of the Irish Members. He regretted very much that those pioneers of reform to whom he had referred were not in their places to support the proposal of that reform which was now under discussion. I was a scandal to the people of Ireland to ask Parliament for this peddling sum, when they paid the Lord Lieutenant £20,000 for indulging in the recreation of cricket, or walking down to the establishment of some particular photographer in Dublin, and getting his picture taken for the purpose of sending it round as that of a landlord who had "protected himself" from the Plan of Campaign, by getting it proclaimed throughout Ireland at the very time that his tenantry had adopted it. It was no wonder to him (Mr. E. Harrington) that the Government from time to time thought it their duty to bring forward such measures as this. Poor as they were in Ireland they might somehow scrape together this £1,200 as a salary for the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if only for the purpose of showing the English people how well the English Parliament diverted itself from its legitimate purpose for supporting a man who had a rent roll of £40,000 a-year, at a time when there was no need for the creation of the new Office. It could be easily pointed out to the Government how they could make up the salary of this new official out of the present swollen allowances made for the purpose of carrying on the Irish Government. It could be easily pointed out to them how this salary could be made up out of scraps and odds and ends. The Government would not go in that direction, however, although they would find no difficulty in obtaining what they wanted without saddling the taxpayers with any further burden. He felt that there was a great deal to be said upon this question, but he did not like to occupy the time of the Committee unduly. He believed it would tax the legal ingenuity of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), and when he used the word "ingenuity," he intended it in no disrespectful sense, for he was glad to recognize that the hon. and learned Gentleman always met them very fairly in these matters—to find out a defence for this burden of £300 even, which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary told them was the whole sum to be taken out of the public purse in regard to this new Office. But even this £300 need not be taken out of the National pocket. The whole £1,200 could be saved without derogation to Public Business, simply by not rigging up as a national cock-shy in Ireland this broken down landlord for all Irishmen to be constantly throwing at him as a living example of all that is abominable in the Irish governmental system.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN (Dublin, College Green) said, before a Division was taken, he should like to say a few words in support of the Amendment before the House. The new Office had been created, and now a new salary was about to be created for the Office. The Government of Ireland in proportion to the populatlon of the country was one of the most costly in the whole world, and in spite of that fact it was now proposed—as he contended—to put a new and totally unnecessary burden upon it. If this new salary was to be attached to the new Office, in his opinion it ought to be paid out of the sums already allocated by Parliament for the Government of Ireland. He thought the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary might very fairly be expected to take out of their own large salaries the amount required to pay the Under Secretary if they considered it absolutely essential that this appointment should be made, and that a salary should be attached to it. He thought the people of Ireland would be somewhat surprised, and perhaps edified, at all this stickling on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite for salaries. Hon. Gentlemen opposite were wealthy men, and affected to be great patriots, and yet they were to be found on the Floor of this House of Commons night after night fighting this stiff, tough, protracted battle in the matter of salaries. He should not have been so much surprised at that if they had not from time to time treated with scorn and contempt the idea of getting any money whatever for the performance of public duties. It was not so long since these self-same Gentlemen who were so anxious about this salary question, and more particularly the Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, spoke with contempt of the secretaries of the National League branches who, he alleged, received salaries for their services. So far as he (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) was aware, no salaries were attached to those positions. It might be the case that in some particular districts the branches of the National League had determined for a while to allocate some remuneration to their secretary, but he was not aware of any specific instance in which that had been done. Even if such were the case, it was not for the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Colonel King-Harman) to speak in a tone of contempt and scorn of the men who received those small salaries. He certainly thought it was a public scandal that such a Gentleman as this should be endeavouring to extort this salary from the House of Commons and the British people. He said the British people, but, of course, the Irish people had to pay their share of the expense, and it was a wonder to him that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet was not ashamed of that fact. He (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) knew perfectly well that no secretary of the National League would take any petty remuneration if it was only to be obtained after such a continuous struggle as had been made on behalf of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. As a matter of fact, the whole system of government in Ireland was over-paid and over-manned. It was a system of corruption. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had lately told the public that his chief worry was in trying to deal with the numerous applicants for place and pay under the Government of Ireland. But now they saw him creating a new Office, and endeavouring to attach a new salary thereto without any necessity for the appointment. But even if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant did require assistance in getting through the work of his Office, it was only reasonable and fair, taking all the circumstances of the case into consideration, that he and the Lord Lieutenant should pay this drudge. The Lord Lieutenant had a magnificent salary appropriated to him by the Parliament of England, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was also in the enjoyment of a splendid salary for the duties he performed, and it was no excessive burden upon these Gentlemen to require them to subscribe between them the salary of their new assistant. The whole discussion did not redound to the credit either of the Government who sought to promote this job, or to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman who sought to profit by it.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) said, he had little to add to the arguments of his Colleagues in support of the Amendment; but he wished to refer to one of the reasons adduced by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in support of the passing of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out that in adopting the Bill and appointing a new Under Secretary one member of the Irish Local Government Board would be suppressed, and that the Government would be saved nearly the whole of the extraordinary sum about to be allocated to the payment of the new Under Secretary. Well, it was once stated that Ireland was the most be-boarded country in the world; and if that were so, he would say, at any rate, let them have efficient Boards. He could not see how, by the creation of an Assistant Parliamentary Secretary to the Chief Secretary and the consequent suppression of a member of the Local Government Board, they were increasing the efficiency of the Boards in Ireland. In that country the people suffered severely from inattention to their duties on the part of members of public Boards. They suffered severely from the slipshod manner in which these Government officials performed their duties; and he certainly failed to see how the Local Government Board of Ireland would be improved by the suppression of an active member and the creation of a new official who would be unable to pay any attention whatever to the duties of the post. The Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Chief Secretary for Ireland would spend most of his time in that House—that was to say, most of that time which he did not spend on holidays on the Continent or in the Isle of Thanet. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman came to the House to answer Questions in his own jaunty and insulting fashion; and he (Mr. J. O'Connor) asked the Committee how they could reasonably believe that the man upon whose shoulders were placed so many onerous duties as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet would be able to give the necessary amount of attention to the duties imposed upon him in connection with the Irish Local Government Board? The reason the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary gave for this arrangement was one that, to his mind, ought to induce the Committee to vote by a large majority the acceptance of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage). He (Mr. J. O'Connor) thought the House was very much indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby for having brought this matter forward, because the House was the guardian of the public purse, and his Amendment afforded the Committee of the House an opportunity of passing its opinion upon an attempt that was being made to fritter away the public resources. He (Mr. J. O'Connor) quite admitted that if there had been any necessity shown for the proposal contained in the Bill the Committee and the House would have been justified in rejecting the Amendment. But no necessity had been shown for the creation of this Office; on the contrary, during all the discussions which had taken place upon this matter it had been pointed out most energetically, and to his mind most conclusively, that there was no necessity whatever for the Office, and therefore it was that he thought the Committee of the House, and the House itself, ought to be grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for having afforded it an opportunity of passing a judgment upon the proposition. As he had said, there had been no reason shown for the adoption of the proposal of the Government; but there was every reason why hon. Members from Ireland ought to offer most strenuous opposition not only to the creation of the new Office, but also to the payment of it. It was hoped that at no distant day, no matter what had been said to the contrary, there would be extended to the Irish people a system, if not of National, at least of local self-government; and one of the first duties that would be imposed upon the Local Bodies which would be set up in Ireland would be to establish an economic system of government, in which spirit it would be necessary to decrease every establishment in Ireland. It would be necessary to decrease the establishment of the Lord Lieutenant, and the various other establishments which were paid out of the public funds. Well, it was in the spirit of the times to compensate vested interests, and here, in view of this ultimate state of things which he pointed out, the Government were about to create a vested interest valued at £1,200 a-year. It came to this—that at some future day the Irish people might be called upon to pay compensation for the abolition of vested interests of which the emoluments of this Office would form no inconsiderable item. That was the reason why he maintained that the Irish Members should offer the most strenuous opposition to this proposal. If the Government took the salary of the new Under Secretary from the salary of the Lord Lieutenant or the Chief Secretary they would take away from the Irish Members this argument. On the other hand, whilst they persisted in the proposal to pay this out of the public funds they gave the Irish Members the best reason for opposing the Bill. A short time ago the House seemed to have entered on a season of economy. From the number of Committees sitting upstairs day after day investigating public Departments, it would seem as though they had entered upon a season of great economy. They were investigating the administration of the Army; they were investigating the affairs of the Navy; and they were investigating Civil Service affairs; but he would ask the Committee, and he would also ask the people of this country, where were the economists from the Benches opposite—what were they doing? These Gentlemen, by speeches in that House, and by their action in Committee, were endeavouring to cut down the expenses of the administration of the country; but where were they to-night when an important matter affecting the economic administration of Ireland was under discussion? Why were they not in their places? For the reasons he had given he felt it his duty to give the most determined opposition to the manner in which it was sought to pay this new Office of Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and to render his support, by speech and vote, to the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said, he certainly regretted that on an occasion like the present, after the great opposition the Bill had met with at that stage, that hon. Gentlemen who were always preaching about economy, did not endeavour to practise what they preached. The hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tipperary (Mr. John O'Connor) had mentioned a point known to all of them—namely, that a number of Committees dealing with all manner of economical conundrums were sitting upstairs. While these efforts at economy were apparently being made, what were the Government trying to do at the present moment? Were they anxious to see the expenditure on the Army and the Navy curtailed, and various extravagances put an end to, in order that they might be able to establish sinecures such as that involved in the present Bill? It was not often that he had to praise a Liberal Secessionist; but he recognized that it was with that House as it had been with the Cities of the Plain—if only one good man had been found in them the cities might have been saved. At any rate, he hailed as an omen that there were a few such good men above the Gangway on that (the Opposition) side of the House, who seemed anxious to follow in the right way. Hon. Gentlemen who had hitherto opposed the Representatives of the Irish nation in trying to obtain for their country, as it was their duty to do, justice and fair play, were beginning to see that, after all, there was something to be said for the efforts of those Members. There was some hope for the situation at the present time, when some of those hon. Members above the Gangway were beginning to show that they were not so impervious to argument and reason as would seem from what happened in the past. The Amendment moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) was, practically speaking, an attack upon a job. As the House was entrusted with the care of the public money, and it certainly was its business to try in every case and on every possible occasion to discourage a job, and especially to discourage a job when that job was perpetrated by the Representatives of a class against the wishes of a majority of the people. That was practically the case in the present instance. Ordinarily the House had to vote away immense sums of money at a late hour of the night. He had seen from those Benches enormous sums of money voted away without a single protest being made, and notably without a single protest being made by any hon. or right hon. Gentleman opposite. Of course, he knew very well that in the past, when money had been voted, it was mostly by a Liberal Government; and that at those times hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who paid very little attention to the voting away of public money to-day, sat on the Opposition side of the House, and had a great deal to say against such payments. In the days of which he spoke, the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was, he might say, a champion obstructionist. At any rate, if hon. Members opposite had forgotten the interest they took in economy, it was not for the Irish Members to do so, especially in the present case, when there were many other reasons for resisting the Government proposal. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary declared that it was necessary that he should have assistance in carrying on the government of Ireland under the Lord Lieutenant. Well, but it was very little they saw of the right hon. Gentleman in Ireland. When he did go to that country he disappeared amongst the ranks of the policemen. He was very brave, very plucky, no doubt; but he was lost amongst the police, and disappeared into Dublin Castle directly he got amongst the Irish people. They wished him joy of his associations. The right hon. Gentleman was anxious to increase the number of his associations; and by all means let him do it, if he did it at his own expense. If he wished for a satellite to revolve around him, by all means let him have it, but do not let him perpetrate a job in order to effect his object. Let him pay the Gentleman who was to act as his shield and buckler himself. The Gentleman was for his own protection and convenience and glorification; therefore, let him pay him himself. When a servant was necessary, he (Dr. Tanner) did not begrudge that servant a salary. Every public servant, even the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary himself, had money coming to him in a legitimate manner. The right hon. Gentleman, of course, had to be paid just like a housemaid or a cook. He did not grudge the money to the right hon. Gentleman, but he did grudge the money which it was proposed to pay under this Bill. He did protest against the right hon. Gentleman being generous before he was just. He objected to the right hon. Gentleman putting his hand into the public purse in order to subsidize his private satellite. The proposal in the Bill was absolutely unfair, and would not commend itself, he felt sure, even to a number of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Many hon. Gentlemen would say that, even as a matter of common sense, it was desirable that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary should pay the occupant of the new Office out of his own pocket, or, at any rate, that he should be paid by the Lord Lieutenant. If the right hon. Gentleman did not feel himself called upon to pay this £1,200 a-year, then let the amount be given out of the salary of the Lord Lieutenant. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had stated to-night that the Lord Lieutenant always spent double the salary he received—which was £20,000 a-year—during his term of Office. Well, as far as he (Dr. Tanner) was aware of the facts in connection with the expenditure of most of the Tory Lord Lieutenants of Ireland, he could assure the Committee that they always tried to do things in the cheapest possible way. In the case of the present Lord Lieutenant, every penny he could spend out of Ireland he spent in that way, and that had been the case with all Lord Lieutenants in recent times, with the exception, perhaps, of Lord Spencer. Instead of spending their money, and £20,000 a-year in addition, they tried to save all they could. Why did the Lord Lieutenant spend £20,000 a-year in addition to his income?

An hon. MEMBER: What does he spend it on?

DR. TANNER: Yes; what did he spend it on? If the present Lord Lieutenant spent that amount, it was on bookmakers and on promoting the game of cricket. It was all very well to try to cram those innuendoes, those chimerical ideas of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, down the throats of the English public and of Gentlemen who sat in that House; but anyone who was at all acquainted with the facts as they existed in the City of Dublin was perfectly aware that those ideas existed only and totally in the brain of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. Again, he must regret that hon.

Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, who went in for preaching economy, were not in the House at that moment. He very much regretted that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), who had tried to keep down expenditure in connection with the great spending Departments of the State, was not in his place. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had said that the amount in dispute was only a small amount—was only a little affair; and that reminded him (Dr. Tanner) of the story in *Midshipman Easy*, where the baby was stated to be only a little one, and being a little one it had to be accepted as it was given. As was the case with the baby in *Midshipman Easy*, this Vote was illegitimate, and the fact of its being a little one did not render it any the more acceptable. The moneys which were at present provided by Parliament ought to be amply sufficient for the government of Ireland. If the charge proposed in the present Bill were admitted, they would simply be creating a precedent for the establishment of further posts, and a precedent for converting unpaid posts, into which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary placed his personal friends, into paid offices. He regarded this proposal not only as the creation of a sinecure for the enjoyment of a Member on the opposite side of the House, but an attempt, by patronage and bribery, to corrupt a nation which had always defied the insidious attempts made upon them by Gentlemen in the position of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary laughed that dulcet laugh which was peculiar to him. It was always refreshing to hear that laugh; but he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that this was no laughing matter. It would be no laughing matter to the right hon. Gentleman if he had to put his hand into his own pocket in order to pay his subordinate out of it. The right hon. Gentleman himself was paid practically for laughing at the country which he had, to a very large extent, to administer. But the subject under discussion was no laughing matter. If the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) was to be paid by private individuals, or was to be paid in any shape except out of the public purse, there would be no objection raised either to the creation of the post or to the payment of the individual; but what was objected to was the method by which it was proposed that the Under Secretary should be paid. With brute force, the Government could do anything, no doubt. The right hon. Gentleman might laugh, and might be able to gain his point, no doubt; but still, if the Government insisted upon doing this insensate thing, it was the duty of the Irish Members to point out that they were doing what was wrong and unjust, though the act would be thoroughly characteristic of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, that having listened to the debate so far as it had gone, he could not help thinking that this was a most gross job that was being attempted by the Government, and he was extremely glad to think that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) had found a limit beyond which he would not go in sanctioning the perpetration of a job. It looked to him (Mr. Illingworth) like a case where a post had been made for a man—not a man found for a post. Although they were precluded, by the stage they had arrived at on the Bill, from saying whether the payment was necessary or not, if it were necessary they might ask who was to be relieved of the duties that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet was going to discharge? It could not be contended that the Lord Lieutenant would be relieved from any of the onerous duties which pressed upon him, and he hardly thought that when the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet returned they would find him doing much work as a Local Government Commissioner in Ireland; and he looked upon the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary as hardly credible—that was, that after the passing of this Bill there would, in the course of time, be a Commissioner the less in Ireland, and that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet, the Assistant Under Secretary, would be expected to do some work in that direction. They had been reminded by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) that provision was made that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet should not be over-burdened with duties in that direction. Provision was made in the Bill that when one of the Commissioners of the Local Government Board retired a successor would not be appointed, and there were words in italics in the Bill which showed that it would be open to fill the place rather than make some extraordinary proposal for the discharge of the duties by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet in the future. He (Mr. Illingworth) should like to ask this question—whether the duties of the Office of Chief Secretary were at this moment heavier than they had been under such Chief Secretaries as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne and his late lamented Friend and Colleague, Mr. Forster? The right hon. Gentleman man the present Chief Secretary would hardly say that the duties of his Office were more onerous than they were at the time those Gentlemen held the Office. The right hon. Gentleman did not deny that Ireland saw very little of his presence in discharge of the peculiar duties that belonged to the Chief Secretaryship. It might be that for personal reasons the right hon. Gentleman was entitled to some consideration. It might be that being a Scotchman, and knowing very little of Ireland, and not liking Ireland or the Irish, it was desirable to relieve himself as much as possible from the disagreeable duties inseparable from his Office; but, if that were so, a case was clearly made out by that admission for the right hon Gentleman sharing his salary with the person who was going to share his duties and to relieve him from a great deal of that which was so disagreeable. Certainly, no case had been made out for casting such a charge as this on the whole country. There was a cry for economy in fashion in the country at this moment, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary himself had been obliged to admit that the present method of governing Ireland could not go on for very long—that there must be a change before long, even involving the reconstitution of the Lord Lieutenancy of that country, and the right hon. Gentleman had hinted that that change would bring about with it a social revolution, if the right hon. Gentleman's words could be so qualified. Well, if that were the case, he (Mr. Illingworth) thought they had a right to expect that during the short time the present state of things existed—the present doomed order of things—the right hon. Gentleman might himself have been content to continue in discharge of the whole of the duties of his Office. It was one of those things which they were ordinarily called upon in the House of Commons to resent—that there should be a new prominent appointment made at the time when it was admitted that the whole system of which that appointment was a part was about to undergo a thorough reconstruction. On this principle it was clearly their duty to resist the present proposal, when it was admitted that the system of government in Ireland was in a state of transition. It seemed to him (Mr. Illingworth), as he had already said, that the Office had been made for the man, and that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet had received this appointment as a sop, because, in the course of certain relationships, certain misfortunes had happened to him in connection with Ireland. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman had been banished from Ireland as a Representative, and forced to take refuge in another country; and, forsooth, for that reason, they had the right hon. Gentleman who held the principal Office under the Lord Lieutenant as a Scotchman proposing that he should be assisted by another Gentleman who had been banished by his countrymen, and was about the most unpopular man in the whole of Ireland. All this, no doubt, would be as a cap thrown against the wind; but there was certainly evidence in the House on that (the Opposition) side to a spirit of fair play in dealing with Irish questions. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby upon the manly stand he had taken against the proposal made by the Government, and he trusted that the country would recognize that this proposal of the Government was a job from first to last, looked at in any aspect—either regarded as a personal matter so far as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet was concerned, or as an attempt to give relief to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. There was no justification whatever for this attempt to burden the country with increased expenditure, and he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby would not be singular amongst his political Friends in voting against the Bill.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, there was one thing he had expected in the course of this debate, and that was that they should be told by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. A. J. Balfour) how he would define the difference between his own Office and that of the new Parliamentary Under Secretary. He (Mr. T. M. Healy) thought the Committee had a right to be told, in view of the fact that the right hon. Gentleman's own salary was £4,500 a-year, with residence, and that it was proposed to give the new Under Secretary £1,200 a-year, what the work of each Department would be respectively. As to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) being a member of the Local Government Board in Ireland, he (Mr. T. M. Healy) submitted that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would be unable to attend to the duties, owing to the necessities of his Parliamentary functions. As a matter of fact, it would appear as if the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet was simply intended to stand at the whipping post for his right hon. Colleague. At any rate, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary should give them some statement as to his opinion of the work the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet would have to do in connection with the Irish Local Government Board. Supposing that in the future a question should arise, and the Irish Members might wish to lay their finger upon a certain blot in the Irish Administration, how would they be able to make the Irish Parliamentary Under Secretary responsible for certain alleged evils in connection with the Local Government Board of Ireland, and then how would they be able to discriminate between the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant and the Parliamentary Under Secretary, and to say the Chief Secretary was responsible for this and the Under Secretary was responsible for that?

The CHAIRMAN said, he desired to point out that the subject under discussion was not the necessity for the Office, but whether the money should be paid out of funds already provided by Parliament, or whether a fresh sum should be voted.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he bowed to the Chairman's ruling; but he submitted that on the question of the description of work for which the salary had to be paid would, to some extent, depend the view they took as to the manner in which the payment should be made. If they did not consider how the work was to be done in settling the payment, the salary might just as well be paid to the occupant of the new position out of consideration for his personal beauty, or for some other reason apart from his ability to do the work.

The CHAIRMAN said, the Question was whether Parliament should vote this money for the salary, or take it out of sums already voted.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, that was so, and what he was trying to point out was this—that supposing it was endeavoured to subtract the salary from that of the Chief Secretary, was that endeavour to be resisted on the ground of the amount of work the Chief Secretary had to do, and in the performance of which it was necessary for him to have an assistant? Would the right hon. Gentleman give the House a guarantee that his own personal attention would be directed to Irish affairs, and that the simple duty of reading answers would be entrusted to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet? The right hon. Gentleman would, of course, be anxious that a scandal should not be perpetrated in Ireland. If the right hon. Gentleman was to decide everything, then they might be disposed to agree to the extra salary; but he was bound to submit that if they were to be left solely at the mercy of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet—if to him was to be entrusted the real work of the government of Ireland—then the Government were not entitled to ask for payment of the additional salary out of the public purse, and it was only fair to assert that one salary for the Office was adequate. He would ask the Government to tell the House exactly in what manner the work of the Office would be allotted, and then they would be in possession of the means of judging the reasonableness of the proposal.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. T. M. Healy) had asked how it was proposed to apportion the duties. The only possible answer was the one that was given in all similar cases. It was impossible to lay down beforehand exactly what duties should be done by the Chief and what should fall to the share of the subordinates of the Department. But the responsibility rested solely on the Chief, and no responsibility would fall on the shoulders of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet, any more than it fell on the shoulders of any other Under Secretary. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Home Secretary, and the Secretary of State for War, were alike responsible for the administration of their respective Departments; but it was impossible to convey to the House exactly what work was to be done by the Head of a Department, and what was to be done by his subordinates. The matter would be arranged between the right hon. and gallant Gentleman and himself; but he could assure his hon. and learned Friend that the responsibility would rest solely with him as the Head of the Department.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman a personal question. Let them take, for instance, the question of the appointment of Land Commissioners and of Resident Magistrates. Was the House to understand that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet was to have the power to make these appointments? That was a matter on which the Irish Representatives were very sensitive. For his (Mr. T. M. Healy's) own part, he did not care very much about the right hon. and gallant Gentleman giving the answers to certain Questions. Of course, there were Questions of a purely administrative character, such, for instance, as that of National Education, which did not concern Irish policy. He could very well understand such minor questions of detail being dealt with by an Under Secretary; but it was with regard to higher questions affecting the administrative policy—the appointments of Resident Magistrates and of Sub-Commissioners—that anxiety was felt. Was the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to continue to sit on the Privy Council, as he had done within the last six months with regard to a Bill rejected by that House which he supported, but which the Chief Justice of Ireland very properly scouted out of Court? Was he to be able to attend and act in that manner, and to speak with the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government? Surely the House was entitled to some fuller explanation?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked, what case was the hon. and learned Gentleman alluding to?

MR. T. M. HEALY: The Claremorris Tramway case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was the spokesman of the Government on that occasion. His right hon. and gallant Friend would not occupy a position different from that held by any other Under Secretary. It was a position perfectly well understood in that House. The responsibility would rest with him (Mr. A. J. Balfour) entirely.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) said, he thought the House was pretty much in the same position now as prior to the right hon. Gentleman having volunteered his explanation, for they were still in the dark as to what duties would be performed by the Under Secretary. The principle of the Amendment before the House, as he understood it, was that the right hon. Gentleman, who had the privilege of calling the tune, should have the obligation of paying the piper; and the object of the Amendment was to provide that, instead of the salary of the Under Secretary coming out of the pockets of the ratepayers, it should be paid by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary himself, or, at any rate, by the officials who were to be relieved by the new appointment. The question had been raised whether the salary should be paid by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary or by the Lord Lieutenant. He (Mr. Maurice Healy) confessed that to him it was a matter of absolute indifference, and the decision was one which he was prepared, with the utmost confidence, to leave in the hands of Her Majesty's Government. No doubt, the salary of the Lord Lieutenant was of such a nature as, perhaps, to allow of such a paring down; but, perhaps, on the other hand, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would experience such relief that it would only be fair that he should pay for the assistance he was to receive. But, as he (Mr. Maurice Healy) had said before, that was a matter as to which they were absolutely indifferent. All they asked was that the salary should not come out of the pocket of the general taxpayer. Up to the present, no answer had been given to the arguments on which the Amendment was founded; nothing had been advanced to show that the business falling to the lot of the right hon. Gentleman opposite had so increased in amount as to render necessary the appointment of an assistant, and he could only urge that, when proposals of that kind were made, they should be made with full information as to the effect. It would, he thought, be very interesting if they could have a Return showing the amount of work now falling to the lot of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary as compared with what was done by his Predecessors. It would be interesting to have a Return, showing how many times the right hon. Gentleman had crossed the Irish Channel as compared with his Predecessors; but there did not seem to be any disposition on the part of the Government to supply hon. Members with information on which they might safely make up their minds on this question. It had pleased the Government on this, as on many other occasions, to throw the Bill on the Table of the House, and endeavour to pass it by the brute force of their majority. They did not condescend to give to the House anything which could reasonably be considered a justification for the course they had taken. The only sort of defence which had been made for this job—for such it might very properly be called—was that it would add very slightly to the burdens of the taxpayer. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had tried to make out that it would only add £300 a-year to the burdens of the taxpayer. But the device resorted to in order to bring about such a result made the Bill ten times more offensive than it otherwise would be. It was ridiculous to suggest that the new official who was to be appointed specially to do Parliamentary work in the House of Commons, who was, in the words of the Bill, "Parliamentary Under Secretary," would be in a position to do anything in the nature of serious work at the Irish Local Government Board. The right hon. Gentleman told them the other day, in a moment of frankness, that the Irish Local Government Board never met. If that was so, it would be very easy for the Parliamentary Under Secretary to do the work of supervising the Local Government Board. If all the work of the Board was done by the Secretary and under officials the Parliamentary Under Secretary would, no doubt, be able to discharge the duties of a member of the Board in an admirable manner. But if there were any serious duties to perform, it was idle to suggest that they could be efficiently performed by any person appointed for the purpose of doing Parliamentary work. For all these reasons, he contended that the Amendment before the Committee was a most proper Amendment. It was most cheering to find there was a point beyond which Liberal Unionism would not stretch. He trusted the Committee would find that the Member of the Liberal Unionist Party who had ventured to differ, to some extent, from the policy of Her Majesty's Government would not be left in the Division Lobby severely alone by his Colleagues.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) said, that the Bill was one for the regulation of the Office of Parliamentary Under Secretary. The Under Secretary was to be paid a salary, and the question which was raised by the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) was whether the salary should be an additional burden upon the resources of the country. The first question which always arose when they were creating an additional office was whether the additional office was required. Therefore, they ought to have it made out most clearly by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) that there was a necessity for this Office. Had any such necessity been proved? It had not been proved by anything that had arisen in the House. It had not been proved by anything that had arisen out-of-doors. He had been very glad, indeed, to find the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) standing up with that courage and pluck that so distinguished him to answer Questions which it might have been troublesome for the Chief Secretary to answer. He had been glad to find the somewhat irrelevant Questions put by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite for the purpose of troubling the Chief Secretary answered in a blunt, able way by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet; and to that extent he had recognized the advantage of having a butt, so to speak, between the Chief Secretary and hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite. To that extent the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had been useful, and to that extent he was deserving of the thanks of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. To that extent hon. Members sitting upon the Government side of the House ought to be thankful to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. Most sorry they were that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was absent now, and that, in consequence of illness, he was unable to defend himself against any aspersions which might be made upon him. But that was no reason why they, the Members of the House of Commons, should vote him the salary proposed. He wanted to hear from his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland a much better reason than had as yet been given why they should vote the salary proposed. He certainly should not vote that this salary should be paid to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, unless they heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary some better reason than had been given up to now for the creation of the Office—some better reason than had been given why some of the work which the country paid him for doing should be thrown upon the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, for which he should be paid a salary of £1,500 a-year.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, it seemed to him a somewhat invidious thing to appoint a servant, and then to refuse to pay him. If that were really the state of things, he should have no difficulty whatever in voting against the Amendment of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Heneage). But he thought they did not pay quite sufficient attention to the fact that this thing had been put upon them by slow—he was almost going to say crafty—degrees. In the first instance the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) to the post which he now held was one that was very seriously questioned on the Opposition side of the House in April of last year. The Government were asked whether the appointment was not one which in the natural order of things would cause the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to seek re-election at the hands of his constituents, and it was said —"Oh, no: certainly not." Why not? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would remember that he explained that the fact that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would not need to seek re-election arose from the circumstance that he was not to receive any salary. What did they find? They found that as the result of this nice little arrangement the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was to continue Under Secretary with a salary, and escape the test of merit—re-election by his constituents. He did not think that was an ordinary case of the House appointing a man to a post, and then being called upon to pay him; and it was because it did not appear to him that that matter had been conducted quite in accordance with precedent, and—if he might say good-humouredly—quite upon candid lines, that he thought they were justified in voting for the Amendment.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, he would like to hear from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) whether any limitation was to be put upon the tenure of Office by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, because there was nothing in the Bill, so far as he could make out, to prevent the appointment being a permanent one. The present Government might go out of Office the day after the right hon. and gallant Gentleman commenced to receive his salary: was there to be anything inserted in the Bill to provide that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman should quit Office at the same time? Furthermore, he would like to know whether it was necessary that the holder of the Office of Parliamentary Under Secretary should be a Member of the House of Commons? Suppose Parties changed sides, was it to be possible for the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to sit upon the Opposition side of the House and hold his Office? He (Mr. T. P. Gill) did not think there could be two opinions in the House, especially after the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Kingswinford Division of Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill), upon the question whether the salary of the Under Secretary could or ought to be provided out of moneys already granted for the Chief Secretary and the Lord Lieutenant. The whole House seemed to be agreed that, whatever might be said as to the necessity for this Office, the question of increasing the burdens of the taxpayer in order to pay a salary to the incumbent of the Office was one which could not willingly be entertained. Nothing could be said in defence of such a proposition. £24,500 was now paid in the shape of salaries to two Members of the Irish Government, and many of the duties discharged by those officials were to be discharged by the holder of the new Office. The very least which might be expected was that the salary of £1,500 for the Under Secretary should be paid out of the £24,500 now paid to the Chief Secretary and the Lord Lieutenant. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary could not deny that the impression—speaking broadly—which was originally left on the minds of hon. Members was that no burden would be placed on the taxpayer by the creation of this Office. He could very well understand the right hon. Gentleman setting up as a defence an explanation of his original statement that, although the new Office was to be a salaried one, it was not to be a salaried one in the sense that the taxpayer was to pay the burden. But the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary did nothing of the kind. Before they proceeded further, they ought, at least, to be satisfied as to the permanency or otherwise of the Office which the Bill created.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he hoped that the Committee would now think it right to come to a decision. The Amendment had been discussed for two hours and a half, and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) would agree with him that sufficient time had been occupied upon a question which was, at all events, limited in its scope. He, therefore, claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put accordingly, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 190; Noes 145: Majority 45.—(Div. List, No. 107.)

Question put, "That the words 'to be' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 191; Noes 183: Majority 8.—(Div. List, No. 108.)

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he wished to move an Amendment which was not on the Paper, and of which he would give a few words of explanation. The Amendment in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) had reference to the salaries of the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary; but those salaries were provided from two sources. The salary of the Lord Lieutenant was taken from the Consolidated Fund, and that of the Chief Secretary only was voted in the Estimates. What he proposed to do was to insert before the word "provided" the word "annually," in order to secure that the question of this payment to the Parliamentary Under Secretary should annually come under the review of the House of Commons. This would secure that the money to be paid to the Under Secretary should come in the Estimates for the Chief Secretary's Office every year. Obviously this was a reasonable and necessary proposal in view of the fact that though the Bill was one regulating the Office of Parliamentary Under Secretary they had, as had been pointed out by the hon. Member for South Louth (Mr. T. P. Gill), had no guarantee that the holder of the salary would even for the most part of his time be a Member of the House at all. The Bill as drafted contemplated the Parliamentary Under Secretary as being a person who was not a Member of the

House, for in the 1st section the words were—

> "The Office of Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant shall not render the person holding the same incapable of being elected."

So that holding the Office was considered as antecedent to his election. The official might, therefore, be a person not a Member of the House. What guarantee had they that not being a Member of the House he would not continue to hold this nominally Parliamentary appointment? As the hon. Member for South Louth had gone on to point out, there was no guarantee furnished in this Bill that although appointed nominally as Parliamentary Under Secretary the official appointed might not continue to hold the post, whether in that House or out of it, for the remainder of his natural life. Under those circumstances, it was reasonable that they should ask that the Vote for the Office should be annually submitted for revision at the hands of the House. He was afraid that if this provision were made according to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby, and the money provided by Parliament or to be provided hereafter from the Estimates was to be taken as sufficient for the purpose, they had no guarantee at all that the sum needed would be drawn from the salary of the Chief Secretary or anyone higher in Office. Everyone acquainted with the Civil Service was aware of this fact—that if it was desired to give any extra allowance or extra salary it was always possible to obtain the needful funds for the purpose, not by reducing the salary of any high-placed official, but by squeezing the lower ranks in the Office. They might very easily in this way get out of the Vote for the Chief Secretary's Office £1,000 or £2,000 a-year without in any way trenching on the salaries of the higher officials. Unfortunately they had no guarantee that if they provided £1,500 a-year out of the Vote for the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) they would in any way diminish the inflated salaries of any of the higher officials of the Department, because he was sure that those who had the management of the Office would be able to scrape out of the salaries of writers and Lower Division clerks as much as would pay this demand. There was always ample margin amongst those small officials for the payment of such a salary as this. Therefore, it was absolutely necessary that this Bill should not only create the Office and provide for the payment of the occupant, but that the holder of the post and the conditions under which he held his Office should be brought from time to time under the consideration of the House, and the only way of doing that was by including the Vote in the annual Estimate. He proposed, therefore, to meet the need he had indicated by inserting before the word "provided," at the beginning of line 8, the word "annually."

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 8, after the word "provided," insert the word "annually." — (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'annually' be there inserted."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he entirely agreed in the view of the hon. Gentleman that this salary should be subject to annual revision by Parliament, and there was nothing in the Bill, as at present framed, which precluded such a course being taken. At present the salary of every Minister, every Secretary, and every Under Secretary was in the Votes, and he agreed that the salary of the Under Secretary in this case should be no exception to the rule; but the Amendment of the hon. Member opposite was entirely unnecessary. The hon. Member's object was already amply carried out.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he might, perhaps, point out that by refusing to accept the Amendment the Government were letting the cat out of the bag, because if they would turn to the next page of the Bill, they would find that, although the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) might not be in the House, he might still be a member of the Irish Local Government Board, and that the Bill practically gave him a life appointment whether he was in the House or not. The Parliamentary Under Secretary for the time would, by virtue of his Office, be a member of the Local Government Board of Ireland, and then they had it that when a vacancy occurred in the Local Government Board no other person was to be put in it. In other words, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet would become the holder of a life appointment on the Irish Local Government Board. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, if that was not so, why did not the Government make it clear? Supposing the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet did not care to become President of the Irish Local Government Board, the House conferred the position upon him whether he liked it or not, and what was there to compel the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to resign the Office when he had obtained it? Nothing whatever. He might say—"I hold my Office during good behaviour as other Members of the Board hold theirs." A new Lord Lieutenant might discharge—as he might do—Mr. George Morris or Sir Henry Robinson, both of whom held office during pleasure. It would be a monstrous thing if Mr. George Morris were to be turned out by an incoming Lord Lieutenant, and no doubt the case of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet would be looked upon in the same light. What was to prevent the Government, when the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet was put into this post, saying—"We have given him a life appointment in this Bill." What was the proof of that? Why, that Parliament with its eyes open, and knowing that there were three distinct members of the Local Government Board for Ireland appointed for life—or during pleasure—had replaced one of them by the Irish Under Secretary; and, as nothing at present compelled Sir William Kaye to go out of office with the Government, what would compel the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member of the Isle of Thanet to do so? Supposing the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet, on a change of Government taking place, were to put his foot down and say—"I will not go out." If, then, an incoming Government were to turn him out, the Tory Party would come down to the House and make a great noise, declaring that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had been turned out at the instance of the Nationalist Party because he was a landlord and had resisted their claims to Home Rule, and notwithstanding the fact that he had been appointed for life. He (Mr. T. M. Healy) submitted that, at any rate so long as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman remained a Member of the House of Commons, he could continue to hold this office under the Local Government Board of Ireland; and, that being so, the inclusion of this word "annual," as proposed by his hon. Friend, became a very important matter. The salary might be put upon the Consolidated Fund, and the House might have no opportunity of debating the arrangements of the office. The proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had a backing of reasons to it; and, that being so, why did not the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary agree to the proposal? What harm could it do? The right hon. Gentleman could have no objection to it, unless there was something lurking under his refusal. It was admitted that the word could do no harm; then why not accept it? Looking at the fact that the Government had only carried the salary of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet by eight votes, and even then only under pressure of the clôture, it was not unreasonable that the Government should give at least this guarantee. The Government should bear in mind that they had only just, by the skin of their Liberal Unionist teeth, been able to carry the proposal for this salary.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he had thoroughly explained to the House that a Vote must be taken by Parliament for this salary, and that, therefore, this Amendment was unnecessary. If, under these circumstances, the Irish Members persisted in their demand, Heaven forbid that he should oppose their wishes. If they desired to put in a word wholly superfluous, and which was not put in other Acts of this kind creating offices of this description, he should offer no further objection. Of course, it had always been his desire to treat Ireland in the same way as England had been treated.

Question put, and *agreed to;* word *inserted.*

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, in rising to move the next

Amendment which stood in his name—that was to say, in line 13 of Clause 1, to leave out all after "voting" to the end of the clause, he was raising what he conceived to be an important Constitutional question, and he should consider it his duty to take the opinion of the Committee upon the proposal. The object of the words the omission of which he proposed was, of course, to relieve the person appointed to this Office from the necessity of presenting himself before his constituents for their verdict on his conduct since his election to the House. This question was first raised, he believed, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) on the 15th of April last year. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) asked a Question, with regard to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman who was appointed to this Office (Colonel King-Harman), and he received a reply from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) to which he (Mr. J. E. Ellis) would not further allude. After the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had sat down, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton also asked the hon. and learned Attorney General for England (Sir Richard Webster) whether his attention had been called to the Act of 41 *Geo.* III., which dealt with this point. He (Mr. J. E. Ellis) mentioned this because he was well aware that on this question of vacating seats on the acceptance of Office there was in some quarters a disposition to think that it was unnecessary, and he believed that the second reading of a Bill rendering it no longer necessary was moved in that House quite recently. Well, he (Mr. J. E. Ellis) was one of those, he confessed, whom it would take stronger arguments than he had yet heard in that House or elsewhere to induce to support a Bill taking away from any constituency the right of passing a verdict on a Member of the House on accepting Office. But the hon. and learned Attorney General, on the occasion to which he had referred, used some language to which he ventured to recall the attention of the House. The hon. and learned Gentleman pointed out to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton, alluding to this particular Act of Parliament, that it expressly recognized the possibility of appointments being made by the Lord Lieutenant, but only vacated seats or rendered gentlemen ineligible to sit in the House if they held Office of profit under the Lord Lieutenant. Now, that was precisely the point which arose under the present Bill. Here was a Bill creating an Office of profit under the Lord Lieutenant, and he ventured to ask why they should pass an Act of Parliament taking away from the constituency represented by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet the right which they possessed under the Act of George III. of passing their verdict upon his conduct in accepting Office? The Government were always talking to the House about the Act of Union. Well, he would remind those who so freely mentioned the Act of Union that this very Act of 41 *Geo.* III. was passed, as the Preamble stated, in order to carry out the Act of Union. Now, with regard to the reply of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, his right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne had used a very strong expression the other day. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had told them on the 15th of April what was equal to saying that no salary was attached to the Office of Parliamentary Under Secretary; but they had been told by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant that, at the very moment the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury was using these words, the Government were intending to bring in a Bill to give a salary to the recipient of the Office. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne had used the expression that the conduct of the Government on that occasion and on the introduction of this Bill, and the whole circumstances attending it, were neither more nor less than an equivocal manœuvre. In that term he (Mr. J. E. Ellis) ventured to include the assertion which was made at that time as to the non-vacation of the seat. Unless it was not in the mind of the Government at that time to introduce an exception in the case of the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from the operation of the Statute of 41 *Geo.* III., he could not look upon their conduct at that time as other than an unworthy manœuvre, and wanting in strict frankness. He would leave the precise interpretation of the Act of Parliament in the hands of those who were sometimes called learned Gentlemen. His ground of objection to the Bill divided itself into three heads. He ventured to assert, without fear of contradiction, that the authority of that House of Commons depended upon the fidelity of its Members to the pledges they gave to those whom they asked to vote for them. He remembered perfectly well that an hon. Member—when the Liberal Party was sitting on the other side of the House in 1886 — (Mr. Edward Leatham), who then represented the borough of Huddersfield, got up and said he did not represent his constituents, and did not say what they wished him to say, but that he was speaking exactly contrary to their desires, and that, therefore, he was speaking in a most disinterested manner, because he knew he was going to lose his seat — [*Cries of* "Order!"] Some hon. Members called him to Order, but he maintained that the subject of an hon. Member going against the wishes of his constituents was clearly germane to the point at issue, as he desired that the Parliamentary Under Secretary should be compelled to go before his constituents in order to receive their approval of his conduct on his accepting Office. Possibly his words were rather an unpleasant reminder to some hon. Members opposite who probably contemplated the loss of their seats through the loss of confidence of their constituents. The clever and versatile politician who sat on the Front Opposition Bench—he referred to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain)—had used a very curious expression the other night, which he (Mr. J. E. Ellis) had taken down at the time, and which he thought would be remembered. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of those who "had to submit to the annoyance of public election." He (Mr. J. E. Ellis) could quite understand that in the General Election coming there might be some annoyance to those who—like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, the noble Lord the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington) and others—sat on that (the Opposition) side of the House. He could quite understand the term as applied to those hon. Gentlemen; but, speaking generally, he did not believe there would be much difference from him in his view of the subject. The occupants of the Benches opposite would not differ from him when he said that hon. Members came to that House to represent the views of their constituents, and that their fidelity to their election pledges was the best way in which they could carry into effect the representative principle of government. Apart from the general question, surely the moment chosen for attempting to deprive the electors of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet of the right they would otherwise have to pass judgment upon their Representative was a most unfortunate one. In spite of every effort of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to make things appear the contrary, they knew that the great controversy before the country just now was the Irish Question. They knew the pledges which had been given by the supporters of the Government—and he trusted he might not be interrupted by cries of Order when he mentioned one striking illustration. They knew how one noble Lord, a Member of that House, had placarded his constituency with "Vote for Weymouth and no Coercion." He was justified in asking if that pledge had been kept. [*Cries of* "Question!"] He understood that interruption. Hon. Members opposite did not like the allusion, and he would, therefore, pass to the third point. If they searched the House of Commons through, they would not be able to find a person who had departed more from his election pledges—he would defy them to find a better illustration of that political virtue than the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet. What had the right hon. and gallant Gentleman said to his constituents on the 30th of June, 1886? He used this language. He said—

> "If I am returned to Parliament I shall use my best endeavours to insure that equal law and equal justice shall be administered in Ireland and England."

That was what the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had told the electors, and he

(Mr. J. E. Ellis) asked the House not to deprive the electors of the Isle of Thanet of their power of passing judgment as to whether his pledges had been kept or not. Equal law and equal justice in Ireland and England! Why, the debate which took place earlier in the evening gave the lie to that assertion——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. J. E. ELLIS: I beg pardon if I have used an un-Parliamentary expression—I would say a contradiction.

THE CHAIRMAN: That cannot be relevant to the subject under discussion.

MR. J. E. ELLIS said, he stood corrected, and begged to apologize for having strayed. He said again that the promise contained in these words that equal justice should be done to Ireland and England had not been fulfilled by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. He (Mr. J. E. Ellis) would, as he had said, be no party to depriving the electors of the Isle of Thanet of this opportunity of passing judgment upon their Member. He did not suppose for a single moment that the constituents of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would endorse the view that the Opposition took as against the Government on these matters; but the responsibility, if they had to re-elect the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, would be with them. He contended that they should not be deprived of the opportunity they would have under the Act of Parliament which he had mentioned—not under the Act of Queen Anne, but under that to which he had referred—of expressing their opinion of their Representative; and he, therefore, begged to move the Amendment that stood in his name.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 13, to leave out all the words after the word "voting" to the end of the Clause. —(*Mr. J. E. Ellis.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not catch the full relevance of the whole of the observations of the hon. Member; but he thought he could give him an answer which he would see deserved the consideration of the Committee. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) did not propose to discuss the merits of the existing rule, which required that Ministers should be re-elected on being selected to Office, which some hon. Members considered a very wise provision, but which he himself thought rather belonged to the by-gone traditions of Parliament. The whole of the Bill was in absolute conformity with all recent legislation in the House with all regard to subordinate positions. Every Under Secretary, he believed, took Office without his being required to seek re-election, and there was no reason that he could see why the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland should be placed in a different category from every other Under Secretary. The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis) had argued against the Bill as if it had reference solely to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet. ["Hear, hear."] Well, he had never heard a Bill avowedly argued on the ground of the character of the person who it was proposed should be the first occupant of the position it was designed to create. He was the more surprised to hear hon. Gentlemen opposite taking up the position they did with regard to the Bill when they were so fond of telling the Government that their tenure of Office was to be so short. Surely, if they were right, the matter was hardly worth much consideration. Parliament not long ago constituted the Office of Secretary to the Board of Trade—it was in 1867. That Act provided, exactly as the present Bill provided, that the Member appointed to the Office should not vacate his seat on the acceptance of that Office, and should be eligible, if not a Member, for election. The First Commissioner of Works did vacate his seat upon his being appointed; but when the Act was passed it especially exempted the first holder of the Office, so that they had an unbroken precedent in regard to recent appointments.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn), interrupting, said, he wished to ask whether in any other cases Under Secretaries had been appointed first without salaries?

THE CHAIRMAN: These interruptions are extremely irregular.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the Government were acting in this matter in strict accordance with Parliamentary precedent in excepting the first Parliamentary Under Secretary from the necessity of re-election, putting him into the same position as the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, the Financial Secretary to the War Office, the Secretary to the Board of Trade, the Secretary to the Admiralty, and the four Under Secretaries. Under these circumstances, he hoped the House would see the absurdity of making a special exemption in the case of his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Isle of Thanet.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland in his statement of what he (Mr. John Morley) had gathered to be the right hon. Gentleman's own view of the prevailing policy in recent times, and, no doubt, the tendency in the House during recent years had been to limit and not to increase the number of Offices the acceptance of which necessitated an appeal to the constituency; but they must remember that the whole circumstances connected with the Bill were exceptional and peculiar. The right hon. Gentleman had complained that so much criticism on the clauses of the Bill, and on the second reading, had turned upon the qualification and position of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet. But what was the reason for that? There was a perfectly good reason for it, and it was this—that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was put into some sort of position—he did not know whether to call it an office or what to call it—which was only now being regularized; and it was on that account, if he might say so, that such strong objection was taken to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet being appointed to the position without being required to seek re-election at the hands of his constituents. The Parliamentary Under Secretary was created first, and the Office was now being created, and that was the reason why there was so much criticism bearing upon the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet, and why his hon. Friend the Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis) was perfectly justified, in bringing forward his Amendment, in referring to the Election pledges of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. He (Mr. John Morley), however, did not wish to dwell upon that aspect of the question. All he had to say was that, though he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in his general view as to re-election not being necessary on the acceptance of these subordinate offices, yet the conditions under which the particular subordinate office in question was first introduced last year —and he did not wish to repeat any of the harsh words he used—were such, and there was so much that was peculiar in the creation of the Office, that while he agreed in the view of the Government as to the general policy in the matter on this occasion, he felt bound to support the Amendment of his hon. Friend.

Mr. ANDERSON said, he had been very sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary just now; but he had desired to ask—as the right hon. Gentleman had stated certain cases or precedents in the creation of these Offices which this Bill was said to follow—the right hon. Gentleman to point out to the Committee one case which could be fairly taken as a precedent. Could the right hon. Gentleman find a precedent in the whole legislation of this country where an Under Secretary had been appointed with a salary, and where it had been stated that he was not to have a salary, but where, subsequently, when it was found convenient to avoid an election, came forward and legalized their appointment with a Bill of this kind? There was no such precedent, and therefore it was that he ventured to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman whilst he was speaking. He had asked him if he could point out anything of the kind? It had been positively asserted on both sides of the House that hon. Members opposite, as well as hon. Members on the Opposition Benches, had come to the conclusion that this appointment from beginning to end was not to be defended, and that the more they looked into it, and attempted to justify it, the worse it became. As the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had said, they were bound to bring forward precedents in a case of this kind; but when the right hon. Gentleman referred to the precedents they entirely failed him. What he (Mr. Anderson) said was this, and he said it advisedly, that the House had been entirely taken in as to this appointment from the beginning. They were asked to sanction the appointment, in the first place, on the ground that it did not come within the Act of Parliament, and was not an Office of profit. The matter was then passed over; but now it seems that it was an Office of profit, and that there were provisions in the Bill the object of which was to avoid the necessity for a re-election. He hoped the Amendment would be pressed to a Division, as it would emphasize the strong feeling which he believed to exist on both sides of the House, and which he was sure existed in the country, against this appointment.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, he wished to state the grounds upon which he should support the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. T. E. Ellis), and he also wished to refer to the arguments made use of by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. The right hon. Gentleman said, and said truly, that there had been a good deal of legislation of late years in this direction. Various Offices had been constituted, in each of which the holders had not been made subject to the condition of re-election. That was perfectly true, and the right hon. Gentleman had taken the opportunity of expressing an opinion which he entertained, that it was a very doubtful policy which made the vacation of a seat a necessary condition of the acceptance of Office. He (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) knew that that opinion had obtained great currency in the House; but he must say that he did not share it, as he thought it was an important item of popular control that persons taking Office under the Crown should in general be subject to re-election. There had undoubtedly been, in his time, a great relaxation of the rule which was originally too rigid. When he first entered Parliament the rule was not only that a person should be subject to re-election on taking Office, but that he should be also subject to re-election on any change of Office. He remembered perfectly well himself being the Vice President of the Board of Trade half-a-century ago, and that on his becoming President of the Board of Trade, a question was submitted to the Law Officers of the Crown to ascertain whether the fact of a Member becoming a President of the Board of Trade instead of a Vice President of the Board of Trade did not constitute the taking of a new Office in such a sense as to render re-election necessary. But what he wished to call the attention of the House to was this, that when the right hon. Gentleman said that precedents were in favour of releasing this new Office from the condition of re-election that might happen to be true; but there was another question to be considered—namely, whether it was wise to go on increasing indefinitely the number of those Offices not subject to re-election? There had been a considerable increase in those Offices. He could not be quite certain, but his belief was, that 40 years ago there had been no more than six or seven of these Offices in the House, and now they numbered about 10, and the right hon. Gentleman proposed to add another. He must say he was very much disinclined to add to the number of those Offices which could be taken without re-election. He had no desire to restrain or narrow the influence enjoyed by the Government in this House which was exerted through its official Members, but he thought it was quite a fit subject for careful consideration whether they should increase the number of Offices which could be accepted without re-election. He was much disinclined to agree with the proposition on this ground; but he was bound to say that he should vote with the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment, on a ground altogether apart from the mere question of the creation of this Office, and that was the ground that the appointment so completely and pre-eminently realized the highest idea of what might be called a Parliamentary job. This was an Office which was absolutely unnecessary. No Department less required its hands strengthening by the multiplication of Offices than the Irish Department; and the old and sound principle of every right-minded Government always was that when at any particular time there was particular pressure upon a certain Department, it should be provided for by calling in the aid of some less occupied Member of the Government. That was a sound and good principle, and ought always to be adhered to. The creation of the Office was most unnecessary; and, having regard to that and to the unfortunate and deplorable choice of the man who was to fill it, he must decline to be a party to asking the House to afford any facility either for the taking or the holding of the Office.

Mr. T. M. HEALY rose to Order. He asked whether the right hon. Gentleman who was about to move the Closure could make a speech in advance, or whether he should not confine himself to that Motion?

The CHAIRMAN having called upon the First Lord of the Treasury,

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Mr. Courtney, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) has thought it right to express his opinion that the Office sought to be created by this Bill is totally unnecessary. I should have thought that the right hon. Gentleman's knowledge of Irish Administration would have led him to take precisely the opposite view. With the greatest courtesy, I wish to remark that a want of knowledge of the actual details of Irish Administration, and the necessity which exists for intelligent supervision in that Department, is not such as might be expected from a right hon. Gentleman of such distinguished position in public life. But, Sir, apart from that altogether, I may say that the Government would not have proposed the Office if they had not felt it necessary for the good administration of Irish affairs. We felt it to be necessary for that purpose, and it is with that conviction that we press it upon the House. I entirely agree with what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman as to the creation of Offices held by Members of this House which are to have immunity from re-election, and the Government has shown how desirous they are of lessening, rather than increasing, the number of Members of the Government holding Offices subject to re-election by having this year suppressed two paid Offices—namely, that of Judge Advocate General and that of the Surveyor General of Ordnance, which have ceased to be Offices of profit under the Crown. I mention that fact, to show that the Government are as anxious as the right hon. Gentleman himself has been, not to provide salaries for Officers who are not really necessary to the service of the country, and not to provide immunity from re-election unless such immunity is also necessary. I trust the Committee will now come to a decision on a question which, I venture to think, has been sufficiently discussed.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury has started the whole question as to whether this Office is or is not necessary. He appears to forget, however, that the present Chief Secretary for Ireland has two assistants whom I never had, and whom no Gentleman who preceded the Chief Secretary ever had—namely, the Closure and the 12 o'clock Rule.

An hon. Member rose to Order. He asked whether the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman were not more appropriate to the Motion for the second reading?

The CHAIRMAN said, the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman were, no doubt, somewhat divergent at the moment; but he would probably apply them to the question before the Committee.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: I could not allow the right hon. Gentleman, having such enormous weight in the discussion as the First Lord of the Treasury, to close this very important debate with the expression that this Office is called for by the extra work on the shoulders of the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and I can only say, once for all, that the work of the Irish Chief Secretary in the old days would not have been too much for one man to do before 12 o'clock. I should have been ashamed to ask for assistance in that work, although, from my own experience, I know that the work which came on after 12 o'clock was the hardest, and might have fairly required the attention of two men. If ever there was a post to which we should apply the old rule of appealing to the country as to whether a Gentleman, not at present in the service of the Crown, should take that service, it is this post of the Assistant Irish Secretary. It is absolutely impossible to separate this appointment from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman who is going to take it, and I maintain the appointment of that right hon. and gallant Gentleman is a most serious step, out of the many serious steps which the Government have taken with regard to Ireland. I certainly would not refrain from voting for the Amendment, which means that one of the constituencies of the country shall be able to say whether, at this crisis of affairs in Ireland, the Irish people should have any share in their own administration, or whether they should have none. [*Cries of* "Question!"] That is the question. It is whether a constituency is to be debarred from being able to say whether or not it wishes to have a right hon. and gallant Gentleman second in command in Ireland, who is not neutral or impartial, but in sympathy with the governing minority of the people.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he had to congratulate the First Lord of the Treasury on having made a speech without moving the Closure.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 230; Noes 191: Majority 39.—(Div. List, No. 109.)

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he had some confidence in rising to move the Amendment which stood in his name by reason of the remarkably diminished Government majority which they had witnessed that evening, and the fact that the first Division resulting in so small a majority had induced the Chief Secretary for Ireland to give way upon another Amendment. Those circumstances induced him to hope that the Government might see the reasonableness of the proposal which he was about to lay before them. It would be observed that the Amendment referred to two points. He proposed, first of all, that the salary to be given to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet Division of Kent (Colonel King-Harman) should, in no case, exceed £500 a-year; and, in the second place, he proposed that this salary should not commence until the end of the present Session. Those two proposals appeared to him to be justified by all that had gone before in the history of the Bill. He did not propose to detain the Committee with a detailed reference to the circumstances; but he thought that they showed the undesirability, in the first instance, of providing a salary for the right hon. and gallant Gentleman; and, in the second place, the importance of seeing that he was not paid for his services during the past year. The remarks which had just passed between the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) had shown very clearly what had been proved over and over again—namely, that there was no absolute necessity for the post which the Government were seeking to create. He thought, under the circumstances, that he would be justified in proposing that the salary of the person to be provided with this post should, at any rate, be proportioned to the work he was likely to have to do, which was *nil*. But it might be held to be somewhat severe, if it would not be trifling with the Committee, if one were to make a proposal of that sort. He believed, however, that it would be possible to say that, in proposing that the salary should be £500 a-year, they were dealing very liberally with the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. He considered that they were dealing with him far too liberally; but hon. Gentlemen on those Benches were inclined to take a somewhat generous view of the matter, because they knew that the Gentleman to be provided by the House with a salary was a broken-down rack-renter. [*Cries of* "Name!"] Had the Government not sent him to South Africa because he was broken down? [*Cries of* "Name!"] It might, perhaps, be that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was sent out there because he had tried to break down the Government. It appeared to him distinctly, if he might judge from what he knew, that in the County of Roscommon, at Boyle, there was a deliberate attempt on the part of the Government to set up Humpty Dumpty on the wall again, and if only for that reason he should be inclined to protest, as far as possible, against voting any salary to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. But what were the services for which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was to be paid? He was not aware that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was good as a shorthand clerk, and as a very skilful shorthand clerk could be obtained for the payment of 20*s.* or 40*s.* a-week, if he were skilful in that respect £100 would be ample for him as clerk to the Chief Secretary for Ireland. But if they could not discover that his qualifications lay in that direction, were they to pay him £1,500 a-year for answering Questions in that House which the Chief Secretary for Ireland was too indolent to reply to? [*Cries of* "Order!"] If it was not on that account, he wanted to know on what ground they were asked to pay this money? When he considered the possibilities pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, which made the appointment almost the most mischievous which could be conceived, he felt that they ought not to assume that the services of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman were worth £500 a-year, but rather that they should be willing to pay £5,000 to get rid of him altogether. There had been no reason stated for the appointment, except that he was in need of the salary proposed to be provided to help him out of his difficulties; and that he believed was the sole object with which this provision was being made.

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress.

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he would fix 2 o'clock to-morrow for the consideration of the Bill to be resumed.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he must submit that the proposal of the First Lord of the Treasury to continue the discussion at 2 o'clock to-morrow was Opposed Business which, under the Standing Order, could not now be taken. The Standing Order of the 24th February, 1888, provided that, unless the House should otherwise order, the House should meet on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, at 3 o'clock. The Order of the House would be required to meet at 2 o'clock, and as that was in the nature of Opposed Business it was manifestly impossible that the House could meet at that hour.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he ventured to submit that the preponderance of voices would give the House this power to fix the hour.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, that this was an extraordinary proposition on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. It seemed to him that all the laws and practice of the House of Commons were to be set aside by the right hon. Gentleman's *ipse dixit.* He had heard over and over again questions of Morning Sittings discussed, and Divisions had been taken upon them, and he asked by what right was that Rule to be abrogated? What was the history of this question, and how had it arisen? By the Government wasting the time of the House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith), in referring to the question of a preponderance of voices, alluded to the New Rule, which provided for the fixing of Business at the time of Business being suspended. That Rule provided—

> "That the Business then under consideration and any Business subsequently appointed shall be appointed for the next day on which the House shall sit, unless the Speaker ascertains by a preponderance of voices that a majority of the House desires that such Business shall be deferred until a later day."

He must, therefore, point out, that the preponderance of voices could only prevail to defer business to a later day, not to take it at an earlier hour.

IMPERIAL DEFENCE [EXPENSES]

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, this Order would be taken at 2 o'clock to-morrow.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, that the objection to the last proposal applied to this also.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Sir, I beg to give Notice that, at 3 o'clock, I shall move that this Business be taken before the other Orders of the Day.

An hon. Member: We shall oppose it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he had no desire whatever to object to the Imperial Defence Bill being taken. His only objection was to a Morning Sitting.

Committee *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY FOR INJURIES TO WORKMEN BILL.—[Bill 145.]

(*Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Forwood.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): It is possible that we may be obliged to postpone the Bill on Thursday, in order to take other Business.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): Are we to understand that the Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill, in which the English people are interested, is to be sacrificed to the Bill for the Under Secretary for Ireland?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I must point out that if it is delayed, it will be owing to the factious opposition of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked whether it was in Order for the right hon. Gentleman to charge Gentlemen on that side of the House with factious opposition?

[No reply.]

Second Reading *deferred* till *Thursday.*

NATIONAL DEBT (SUPPLEMENTAL) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Bill to make certain Amendments in the Law consequential on the passing of "The National Debt (Conversion) Act, 1888," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. William Henry Smith, and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 264.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 15*th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Lloyd's Signal Stations (84); Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment (Scotland) (76); Local Bankruptcy (Ireland) (93); Coroners (36).

Committee—Glebe Lands (100-119).

Committee—*Report*—*Considered*—*Third Reading*—Local Government (England and Wales) Electors (103), and *passed.*

Report — Church Discipline (108-118), *now* Clergy Discipline; Suffragans' Act Amendment * (83).

Third Reading—Tithe Rentcharge * (53); Tithe Rentcharge Recovery and Variation * (99); Copyright (Musical Compositions) * (92); Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances) (96), and *passed.*

Provisional Order Bills — *First Reading*—Local Government * (113); Local Government (No. 2) * (114); Local Government (Poor Law) * (115); Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 2) * (116); Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 3) * (117).

Second Reading—Local Government (Ireland) (Dublin Markets) * (85).

Third Reading—Local Government (Ireland) (Coleraine, &c.) * (63), and *passed.*

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

Moved, "That the Earl of Selborne do take the Chair in all Committees upon Private Bills this day, in the absence of the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos from illness, unless where it shall have been otherwise directed by this House."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Moved, "That the Lord Knutsford be appointed to take the Chair in the Committees of the Whole House, in the absence of the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos from illness."—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Whitsuntide, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess.

INDIA—THE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS.—QUESTION.

The Marquess of RIPON asked the Secretary of State for India, with reference to a statement made in the House of Commons on the previous night on the subject of the Contagious Diseases Acts in India, Whether it was the intention of the Government to take steps to repeal the Acts as they had been repealed in this country, or whether it was only proposed to suspend their operation? He hoped that the Acts would be repealed.

The SECRETARY of STATE (Viscount Cross), in reply, said, that the whole question was brought under his serious notice last year by the Bishop of Lichfield, and, in consequence of what was stated to him, he at once placed himself in communication with the

Viceroy upon the subject. The Answer, which was given in "another place" on the previous night, was as follows:—

> "In consequence of the action taken by the Secretary of State upon the Questions put to him in "another place" last year by the Lord Bishop of Lichfield, what is known as the regimental system has been absolutely stopped. The Commander-in-Chief has prohibited women from accompanying regiments on march or to camp, and also from residing in regimental bazaars. The administration of the Contagious Diseases Act in Bombay, Madras, and Bassein, the only places in which it is in force, has been suspended by the Government of India under a power contained in the Act. The Government of India is now engaged in a revision of the regulations made for preventing the spread of venereal disease in cantonments, under Section 27 of Act III. of 1880; and a despatch is going out to India from the Secretary of State in Council, which will prohibit the compulsory examination of women and the making of any regulations which can be justly construed into a legalization of prostitution."

He thought the noble Marquess would see that important steps had been taken in order to do away with what was somewhat of a scandal. The action which the Government of India had taken was the suspension of the operation of the Acts. The Government of India had asked his assent to that suspension, and he had given it. The results would be carefully watched.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) ELECTORS BILL.—(No. 103.)

(*The Lord Balfour.*)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1 (Short title and construction).

EARL BEAUCHAMP said, he rose to move an Amendment. The Bill had been described to them last night as one of a very complicated nature, and it was proposed that it should be passed through the House under circumstances which, through its connection with another Bill now in the other House, made it difficult to give it that amount of consideration and revision which its importance deserved. If they were to have another franchise, they must ask what it was to be, and were they to exclude those who were owners of property? It seemed to him that this Bill, as it was framed, excluded from the franchise all the owners of property as such; and if its principles were adopted without modification and protest, it appeared to him that they would lead necessarily to what was known as the one man one vote system, and ultimately by a logical sequence to universal suffrage, including all who were of full age. He did not know whether their Lordships were prepared for the adoption of principles leading in a direction so fraught with important consequences to the country. As the Bill stood, the owner of property as such would have no voice whatever in the election of the representatives returned to the proposed County Councils. In their desire to facilitate the passing of the Bill on the responsibility of the Government, their Lordships, he thought, ought not lightly to part with all control over a measure of such importance. In the case of the Ballot Act, their Lordships reserved their right of giving to the measure that revision which might be required at the expiration of a certain number of years; and although after a limited period experience induced Parliament to re-enact the Ballot Act without substantial alteration, yet no one could question that their Lordships had acted wisely in reserving the right of reconsideration in regard to a matter of such importance. But if that argument held good in respect to the Ballot Act, it applied with still greater force to the case of the present Bill, which could receive no examination at all at this moment. Moreover, when that Bill and the other Bill which was its corollary passed into law they would, at no distant period, experience the working of the measure. He therefore proposed to amend that clause by moving the insertion of words providing that the Bill should continue in force till December 31, 1889, and no longer, unless Parliament should otherwise determine.

Amendment *moved*,

> In line 11, after ("1888") add ("and shall continue in force till the thirty-first day of December 1889, and no longer unless Parliament shall otherwise determine.")—(*The Earl Beauchamp.*)

LORD BASING said, he hoped that their Lordships would accept that Amendment. He intended to have moved it himself if the noble Lord had not done so. Apart from the special reasons given by his noble Friend in favour of the Amendment, the Bill was very faulty in its form, because it proposed to legislate on important matters by means of reference to various other Acts of Parliament; and even an expert would find very considerable difficulty in ascertaining what was the exact meaning of its provisions. They ought to have a Bill setting out in clear language what the intentions of Parliament were. He could not admit that because owners of property did not participate in municipal elections they ought to be equally excluded from participating in the elections for County Councils. He denied that there was a perfect analogy between Municipal Corporations and County Councils. It was, no doubt, intended to give to the counties as much of municipal functions as could properly be extended to them; but they would not be able to carry that so very far. As an ilustration of his argument he showed that the money raised by the rates in boroughs was expended for the common benefit of the town, while in the country districts precisely the reverse was the case. The occupier of land might be rated for purposes as to which he had no interest whatever. He would only have one vote, whereas by status and wealth he might be equal to 10 or 20 occupiers of houses. He agreed with his noble Friend as to the desirableness of amending the Bill and limiting its operation. When more experience had been gained they would be able to discuss the question of franchise more freely than at present.

Lord BALFOUR said, he believed that the Bill, although complicated in appearance, would be simple in its operation. Both noble Lords had complained because the Bill enacted by reference to other Acts. The reason for this was a very good one. The basis of the Bill was the extension of the municipal franchise and municipal privileges to the county. The Acts which conferred those privileges were extended by means of the present measure, the word "county" being substituted for "borough" where necessary, in addition to other incidental and necessary changes. If all the Burgess Acts, amended and altered as they had been by the Rating Acts, were to be set out in the form of a Schedule, instead of the measure being less complicated than now, it would be rendered much more difficult and complex. The simple effect of the enactments in Clauses 2 and 4 was this, that the burgess qualification of the boroughs would be extended to the counties. Those charged with making up the lists of electors for the register would place in three divisions in the list those who were qualified. Leaving out of sight the lodger and the service qualifications, there would be one list containing the names of all those who were qualified in each district to vote for municipal and Parliamentary purposes. Next would come those who were qualified to vote only for Parliamentary purposes; and, thirdly, those who were entitled to vote for municipal purposes alone, this list including Peers and women. The noble Earl (Earl Beauchamp) took a most alarming view of the principles of the Bill, but he could not make out from what the noble Lord said how it was that this Bill committed them to the principle of universal suffrage. That was a new idea, and he did not see anything in the Bill which led to that conclusion. If noble Lords thought that in another year there was a likelihood that they would revert to the system of giving owners the right to vote in respect to their property situated within the boroughs, they were, he believed, much mistaken. However, he thought it would be more convenient to take the discussion on that question when the Committee reached the consideration of a subsequent Amendment which raised the point in a particular form. He hoped their Lordships would not accept the Amendment, because he could not see what good purpose would be gained by keeping open an agitation with respect to the franchise for another year. It was urged that if their Lordships passed the Bill as it stood they would part with it for ever. But surely if the Bill did not operate successfully the question could once more be raised by means of an amending Bill. To say that the Government were creating a new franchise unknown to the law was hardly an accurate statement of the case. The Bill simply extended the present municipal franchise to the counties. The Local Government measures at present before Parliament were sufficiently complex already, and he therefore hoped the Amendment would be rejected.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 28; Not-Contents 64: Majority 36.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 2 and 3 *agreed to.*

The Earl of JERSEY said, he rose to move the insertion of new clauses giving an ownership franchise qualification to owners of property not resident within the rural electoral districts in which their property was situated. As the Bill now stood, it would operate very hardly upon the owners of property in counties. The County Councils would have great powers entrusted to them, under which they might make, assess, and levy rates, and deal with roads, bridges, rivers, tramways, gas and water supplies, and, in fact, everything that had to do with the management of the district; and they would also have the very dangerous power entrusted to them of borrowing money, and thereby to make a practically permanent charge upon the land. As the Bill now stood, a landowner might possess several cottages for which he paid the rates, but unless he lived in the district his cottagers, who paid nothing to the rates, would have a voice in levying and spending them, whereas the owner would have no vote in the matter whatever. That was hardly a reasonable position in which to place the landowner. The question affected not only the large landowners, but also the small landowners, of whom there were a great number in the country, and upon whom the rates would fall very heavily. It would be said that they were only extending to counties the borough franchise. But they must recognize that county affairs were not exactly similar to borough affairs. He did not ask for any special privilege or favour for owners of property. He only asked that the right which Parliament had hitherto jealously preserved for those who paid the rates—the right of representation—should not be taken away from them by this Bill, but that there should be left them the power of dealing with those local affairs with which their own interests were so deeply affected.

Moved, after Clause 3, to insert the following Clause:—

(Ownership of land to qualify.)

"Every person who in respect of any property situated outside the limits of a municipal borough is entitled to be registered as an ownership voter within the meaning of the provisions of the Registration Act, 1885, shall be entitled to be registered as a county elector in respect of such qualification, in like manner in all respects as if the sections of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, relating to a burgess qualification included the said ownership qualification."—(*The Earl of Jersey.*)

Lord BALFOUR said, that to enable the House to judge of the Amendment he would ask them to consider its effect if applied as proposed only to rural districts in counties. There was no suggestion that property in boroughs was to qualify. They would often have a case like this. Some of those districts to be created would be partly urban and partly rural, and very often the divisions were of a very arbitrary kind. They might have the houses on one side of a street within a borough, and the houses on the other side in the county. The effect of this proposal would be that upon the same day, for the same Council, and within the same district, they would have owners qualified on one side of the street and owners disqualified on the other. That was an anomaly which had not grown up or happened by accident, but which the noble Earl would deliberately create by a vote in Parliament. The grievance of owners not having a vote was a sentimental one only in rural districts, for proprietors who were non-resident existed to a much greater extent in town than in country districts. To make the change proposed would be to change the whole burgess qualification in such a manner as to create the greatest anomalies. Her Majesty's Government had to choose between the Parliamentary or the municipal franchise, and in preferring the latter to the former he contended that they had solid ground to go upon. The proposal of the noble Earl would change the whole burgess qualification, which would be an uncalled-for step. He ventured to say that this was rather a sentimental than a real grievance; and there could be little hardship in this matter, because as all the elections took place on one day a non-resident owner would not have an opportunity to give many votes even if he had them.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided:*—Contents 34; Not-Contents 55: Majority 21.

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Bathurst, E.
Beauchamp, E.
Carnarvon, E.
Feversham, E.

Jersey, E. [*Teller.*]
Kingston, E.
Lindsay, E.
Mar and Kellie, E.
Milltown, E.
Morton, E.
Powis, E.
Stanhope, E.
Strafford, E.

St. Asaph, L. Bp.

Addington, L.
Aveland, L. [*Teller.*]
Basing, L.
Brougham and Vaux, L.

Clanwilliam, L. (*E. Clanwilliam.*)
Clinton, L.
Colchester, L.
Donington, L.
Fermanagh, L. (*E. Erne.*)
FitzGerald, L.
Herries, L.
Lamington, L.
Magheramorne, L.
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Cranbrook, V. (*L. President.*)

Bedford, D.
Grafton, D.
Rutland, D.

Ripon, M.
Salisbury, M.

Mount-Edgcumbe, E. (*L. Steward.*)
Brownlow, E.
Camperdown, E.
Derby, E.
Fife, E.
Granville, E.
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Selborne, E.
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Cross, V.
Gordon, V. (*E. Aberdeen.*)
Oxenbridge, V.
Sidmouth, V.
Torrington, V.

Carlisle, L. Bp.
Chichester, L. Bp.

Ashbourne, L.
Balfour of Burley, L.
Brassey, L.
Brodrick, L. (*V. Midleton.*)
Burton, L.
Elphinstone, L.
Hamilton of Dalzell, L.
Harris, L.
Hartismere, L. (*L. Henniker.*)
Herschell, L.
Hopetoun, L. (*E. Hopetoun.*)
Kensington, L.
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Knutsford, L.
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Monteagle of Brandon, L.
Northington, L. (*L. Henley.*)
Poltimore, L.
Rosebery, L. (*E. Rosebery.*)
Truro, L.
Watson, L.
Wigan, L. (*E. Crawford and Balcarres.*)
Winmarleigh, L.

Moved, to insert the following New Clause:—

(Tenure of house by office or service not to invalidate vote.)

"Where a man himself inhabits any dwelling-house by virtue of any office, service, or employment, and the dwelling-house is not inhabited by any person under whom such man serves in such office, service, or employment, he shall be deemed for the purposes of this Act to be an inhabitant occupier of such dwelling-house as a tenant."—(*The Earl of Jersey.*)

Lord BALFOUR said, that the same general considerations ruled the answer to this Amendment as in the last. The burgess qualification had been taken as the basis of the new franchise, and it had been resolved neither to level up nor to level down. He hoped the Amendment would not be accepted.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clauses 4 to 11 *agreed to.*

Clause 12 (Separate list of persons residing within fifteen miles of county).

The Earl of MILLTOWN asked whether it did not relate to the qualification of persons to be elected members of the new Councils, and import into this Bill the qualification now existing in the Municipal Corporations Act? If, as he was of opinion, that it was not desirable, and might be mishievous, a gentleman who might reside a little beyond the stipulated distance from his property would be ineligible, although he might be the very person whom the electors should desire to represent them. We had long since done away with the qualification for Members of Parliament, and he thought there was no reason for retaining it in the case of members of County Boards.

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury) replied in the affirmative. No doubt, the question of qualification was a most important one, and their Lordships would have an opportunity of fully discussing it when the larger measure was before them.

The Earl of JERSEY asked, whether the Government could give the House any information with regard to a matter which was mentioned in "another place," and in respect to which they then gave a kind of promise—namely, as to whether owners not having votes as ratepayers would under the Local Government Bill be qualified to sit upon the County Council?

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, it would be irregular to discuss this point, which did not arise out of the present Bill, and he hoped his noble Friend would be satisfied with the assurance, to use a common expression, that the Government had a very open mind on the subject.

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses *agreed to.*

Bill *reported* without Amendment.

Lord BALFOUR said, he begged to move the suspension of the Standing Order in order to allow of the Bill being read a third time and passed. It was essential that the Bill should become law before Parliament again met after the Holidays, and, therefore, that it should receive the Royal Assent before the adjournment, which had been fixed for to-morrow or Thursday.

Moved, "That Standing Order No. XXXV. be *considered* (according to order) and *dispensed* with."—(*The Lord Balfour.*)

The Earl of FEVERSHAM said, he extremely regretted the proposal to hurry this important Bill through the House. At the close of last Session, as late as the month of September, an important measure dealing with allotments was introduced into this House when the attendance of Members was very attenuated, and when no adequate opportunity of discussing it was afforded. He thought the practice of thus hurrying Bills through this House was calculated to undermine the authority of the House, as tending to give the country the impression that measures did not here receive due deliberation. He objected to the practice generally, and he objected specially to it on this occasion in regard to this Bill, which was really legislation in the dark. They were creating a constituency before they knew what the representative body would be. Would it cause any very great inconvenience supposing the Local Government Bill were retarded? Was that Bill likely to establish a system so very superior to the present system that there was any hurry about it? On the contrary, it was generally admitted that the present system of administering county business had been most admirable, being efficient and economical. A little delay would, if anything, be an an advantage as giving time for preparation and consideration, and he desired to enter his protest against the proposal of the Government to suspend the Standing Orders and hurry the Bill through.

Earl BEAUCHAMP said, that if it were hereafter found that this Bill did not work well, there would be great regret in this House that it had not received due consideration, and he hoped that the responsibility would then rest where it ought to rest—namely, on Her Majesty's Government, who had denied their Lordships the opportunity of giving it full consideration.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, he agreed that the alteration in the present system of county government was not a matter of great urgency; but this Bill was connected with financial changes which could not come into operation until the Local Government Bill was passed, and which would be very satisfactory to the rural population. He did not think that that population would be grateful to the noble Earl if he were to succeed in postponing those financial changes for another year. As to the actual proposal to suspend the Standing Order, he should not make it if he thought any considerable number of their Lordships objected, though the consequences of its not being made would be that this House would have to sit on Thursday, and possibly Friday. If there was any considerable body of their Lordships who wished to consider the Bill on third reading, the Government did not desire to stand in the way of their doing so.

The Earl of CARNARVON said, he ventured to say that their Lordships would be perfectly willing to put on one side their private and personal convenience in order to secure the consideration of this Bill, which seemed to him to be a Bill of a very important character. It was admitted on all hands that the measure was defective in its construction. The practice of enumerating clauses had been constantly condemned on both sides of the House in the strongest language, and by the highest possible authority. In many cases, no doubt, this was inevitable, and the imperfections of Parliamentary and Party Government, he supposed, were like the imperfections of human nature. But this measure, by the confession of everybody, involved very serious principles, and principles which he believed were very dangerous. It was a part of a larger measure which would sweep away an ancient, a well-tried, and a successful institution of the country. For 300 years and more that institution had stood the test of all trials; for 300 years and more it had exercised a vast influence—an influence which both sides admitted to be wholesome and wise. But that was now to be swept away by a measure which any of their Lordships would be pleased to discuss when it came before them. The Bill now under discussion, however, was intertwined with that measure—it was a part of the larger measure; and he was, therefore, very sorry to see it hurried through by the suspension of the Standing Order. The Bill, in his opinion, contained very questionable, if not dangerous, principles.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, it was only because he believed that the Bill in its present shape was acceptable to the vast majority of their Lordships that they ventured to move the suspension of the Standing Order.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 3ª, and *passed.*

LLOYD'S SIGNAL STATIONS BILL.

(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

(NO. 84.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (The Earl of ONSLOW), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said it would go a long way to bring about the introduction of electricity to lighthouses round the coasts.

Moved, " That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT (1878) AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(*The Earl of Aberdeen.*)

(NO. 76.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it only applied to burghs in Scotland, and was rendered necessary by a change that had taken place respecting the observance of Fast Days, which was a distinctly Scottish institution. For some time past the observance of Fast Days in Scotland had greatly fallen into disuse, not from any want of fidelity towards religious ordinances, but rather because if the old system were to be maintained it would have to be maintained more frequently than formerly. The Fast Days in Scotland had long filled the place of the observance of Good Friday and Bank Holidays in England, and the object of the Bill was to secure that the persons employed in factories should have a holiday on such days as there was a general holiday in the district where these factories were placed. Under previous Acts dealing with this subject it was provided that the two holidays should be the Fast Days. Now that the Fast Days had been largely discontinued, they were left the holidays, but no certain day was fixed. The Bill provided that the magistrates in burghs where no Fast Days were kept should appoint two holidays in the year at an interval of not less than two months. He had been asked why it was not applied to the whole of Scotland. There were two reasons why it had not been made to apply to the whole of Scotland. The first was that it was mainly in burghs that the institution of Fast Days had been discontinued, and therefore in counties opinion was not so ripe for the change; and, secondly, that the Bill would not have received such general approval as it did if it had applied to the whole country. He therefore thought it desirable that the Bill should be confined to the burghs. He hoped the House would give the Bill a second reading.

Moved, " That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Aberdeen.*)

LORD BALFOUR said, he thought the reasons given for confining the Bill to burghs were hardly sufficient. He knew that many country districts as well as burghs had discontinued the Fast Days, and in some of these, as in his own parish, there were more than one factory. Yet no provision was made for a holiday. It might thus happen that while in an adjoining burgh there would be a holiday, those employed in a neighbouring factory situated in the county would have none. He therefore thought it a most extraordinary proposal that a Bill of this kind should be made to apply only to burghs. In his opinion it would have been a less evil to have waited until next year, when there would probably be a County Bill for Scotland, and then the necessary steps could have been taken to give the power of appointing these holidays to the Local Authority.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly.

LOCAL BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) BILL.

(*The Lord Ashbourne.*)

(NO. 93.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a." (*The Lord Ashbourne.*)

LORD FITZGERALD, in moving that the second reading of the Bill be postponed till after the Whitsuntide Recess, said, his object in doing so was to get time for the consideration of its provisions by the great bodies in that country who were interested in the matter. His noble and learned Friend had not given any reason whatever for pressure being put upon their Lordships to force this Bill through the House at this particular time. There was in Ireland a society known as the Incorporated Society of Solicitors. It was a body similar in all respects to the well-known body of the same name in England. He had received a letter from the secretary of that Society to-day, stating that he had only received a copy of the Bill yesterday, and that he had not had time to consider it, and he had not time to call the council of the Society together, as they were scattered throughout the country, and the few members of the Society that he had communicated with had expressed their disapproval of the Bill. It was curious that, with respect to a Bill of this character, they should be asked to pass the second reading without any explanation. Amongst the letters which he had received on the subject of this Bill was one which he had received that morning, in which the writer stated that the Recorder of Cork, who was to be one of the Judges under this Bill, entirely disapproved of it, and that the mercantile community of Cork did not accept it. This, as their Lordships would see, was a Bill to constitute certain Local Bankruptcy Courts in Ireland. When a similar Bill was last before the House of Commons it was opposed by the Public Bodies. The circumstances of the country had since altered; but the alteration of the circumstances made the case much stronger against the Bill. The proposal made by this Bill involved considerable expense, and it rested upon a wrong principle. Another Bill—the Judicature (Ireland) Bill—had been brought into the House of Commons, which was an adoption, to some extent, of the provisions of a Bill of Lord Spencer's in 1855. It related to the judicial system in Ireland, and proposed to abolish the two bankruptcy Courts in Dublin, and to transfer their business ultimately to the Superior Court. While it was thus proposed to abolish the two Bankruptcy Courts in Dublin, which were at present efficiently administering the Irish Bankruptcy Law, the noble and learned Lord proposed to continue the administration of this condemned bankruptcy system by instituting a number of local Courts with official staffs, necessitating great expense. This Bill proposed to provide a Local Bankruptcy Court for Belfast, including portions of the Counties of Antrim and Down, with a population of 950,000; and it proposed a similar Court for the City and County of Cork, with a population of 750,000; and the Lord Lieutenant would have power, by Order in Council, to establish Local Bankruptcy Courts also in Londonderry, Galway, Waterford, and Limerick, or any of those places. The Bill provided that the Recorders of Londonderry and Galway, as well as Belfast and Cork, should be the Bankruptcy Judges for those towns. The County Court Judges of Waterford and Limerick should also be constituted Bankruptcy Judges for the purpose of carrying out the Bankruptcy Law. These proposals must necessarily involve very considerable expense, because anyone who knew anything about Bankruptcy Law knew that it could only be carried out by a trained Judge and a trained staff. Then there was to be a registrar for each Court; there was to be an official assignee, who was a very important officer, and there was to be such other clerks and officers as the Lord Lieutenant might consider it necessary to appoint. He did not particularly understand those provisions of the Bill by which the Counties of Antrim and Down were to be distributed in such a way that Antrim might become part of Down, and Down part of Antrim, for the purposes of bankruptcy jurisdiction, and in Cork in the same way the East Riding was to become part of the West Riding, and the West Riding part of the East Riding, for the same purposes. The Bankruptcy Judges must reside in the places in which they officiated all the year round. It was also provided by the Bill that compensation should be given to the official assignee in Dublin, and it contained a sweeping clause for the appointment by the Lord Chancellor of all the other necessary officials whose appointment was not otherwise provided for, so that their Lordships would see that this was a very sweeping measure of expenditure. In 1883 it was proposed in the House of Lords that Mr. Chamberlain's Act should be extended to Ireland, and the same proposition had been made, he believed, in the House of Commons, but it was thought then that it was better that it should not extend to Ireland immediately, but that they should wait, and if its operation was successful that it might then be extended to it with such Amendments as suited the institutions of the country. But there was no such object aimed at by this Bill. If Belfast and Cork wished to have local Courts he did not object to it, but let the bankruptcy system be put upon a proper basis. He had in his hand a document sent to him by a Dublin solicitor in which he gave an estimate of the bankruptcy business of the whole country. From this it appeared that the total liabilities amounted to £364,457 for one year, of which sum £6,840 represented the bankruptcies that arose in Belfast. That would show that the establishment of a Local Bankruptcy Court there was not so very pressing a necessity. The solicitor further stated that when the Bankruptcy Bill was formerly introduced, he was asked by the Home Trade Association of Manchester to explain its provisions, and the result was that the Home Trade Association arrived at three resolutions to the effect—(1) that the business of the Bankruptcy Courts in Ireland was not sufficient to occupy the time of a single Judge of ordinary business capacity; (2) that if the small business was distributed over the country it would weaken the central Court; and (3) that it would be inconvenient for the merchants to be professionally represented in the various local districts. This Bill was only intended for the convenience of debtors, and not for the convenience of creditors, while it did not provide a small bankruptcy jurisdiction which would enable small traders and small farmers to have their affairs settled expeditiously and inexpensively. The Bill, as he had said, was expensive, unnecessary at present, and not based upon a right principle, and he hoped time would be allowed to examine its provisions before the second reading was taken.

Moved, "That the further Debate be adjourned."—(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord ASHBOURNE) hoped that their Lordships would not assent to the proposal of the noble and learned Lord. The provisions of the Bill were explained when it was introduced, 10 days ago, and had been circulated for eight days. He came over from Ireland last week with the intention of moving its second reading. The noble and learned Lord opposite asked him a few days ago to postpone his Motion for the second reading of the Bill until after the Whitsuntide recess. He told the noble and learned Lord that he could not do that, but that he would, in order to suit his convenience, postpone his Motion until to-day. In these circumstances he thought that their Lordships would agree that he had done all that courtesy required of him in the matter. His time was not his own, and it was not easy for him to be away from his duties in Dublin, and he had done everything he could to meet his noble and learned Friend. With regard to the provisions of the Bill he would remind their Lordships that now-a-days the desire was that there should be a local administration in the case of bankruptcy, and in his opinion it was most desirable that the great places in Ireland, such as Cork and Belfast, and possibly also other places, should have Bankruptcy Courts of their own. He had previously explained that. As far back as 1879, Lord Cairns gave the great authority of his name to a measure practically almost identical with that now before their Lordships. That Bill passed through their Lordships' House with the approval of both sides in all its stages; it passed two readings in the House of Commons, and was only lost in consequence of the close of the Session rendering it impossible that it should be carried. In 1883, a similar Bill was prepared by the Government of the day, and was supported by the noble Earl opposite (Earl Spencer). The present measure was drawn upon almost identical lines with that Bill. In the last Session of Parliament there were three Bills brought in on this subject. They were not confined to one side of the House, and commanded support from politicians of every shade of opinion, and one of those Bills was actually sent to a Select Committee, and it was in its essential details largely identical with the present Bill. How had the noble and learned Lord met the Motion for the second reading? The noble and learned Lord asked that the Motion should be postponed, on the ground that the law societies in Ireland had not had sufficient time to consider its provisions. It would, however, have been very easy for those societies to have obtained copies of the Bill in ample time for them to consider it before the second reading. The principle of the present measure had been known for years. The noble and learned Lord said that he objected to this measure on the ground that it proposed to perpetuate the condemned Irish bankruptcy system. He denied that the present system of Irish bankruptcy had been condemned; on the contrary, it had worked very well, and the noble and learned Lord was the last person who ought to condemn it, seeing that he was the author of it himself. Ireland had been excluded from the scope of Mr. Chamberlain's Bankruptcy Act, because Ireland had an existing Bankruptcy Law, which on the whole worked well, according to the requirements of the country. There was no condemned bankruptcy system in Ireland. The Irish bankruptcy system had worked well, though he did not say that there might not be Amendments made in it. There might be Amendments made it it, but at present he did not know that there was any demand from any considerable section of opinion in the country for anything like a change in the Irish Bankruptcy Law. The noble and learned Lord had referred to the Irish Judicature Bill before the other House, but it proposed to make no change in the bankruptcy laws. It only proposed to abolish the existing Bankruptcy Court in Dublin as a separate Court, handing over the jurisdiction as a going concern to the High Court. He would reserve his answers to the detailed criticism till the Committee stage, and he would be glad if his noble and learned Friend would furnish him with any figures or statements he might have, in order that he might consider and examine them. But he asked their Lordships to say, was it reasonable that great commercial communities with growing populations like Belfast and Cork should not have a local bankruptcy jurisdiction? In order to afford their Lordships time to examine all the details of the Bill, he proposed to postpone the Committee stage till the 8th of June, if that would meet the convenience of their Lordships.

Lord HERSCHELL said, that neither he nor any noble Lord, he believed, on the Opposition side of the House objected to the localization of bankruptcy jurisdiction. The Bill of 1883 was not extended to Ireland—though they had been pressed in the Grand Committee by Irish Members, and especially by Representatives from Ulster to extend it—because there was a sufficiently strong minority in the House of Commons to hamper the further passage of the Bill, and it was naturally not considered desirable to import an Irish discussion into the debates upon that Bill. The reason Ireland was excluded was not because the Irish people were satisfied with the existing system, but for the reason he had stated. There had now been several years' experience of the working of the Act in England, which had been sufficient to disclose its advantages and disadvantages. He believed that it would be a great benefit to Ireland if the advantages found to proceed from the English system were extended to her.

Lord FITZGERALD said, that what he meant by the condemned system was that the passing of Mr. Chamberlain's Act, which condemned the English bankruptcy system, had also condemned the Irish bankruptcy system, because the two systems were identical previous to the passing of that Act. The former English system was the present Irish system. He spoke of the principle of the system, not of the machinery. It is true that 31 years ago he carried through the House of Commons a Bankruptcy Bill, which continued to be the law; that was much altered by the Bill of 1872, but its principles were condemned by the Bill of 1883, with which he had nothing to do.

On Question? *Resolved* in the *Negative;* Then the original Motion was *agreed to;* and Bill read 2ª accordingly; and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Friday* the 8*th of June* next.

GLEBE LANDS BILL.—(No. 100.)

(*Viscount Cross.*)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1 (Short title and extent of Act) *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Application by incumbent to Land Commissioners for sale of Glebe).

LORD ADDINGTON said, he rose to propose an Amendment, the effect of which was to make it necessary for an incumbent to obtain the consent of the patron of his living before applying to the Land Commissioners for a sale of the glebe land of the parish. He urged that to give the incumbent the power of absolutely disposing of the glebe of the parish without the consent of the patron was a very dangerous proceeding.

Amendment *moved,* in line 7, after ("benefice"), insert ("with the consent of the patron.")—(*The Lord Addington.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS) said, he must oppose the Amendment, which would result in very few sales being carried out. Ample provision was made by the Bill for the just rights of the patron by making it necessary that notice should be given him so that he could object, if he saw fit, before the Land Commissioners who had to decide the matter.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he thought that there was a great deal to be said in favour of the Amendment of the noble Lord, and that it could not be quite so easily disposed of as the noble Viscount appeared to think. The law now gave the patron considerable rights in restraint of alienation on the part of the incumbent. He could conceive many cases in which it would not be for the permanent good of the living that the glebe should be sold. Frequently a clergyman had private means, and wished to make alterations in the parsonage-house which would be entirely unsuitable for a poorer successor. He thought it salutary that the patron, as a representative of the lay element, should have something to say in these matters.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, he would urge their Lordships to adopt the clause in its present shape, not as a privilege to the clergy, but as a distinct measure of public policy, the object being, wherever it could be done, that clergymen should no longer trust to so uncertain, so embarrassing, and so cruel a source of income as glebe land. The sufferings of many of the clergy had been extreme in consequence of this having been their one source of income. The teachings of the time had pressed upon the mind of Parliament the necessity for taking measures to discourage the continued existence of this source of income. If it were intended to produce any results, the machinery of the Act must be made to work as smoothly as possible. If, after the machinery were set going by the clergyman, the necessity of the patron's consent was interposed, it would be found that friction would result, and the machinery would never be got to move. What would happen would be that the clergyman would go to the patron; the patron might be a minor, or he might be abroad, or he might be a very old man who did not like to be disturbed, or, perhaps, a man who quarrelled with the Church and never spoke to the clergyman, or perhaps a man who did not like the land to be let on building leases, because it would interfere with his privacy, and so it would be impossible to sell the glebe at all. When all these difficulties had been overcome, the family solicitor might consider whether it was not a breach of trust, and whether the patron was doing the best thing possible for some possible future presentee. He thought their Lordships would be very hard-hearted indeed to introduce these additional difficulties.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 3, 4, and 5 *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Provision where land is subject to mortgage or other debt).

Amendment *moved,*

In Sub-section 2, page 4, line 37, leave out ("so") and insert ("provided that no mortgage created for a limited term, and which is by statute only repayable by annual instalments out of the income of the benefice within such term, shall be discharged out of the purchase money of land sold under this Act, and"): line 38, leave out ("is") and insert ("shall be.")—(*The Earl of Powis.*)

THE BISHOP OF LONDON said, he thought the Amendment was of great importance, as he had known not a few cases in which great difficulties had been caused by very imprudent borrowing on the part of the clergymen.

VISCOUNT CROSS was now unwilling to accept the actual words of the Amendment, but he hoped to be able, before the next stage of the Bill, to meet the view of the right rev. Prelate and of his noble Friend.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Provision as to annual charges on benefice) *agreed to.*

Clause 8 (As to sale).

On the Motion of Viscount CROSS, Amendment made—In page 5, line 24, at end insert as a separate paragraph:—

"Before approving of a sale under this Act of glebe land of any benefice, the Land Commissioners shall require such notice of the proposed sale to be given as they think sufficient to give information thereof to the parishioners."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Power to make rules).

On the Motion of Viscount CROSS, Amendment made—In page 6, line 1, leave out ("sales of land by and other"); page 6, line 4, leave out from ("Act") to ("and") in line 5.

The Report of Amendments to be received on *Monday* the 4*th of June* next; and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 119.)

CORONERS BILL.—(No. 36.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that the first part dealt with the powers of the Coroner to hold certain inquests, and the second part with the mode of his election. There appeared to be a general consensus of opinion on the 1st section of the Bill, which gave the Coroner power to hold inquests in respect of fires. He was not sure that such power did not already exist. Such inquests used to be held, but owing to a legal decision that had been given by the Courts, they had been discontinued. However, it was felt that a power to hold such inquests ought to exist, and it was consequently conferred by this Bill. The subject of the mode of election of the Coroner was a more debatable matter, and though he had read a great number of communications, which all concurred in condemning the present practice as an intolerable nuisance, there was no such unanimity as to the system to be substituted for it. At present every freeholder in the district was entitled to vote at an election of a Coroner, no matter how limited his freehold or how recently he might have become possessed of it. There was, therefore, no register and great confusion, with consequent enormous expense, and many a candidate had been ruined by his success or failure. It had been suggested that the Parliamentary constituency should be substituted. There was a particular objection to that part of the Bill which vested the appointment of Coroners in the Lord Chancellor. His mind was quite open upon this matter, and he certainly should not jealously claim the patronage which the Bill gave him. It might be suggested that the new County Councils should have the power of appointing Coroners; but the objection would at once arise that this could not be provided in the Bill, because no such Bodies existed at the present time. Even if they did, it would require consideration whether the election of Coroners by those who were themselves an elected body was altogether a desirable mode of meeting the difficulty. All he would say at present, therefore, was that the present system ought to be altered, and that when the Bill reached Committee he should gladly welcome any suggestion which would get rid of the difficulty. The responsibility of appointing Coroners was not one which he had desired to attach to the Office of Lord Chancellor. He asked their Lordships to read the Bill a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Lord HERSCHELL said, he wished to express his strong objection to the 1st clause of the Bill with reference to the mode of appointing Coroners. He entirely shared the view expressed by his noble and learned Friend as to the extreme inexpediency of the present mode of appointment; and he looked upon the proposal to vest the patronage entirely in the Lord Chancellor as a very serious one. There could be no doubt that the abolition of the system by which the freeholders had a voice in the appointment of the Coroner would be regarded by many with some jealousy. The mode of popular election was an unsatisfactory one; but there was a widespread feeling that the Coroner ought to be regarded to some extent as a representative of the people, and should not be appointed by the Executive. If they did away with popular election altogether in this matter as it now existed, they were not likely to carry public opinion with them in attaining the end which they had in view by substituting for the present system a system of appointment by the Lord Chancellor or any other officer of the Government of the day. The only step by which they would be able to accomplish what they had in view with general assent would be to vest the appointment in some elected body. Many of the municipalities had for years had the power of appointing Coroners, and any proposal to take that power away from them would be regarded with the utmost jealousy and hostility. It was proposed to constitute County Councils, and it seemed to him that the natural course would be to extend to the County Councils the power of appointing Coroners. It was true that the County Councils were not yet brought into existence; but they had that night passed a Bill which was based upon the assumption that these Councils were going to exist. He would suggest, therefore, that the question of appointment should not be dealt with until they were able to deal with it in the way he had pointed out. At all events, do not let them transfer the power of appointment to the Lord Chancellor. He should feel it his duty to bring this question forward when the Bill reached the Committee stage.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT—THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS.

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury), in moving the adjournment of the House, said, that it was proposed that the House should sit to-morrow at 2 o'clock for the purpose of a Royal Commission —there would be no other Business before their Lordships—and that at its rising the House should adjourn to Monday, June 4.

House adjourned at Eight o'clock, till To-morrow Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 15*th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Southampton Borough, *v.* Admiral Sir John Edmund Commerell, V.C., G.C.B., Chiltern Hundreds.

Committee of Selection (Standing Committees) (Special Report).

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Henley-on-Thames Gas.

Considered as amended—Cork and Bandon Railway.

Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Public Health Acts Amendment (Buildings in Streets) * [255].

Provisional Order Bills—*Second Reading*—Local Government (Gas) * [252]; Local Government (No. 3) * [249]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 6) * [251]; Pier and Harbour (No. 2) * [248]; Tramways (No. 3) * [243].

Report—Metropolitan Commons (Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray) * [193].

Third Reading—Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 4) * [218]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 5) * [219], and *passed.*

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order,

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

ULSTER CANAL AND TYRONE NAVIGATION BILL [*Lords*].

SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.), in rising to move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, said, that he had placed upon the Committee the name of the Chairman of Ways and Means, which he found to be unnecessary, seeing that the Chairman of Ways and Means would be an *ex officio* Member of the Committee. He proposed to move that the Committee should consist of seven Members, and he would suggest that five should be nominated by the House, and the remaining two by the Committee of Selection. It would be observed that, in choosing the names of Members to sit on the Committee, he had not attempted to make a Party question of the matter. Only two hon. Members out of the seven whose names he had placed upon the Paper were Gentlemen who, in any sense, could be supposed to be hostile to the Bill—the hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) and the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor)—and they were not really hostile, because the hon. Member for East Donegal was prepared to support the Bill, provided certain guarantees were given ; and the only kind of opposition which had been offered to it by the hon. Member for West Cavan was directed to words securing proper safeguards as to leaseholders and the lending of money to the Canal Company. It seemed to him to be of very great importance that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, although, of course, he did not know what view the Government had taken in the matter. It would be remembered that in the year 1886 a Bill was laid before the House dealing with the same question, which did actually go before a Select Committee, and very important changes were made in the measure. That Committee examined witnesses, and, among others, examined Dr. Madden in regard to certain questions which affected the county of Fermanagh. Very important evidence was given before the Committee, which produced a great effect, and led to the alteration of the provisions of the Bill. At the present moment what he desired the Committee should do, as far as he was concerned, was this--that they should have an opportunity of pressing on the minds of the Government the necessity of providing proper guarantees in any arrangement which was made between the country, as represented by the Treasury, and the persons to whom the canal was to be handed over, and to secure before the property was handed over that those guarantees were adequate to entitle the Government to get rid of the property. The property itself was valued, when it was made, at at least £200,000, with the land adjacent, and it was now proposed to hand over Crown property to the extent of nearly £250,000 to a number of individuals of whom the House knew absolutely nothing. Surely such a proposal was so important that before it was assented to, its ultimate effects should be fully considered. The proposal was to hand over this property to a certain number of individuals who might be very good men, but who were necessarily a fluctuating body, and who might sell this particular asset, and set off the money obtained for it against their bad debts. The House knew absolutely nothing of the transaction; and because their friends were really in a state of darkness upon the matter, he asked for information to be obtained by a Select Committee. He took it that a Select Committee would examine the Committee of the Lagan Navigation Company, to whom it was proposed to hand over the Canal, and see who they were. He was told that they were wealthy gentleman, but, personally, he did not know whether that was the fact or not. They might be paupers for anything he knew—a corporation of paupers—and, therefore, he maintained that all these matters should be subjected to the scrutiny of a Select Committee. Above all, it was desirable that this Lagan Corporation should never have the power of selling this estate, which they would obtain from the State for nothing. It would be most iniquitous if, in regard to property which they obtained for nothing, they should ever be permitted to sell it as an asset. If the Lagan Navigation ever got the Canal into their hands, and desired to part with the land on each side of it, it should be handed over to labourers in a district, if a fair case could be made out for creating a body of small yeomen in Ireland. Certainly, if ever the land was parted with, it should go to the labouring classes. It was now held by the Crown, and he was of opinion that they had no right to part with it for the private advantage of a few individuals. He, therefore, respectfully submitted that it was only right and fair to appoint a Select Committee to ascertain what the value of the Canal was which that House, out of its bounty, proposed to confer upon the Lagan Navigation Company as a free gift; who the parties were who had the right to claim it as a free gift; and what they intended to do with it when it was handed over to them. Under these circumstances, he ventured to suggest that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, partly nominated by the House and partly by the Committee of Selection. He was only anxious to protect the public interest, and at the present moment he would confine himself to moving that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, the Bill was referred in the ordinary way to a Committee yesterday. The question, therefore, would be that the Order to refer the Bill to a Committee be discharged, and that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Order [14th May] for Committee, be read and discharged, and that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy*).

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) said, he hoped the House would not consent to shelve this Bill, as would practically be the case if the Motion of the hon. and learned Member were agreed to. The hon. and learned Member had clearly shown by his own statement that all he wished to do could easily be accomplished when the Report of the Committee came back before the whole House. He had already called attention to the fact that the Bill went before a Select Committee in 1886.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Not this Bill, but a Public Bill.

COLONEL WARING said, it was a Bill that was practically the same as the present measure, having identically the same objects in view, the only difference being that it was introduced as a Public instead of a Private Bill. That Committee presented a Report, and the recommendations contained in that Report were available to any hon. Member if he chose to enlighten himself on the subject, before assenting to the unusual course proposed by the hon. and learned Gentleman. He thought the Financial Secretary to the Treasury made it very clear the other day how the matter stood. The hon. Gentleman was quite aware of the dangers which had been pointed out by the hon. and learned Member opposite, and intimated that the Government intended to take precautions against the acquisition of this property by the Great Northern Railway Company, or against the Lagan Navigation Company being able to use it as their own private property. It appeared to him that the course taken by the Financial Secretary practically settled the whole question, and that it was not necessary to send the Bill to a Committee upstairs, from which it would never emerge.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he hoped the House would not consent to the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy). The measure would save the taxpayers of the country £1,200 a-year, which they were now paying, and it proposed to confer a great boon upon the mercantile community of the North of Ireland. The Company who were to take over the Undertaking were quite willing to meet fairly all the objections which had been raised. They were quite prepared to meet the case of the leases in East Tyrone, and to prevent the ultimate sale of the Canal to the Great Northern Railway Company. They were willing to insert clauses in the Bill upon those two points. That would be satisfactory to the House. As to the question of the Government lending money to the Company on their security, he thought that was a matter for the Government, and not for hon. Members below the Gangway. The House need not fear that the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would not be able to take care of the Government in that matter. Therefore, he hoped that the House would not consent to take an unusual course with regard to the Bill, but that it should be allowed to go through the usual course appointed for Private Bills. It was an Unopposed Bill, and ought to take the ordinary course.

SIR WILLIAM EWART (Belfast, N.) said, he had also to express a hope that the House would not consent to the Motion. On behalf of the mercantile community of the North of Ireland, he strongly deprecated any further delay in regard to the passing of the Bill, which had now been before the House consecutively for several years. The opposition to which the measure had been subjected had deprived the North of Ireland of the great advantages which were expected to accrue from the passing of the Bill. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) had mentioned several points, which he thought should be inquired into by a Select Committee; but it might be pointed out that if the Bill went before the Chairman of Ways and Means in the ordinary way, ample care would be taken to insert provisions in the Bill to guard the interests of the State and of the general public. He trusted that those who agreed with him in the propriety of pressing the Bill forward would lend every assistance in their power in resisting the Motion, and so far as the Treasury was concerned, he maintained that it was quite fit to take care of itself. The Motion would involve delay, and he could not shut his eyes to the fact that there was very great danger in delay. He, therefore, trusted that the House would not consent to refer the Bill to a Select Committee.

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's) supported the proposal of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford, to send the Bill to a Select Committee. It was quite clear that at that period of the Session, if it were referred to a Select Committee and came down to the House again after Whitsuntide, they would be in a position to pass it without further delay. The hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) had given insufficient grounds for opposing the Motion, and it was obvious that the measure contained many points which a Select Committee could alone deal with fitly. For instance, it had already been pointed out that there was no guarantee contained in the measure that the Company to whom the property was to be handed over would be prevented from selling it afterwards to the Great Northern Railway Company. He saw no force in the objections of the hon. Members for South Tyrone, North Down (Colonel Waring), North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson), and other Members from the North of Ireland, for, if the Bill went before a Select Committee, they would really have the question in their own hands, as a majority of the Select Committee proposed by the hon. Member for North Longford was composed of the Friends of those hon. Gentlemen.

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY (Oxford University) said, he gathered from the conversation which had taken place that it was considered desirable to discuss certain details of the Bill with a view of introducing changes, and it was suggested that the only way of doing that was to refer the Bill to a Select Committee. The real question was whether the Bill, being an Unopposed Bill, it was to go before the ordinary tribunal, or to be sent to a Select Committee. He thought the House would do wisely to accede to the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healey), and he would suggest that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee of seven Members, four to be appointed by the House, and three by the Committee of Selection.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he was quite ready to accept the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet, and he was also prepared to allow the Committee to be nominated by the Committee of Selection.

Colonel SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) said, he sincerely trusted that the Government would not consent to the proposal of the hon. and learned Member opposite. It was most unaccountable why the hon. and learned Gentleman should so bitterly oppose this Bill. He represented a constituency through which the Canal passed, and he must be aware that all sections of the community were unanimously in favour of the measure. The only objection which had been urged against it came from the hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar), who, for some reason or other, had got at the cog wheels of the Bill and interfered with its progress. The objections of the hon. Member for West Cavan were that no further money should be advanced for the purposes of the Canal, and precautions should be taken to prevent the possibility of the property being sold to a Railway Company. The Government had already expressed their intention of so altering the provisions of the Bill that that would be rendered impossible. The Bill was one of very happy augury. It was the only Bill upon which Irishmen of all Parties agreed. It was absolutely non-contentious, and it was much desired by all persons in the part in which he lived and in the districts through which the Canal passed. He, therefore, trusted that the House would pass the Bill without further delay. The right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken said that there had been no discussion upon the details of the Bill, but the Bill itself had been gone into over and over again on the Floor of that House. [Mr. T. M. Healy: Never.] If not this Bill, at any rate a similar measure, and never was a Bill brought in which had received more general acceptance than this proposal. He, therefore, hoped that hon. Members opposite would withdraw their opposition, as he had said the only reason why the Bill had not been passed long ago was from some cause or other with which he was not acquainted. The hon. Member for East Cavan had interfered with the cog wheels of the Bill, and they had stuck ever since.

Mr. O'HANLAN (Cavan, E.) rose to Order. Was the hon. and gallant Gentleman entitled to say that the Member for East Cavan had opposed the Bill? He (Mr. O'Hanlon) was Member for East Cavan, and never did anything of the kind.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, the Question did not involve a point of Order.

Colonel SAUNDERSON said, that it would appear in the Division which was taken yesterday, several Members of the Party below the Gangway on the other side of the House were in favour of the Bill.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, that in consequence of what took place yesterday, he had made some inquiry, and he found that there was no objection on the part of the promoters to insert that clause in the Bill to meet the objections which had been taken by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford, and to make it certain that the Great Northern Railway Company, to whom the hon. and learned Gentleman referred, should be prevented from ever acquiring the Canal, it would be necessary to insert in the Bill a clause to that effect, and it could be added in Committee. As he had said yesterday, he believed that could be done in one of two ways—either in the agreement, which would have to be drawn up between the Lagan Navigation Company and the Commissioners of Works, or by the insertion of a clause in the Bill. His own impression was that it would be better to insert a clause in the Bill, and if that course were taken, it would be necessary either to insert it in the Committee to which the Bill was referred, or when the Bill itself came back to the House. He did not think there was much difference as to which course was adopted, and, therefore, he had come to the conclusion, after the advice which had been given by the Chairman of the Committee of Selection, that the best course would be to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, and allow the names of the Committee to be nominated by the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of the Committee of Selection. He advised his hon. Friend who was in charge of the Bill to accept the Motion. He wished to take that opportunity of pointing out that several Members had spoken of the possibility of handing over property to the extent of £250,000 to the Lagan Navigation Company, and of that Company being in a position to dispose of it to somebody else. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford could not have read the provisions of the Bill, or he would not have made that statement. Any such proposal must receive the sanction of the Board of Works in writing before it could be carried out.

Mr. T. M. HEALY remarked that it might receive the sanction of that Board.

Mr. JACKSON said, it must also receive the sanction of the Treasury, and, therefore, there was every safeguard that the property would not be disposed of without due consideration. He had said that the precautions which were necessary could be provided for in the agreement between the Government and the Lagan Navigation Company; but it could also be done by the insertion of a clause in Committee. He, therefore, supported the Motion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee with the view of having a new clause inserted.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said, that the Bill was a most important one for the community of Belfast, and the whole of the North of Ireland. He, therefore, hoped, if the House consented to refer it to a Select Committee, that the Committee would be nominated and sit at the earliest moment possible, so that the consideration of the Bill might be proceeded with at once.

Sir CHARLES LEWIS (Antrim, N.) said, that as the ordinary course was not to be taken in regard to the Bill, he thought it would be much better to dispose of the question to-day, and accept the Committee as proposed to be nominated by the hon. and learned Member opposite, instead of referring it to the Committee of Selection to nominate the Members. If it were in Order, he was certainly of opinion that it would be far better to settle the matter at once.

Mr. JORDAN (Clare, W.) said, that as a Committee was to be granted, he hoped there would be no delay in making progress with the Bill; but that every step would be taken to expedite its progress. He trusted that the Secretary to the Treasury, in framing Amendments, would have an eye to the best means of securing the running of the Canal. It would be most disastrous if, when the property had passed from the Government to the Lagan Company, it were found that, in the course of a few months or years, the traffic on the Canal was altogether abandoned. The House had been told that the land on the banks of the Canal might sell for £5,000, and unless proper precautions were taken, the Company to whom the Canal might be handed over might sell that.

Mr. JACKSON: Not without the consent of the Government.

Mr. JORDAN said, it was very easy sometimes to get the consent even of high officials. He understood the Financial Secretary to state distinctly that the Lagan Company would not be allowed to sell or lease the Canal to the Great Northern Railway Company or to any other Railway Company. It was most desirable that a provision to that effect should be inserted in the Bill, and, above all, that a further provision should be inserted to provide that if the Company at any time chose to give up the property, it should revert again to the Crown in the position in which it stood atpresent. If these conditions were observed, he should have great pleasure in supporting the Motion for the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee, and he hoped the proceedings of the Committee would be expedited and not delayed, so that the Bill might pass during the present Session.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he must express the hope that the House would now adopt the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxford University (Sir John Mowbray), and refer the Bill to a Select Committee. It was quite clear from what had already passed that this would cause no unnecessary delay—on the contrary, the provisions of the Bill would be carefully considered, and it was highly probable that the settlement of the question would be expedited by reference to a Committee.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Seven Members.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the hon. and learned Member for North Longford propose to move the names now?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: No; to-morrow. He trusted that as the Government had adopted his suggestion, and as the general sense of the House was favourable to it, they would themselves nominate the Committee. He would, therefore, simply move the remainder of the Resolution.

Ordered, That Four Members of the Committee be nominated by the House.

Ordered, That Three Members of the Committee be nominated by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL asked, when the names of the Committee would be moved?

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he should be ready to do so to-morrow; but he thought it would be better after what had passed, for the Government Whips to undertake the duty. He had very little knowledge of these matters himself, as might be seen from the fact that he had put down the Chairman of Ways and Means, who would naturally be an *ex officio* Member of the Committee. He thought it would be better either for the Government or the Chairman of the

Committee of Selection to have the nomination of the Committee.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL asked, whether the Government would accept the proposal of the hon. and learned Member to nominate the Committee to-morrow?

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY said, he thought it was desirable that the Committee should be nominated, in order that the Committee of Selection, when it met on Thursday, might be in a position to add three more Members.

Mr. JACKSON said, he imagined there would be no difficulty in agreeing upon four names, and he would put them on the Paper to-morrow.

QUESTIONS.

——o——

IMPERIAL DEFENCES AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he can state the designs upon which fortifications are now being constructed for the defence of our coaling stations abroad; the designs of fortifications, and weight of guns, intended to be adopted for the protection of military and commercial harbours at home; whether any of the new defensive works will be so constructed as to resist dynamite shells; and, how far, and in what manner, local Naval Reserves, Militia, and Volunteers are to be organized and utilized in connection with the proposed works?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): In answer to the first two Questions of the hon. Member, I am not prepared to publish to the world the details for which he asks. The details already published were very carefully considered by my Military Advisers and myself; and those only were given which could be given in the interest of the Public Service. In answer to the third Question, I would remind the hon. Member that many of the guns will be mounted on disappearing carriages. In answer to the fourth Question, we propose to utilize to the full all the Auxiliary Forces of every description.

Mr. GOURLEY asked, whether any works had actually been commenced in connection with our military and commercial harbours?

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, this was a very comprehensive Question to ask. It was rather one for the debate to-night.

IMPERIAL DEFENCES—THE COALING STATIONS.

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If he will inform the House the names of all the coaling stations which are now being wholly or partially fortified, and what stock of coal the Government intend maintaining, as a minimum quantity, at each depôt at home and abroad for the use of the Fleets; whether any system has been adopted for the purpose of replenishing stations in the event of hostilities; if so, what; and, whether it is intended that stocks of coal shall be maintained during war for the use of steamers of the Mercantile Marine as well as of the Navy?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The hon. Member will find the information he asks for, with reference to the defence of the coaling stations, at page 11 of the Secretary of State for War's Memorandum accompanying the Army Estimates of this year. It is undesirable, in the public interest, to state either the stocks of coal which it is intended to maintain at these stations, or the system that has been adopted for replenishing them. The stocks of coal that the Admiralty keep are for their own use.

WAR OFFICE—ROYAL COMMISSION ON WARLIKE STORES.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the fact that the Royal Commission on Warlike Stores held their final meeting and ceased to exist on or before December, 1887; whether they received the Report on the *Collingwood* gun, and reported on it, before they were dissolved; where those documents are now; whether he will state the names of those officials who have withheld the Report since December, 1887; and, how he proposes to deal with them?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I do not think that even an hon. Member of this House is justified, without ample evidence, in making the charge against public servants that they have wilfully suppressed public documents of importance. In this case there is no such evidence. No such Report has been received. But after a charge of this sort has been made, I think it just to the Department to publish at once Colonel Hope's Report, and the observations of the Ordnance Committee upon it.

LAND COURT (IRELAND)—FAIR RENTS —MR. J. J. HICKEY, OF CULLIN, MILLSTREET, CO. CORK.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Mr. John J. Hickey, of Lisnaboy, Cullin, Millstreet, County Cork, who served an originating notice on his landlord, Mr. French, to have a fair rent fixed by the Land Court, in the month of December, 1886, and whose name was not placed on the list for hearing by the Commissioners at Millstreet in 1887; whether this was owing to pressure of business; what were the number of cases listed and heard at that sitting of the Commission; whether it is a fact that Mr. Hickey's case is not even yet listed for hearing; whether he is aware that there are 12 similar cases in the parish of Cullin; and, whether the judicial rent, which may be fixed in pursuance of the notice of December, 1886, will date from the gale day following?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): My attention has been called to the case referred to. The Land Commissioners inform me that the case of John J. Hickey was listed for hearing at Millstreet last October, and was No. 151 on the list. The Sub-Commission was not able to reach the case owing to pressure of business. The number of cases listed for that sitting from the Union of Millstreet was 14, none of which were reached at the last sitting of the Sub-Commission in that district. Hickey's case will appear in the list for the next sitting, which will probably take place in July. The answer to the last paragraph of the Question is in the affirmative.

In reply to a further Question by Dr. Tanner,

Mr. MADDEN said, he had no reason to doubt the statement that the originating notice in this case had been served in 1886.

Dr. TANNER asked the right hon. Gentleman, whether he was aware that his Predecessor had stated that the case was not listed in 1886; and, whether it was a fact that at the last sitting of the Court only two cases were heard?

Mr. MADDEN said, the facts were substantially as stated in the Question. The case was not listed till last year. It would be taken up at the next sitting.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—BOTTLED WINES.

Mr. KING (Hull, Central) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is aware that the Resolution with regard to duties on bottled wines having been passed on the 26th of March, the Board of Customs nevertheless afterwards issued a General Order which was forwarded to Hull, dated the 19th of April, 1888, that all still wines in bond on 27th of March, or placed in bond before the 10th of April, which had been described in Customs Warehouse Entries as of a value not exceeding 20*s.* per dozen quarts, should be admitted at the old rate of duty; by whose authority such Order was issued; whether it was legal for any Department to issue an Order making exceptions in the case of particular goods coming under the Resolution adopted by the House; whether he is aware that the effect of the Order has been that a large quantity of low priced German and French wines has been cleared; and, on what ground the Order was given, and how much wine has been cleared under the Order?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): In reply to the hon. Member's first Question, I have to say that an Order, such as he describes, was issued by the Board of Customs, not limited to Hull, but extending to all other warehousing ports, authorizing the admission, free of the additional Wine Duties levied under the Resolution of the 26th of March last, of still bottled wine which had been imported and bonded between the 27th of March and the 10th of April, and had been described in the Customs warehousing entries as of a value not exceeding 20*s.* per dozen quarts. The Order was issued on my authority, and according to precedent. It is true that no executive authority has, strictly speaking, a defined right to remit duties which the Legislature says are to be collected; but there must always be, of necessity, an administrative discretion to some extent, on equitable grounds, and such a discretion was exercised in 1845 and in 1870 in relation to the Sugar Duties. Goods imported, and in bond in particular "packages" rendered suddenly liable to a tax because of that package, but capable of being, and which under the tax would be, packed otherwise, have, in extreme cases, some claim in equity to the exercise of such administrative discretion. If the hon. Member will look at Parliamentary Paper No. 281 of 1870 he will find a Treasury Minute issued in a parallel case of administrative discretion applied to the Sugar Duties, with the reasons and precedents for exceptional remission. In reply to his fourth Question, I have to say that there has been no abnormal increase in the quantities of low priced German and French wines cleared. It is estimated that 5,000 dozen bottles have been cleared under this provision.

POST OFFICE (EDINBURGH)—SURVEYOR OF THE MIDLAND DISTRICT.

MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the office of the surveyor of the Midland District of Scotland is part of the establishment of the Post Office in Edinburgh; whether two of the clerks in the surveyor's office in Edinburgh also hold appointments on the staff of the Dundee Post Office; whether they are each paid the proper salary for the Edinburgh appointment and another salary for the Dundee appointment; and, whether they perform any duties in Dundee; and, if not, whether the duties connected with their appointments are performed by clerks at a considerably lower salary than that paid to the clerks who nominally hold the appointments but perform no duty?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The office of the Surveyor of the Midland District of Scotland is not part of the establishment of the Post Office in Edinburgh. In accordance with a Rule applicable to the whole of the United Kingdom, the Surveyor's stationary clerks are borne on the establishment of Provincial post offices. The Post Office on the establishment of which the stationary clerks to the Surveyor of the Midland District of Scotland are borne is Dundee; and it is only the salary which they would receive were they employed at Dundee that they receive as stationary clerks. Over and above this salary they receive a special allowance; but it is not the case that, in consequence of the withdrawal of two members of the Dundee establishment to act as stationary clerks, anyone at Dundee performs higher duties, or receives a lower salary than he otherwise would, the establishment having been specially adjusted to provide against such a contingency.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND—THE CHARTERS.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether the Petition of 10,000 members of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, for a modification of the Charters of the College now under consideration by the Council, has received the favourable consideration of the Lord President, or whether it will be referred to the Royal Commission on University Education in London, recently appointed to consider, among other things, the means of facilitating University degrees for resident students in London; and, whether the Royal College of Surgeons of England has yet presented to the Lord President any comments on, or reply to, the representations made on behalf of the members of the College by the deputation which recently waited on him; or whether, in the absence of any reply, such representation in support of the Petition by 6,000 members will be held to be conclusive?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): The Petition of the members of the Royal College of Surgeons has received the consideration of the Lords of the Council, and will not be referred to the Royal Commission recently appointed to consider the means of facilitating University degrees for resident students in London. There has been a correspondence between the Council Office and the Royal College of Surgeons on the subject of their Petition for a supplementary Charter; and the College have accepted a proposal from the Privy Council to omit from the supplementary Charter points upon which there has been a controversy with the Fellows and the members of the College.

ASIATIC TURKEY—BRITISH HOSPITAL AT SMYRNA—RETURNS.

Mr. H. F. PEASE (York, N.R., Cleveland) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he will grant the Return relating to the British Hospital at Smyrna, standing on the Paper for this day?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: Returns are being prepared, on the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member for South Bristol (Colonel Hill), which will cover the hon. Member's proposed Motion, except that they will only embrace seven instead of 10 years, and the length of the stay in hospital of each seaman, which could not be furnished here. Perhaps he will be so good as to confer with me, and I will see how far the Returns, which are in preparation, can be extended without loss of time.

THE CONSULAR SERVICE—THE HOSPITAL AT CONSTANTINOPLE AND SMYRNA—FEES.

Colonel HILL (Bristol, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has yet received further information from Her Majesty's Treasury in respect to compulsory hospital dues at Constantinople and Smyrna; and, if so, will he communicate it to the House?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Further information has been received. The Returns, which are being carefully prepared, are nearly ready, and will shortly be laid on the Table.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—BATTERSEA PARK—DISCHARGED WORKMEN.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he is prepared to take into consideration the case of the men who have been many years employed at Battersea Park, but who, since the Park has been taken over by the Metropolitan Board of Works, have been dismissed from their employment; and, whether the Statute, by which the Park was transferred, provides for superannuation to these men?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): The hon. Member is, no doubt, aware that I am in no way responsible for the dismissal of the men lately employed in Battersea Park. One of them, who was foreman at Battersea while it was under my Office, and who has since been dismissed by the Metropolitan Board, I have appointed foreman at the Hampton Court Pleasure Gardens. As to others, I am about to submit their names to the Treasury for such gratuities or superannuation as they may be entitled to under the Act of last year.

POSTMASTER GENERAL — CONVEYANCE OF LETTERS "PER RAIL."

Mr. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the monopoly, in virtue of which he has directed Railway Companies to discontinue the conveyance of letters "per rail," was conferred upon the holder of his office prior to the introduction of the penny postal service; whether any further powers have been conferred in this respect upon the Postmaster General during the past half century; whether any of his Predecessors in Office have ever interfered with the practice of sending letters needing expedition by rail; and, whether, pending the inquiry by a Departmental Committee, he would allow the practice to be continued?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): The monopoly referred to by the hon. Member was conferred upon the Postmaster General long prior to the introduction of penny postage, and has been continued by various Statutes up to the present time. There has been no extension of the Postmaster General's powers in this respect since the Post Office Acts of the first year of Her Majesty's Reign. Representations have been made from time to time by successive Postmasters General to various carrying agencies as to the illegal carriage of letters. For my own part, I will say that, while every effort shall be made to effect an arrangement which shall be convenient to the public, and at the same time legal, I have not the power to sanction the revival of a practice which the law forbids.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION COURT AT DOWNPATRICK.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether an application was made to the Sub-Commission Court (Messrs. Edward Greer, O'Callaghan, and Sproule) sitting at Downpatrick on Friday, the 4th instant, that a case in which an hon. Member was coming over from London to give evidence in might be fixed for Tuesday, the 8th instant, was refused; whether the case was fixed for Saturday positively; whether, on Saturday, the hon. Member being in Court, having been summoned by telegraph, the Sub-Commissioners refused to take the case on that day, and postponed it until Tuesday; and, whether the action of the Sub-Commissioners can be justified on grounds of public convenience; and, if so, what were those grounds?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that Mr. Greer, the Chairman of the Sub-Commission, reports that the facts are as stated in the first paragraph of the Question. He declined to accede to the application; as from the state of the Court list he confidently expected to reach and dispose of this case, with all the others on the same estate, on the following day (Saturday). The Court, however, unfortunately found itself unable to reach this case, which was accordingly fixed for hearing on the 8th. The Chairman adds that he was assured that the convenience of all parties had been suited and the despatch of public business facilitated. If my hon. Friend would like to see the Report, I will be very glad to show it to him.

PRISON RULES (IRELAND)—REFUSAL OF "THE NATION" AND "UNITED IRELAND" AT DERRY GAOL.

Mr. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a direct or indirect order has been sent from Dublin Castle to the Governor of Derry Gaol, commanding that official to refuse *The Nation* and *United Ireland* newspapers to Father M'Fadden and Father Stephens; and, whether the Government will cause instructions to be sent to the Governor to allow those papers to be handed in for the use of those gentlemen?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): No such order has been sent from Dublin Castle. Discretion as to allowing newspapers rests, under the Rules of local prisons, with the Visiting Justices, and not with the Government.

Mr. O'HANLON asked, if the right hon. Gentleman would say whether the First Lord of the Treasury had not received a large revenue from the sale of these papers at his book and paper stalls in Ireland?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked, whether the Chief Secretary was aware that this same gaol Governor refused to allow Father M'Fadden, amongst the books to be read by him, a book containing a copy of the Prison Rules and of all the Acts relating to the government of prisons in Ireland?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I can give the hon. Gentleman no information about that.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) inquired, if the Chief Secretary was aware whether Governors of prisons in Ireland had refused to allow first-class misdemeanants to read "Gems of American Poetry?"

[No reply.]

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—UNPAID MAGISTRATES AND PETTY SESSIONS —MR. JOHN BYRNE.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether unpaid magistrates are in all cases prohibited, under pain of dismissal (as in the case of Mr. James Byrne, of Wallstown Castle), from adjudicating in their counties, except in their own Petty Sessions district; whether paid magistrates adjudicate in whatever Petty Sessions district they are ordered to sit in within their counties; are several paid magistrates appointed for more than one county; if so, why does not the Under Secretary's Return, No. 89, 15th March, 1888, show this, and why does it only give one district as that in which stipendiaries adjudicate; would the Government consider the propriety of ordering their paid magistrates, at least, not to sit in Licensing Sessions outside their own districts, as shown by this Return, so that local opinion may not be out-voted by the action of strangers from distant places; and, will a correct Return be presented, showing the actual districts in which the gentlemen in question operate?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The hon. and learned Member on the 13th of March asked a somewhat similar Question, and was answered by my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland to the effect that the case of Mr. Byrne was not at all analogous to that of a Resident Magistrate, who was paid to devote his whole time to the Public Service, and who was not appointed with reference to a Petty Sessions district; but was bound to attend all Sessions in his jurisdiction, as far as time permits. Resident Magistrates are qualified to adjudicate at any Petty Sessions within their counties. As a matter of practice, however, they only adjudicate in the Petty Sessions assigned to their charge, except where they act also as *locum tenens* for another Resident Magistrate on leave of absence, or on the constitution of a special Court under the Crimes Act, or other exceptional circumstance. Resident Magistrates selected under Section 11 of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act are necessarily appointed to act in more than one county. The Return referred to, which is in part a continuation of the Return ordered by the House on the Motion of the late Member for the St. Stephen's Green Division of Dublin (Mr. Dwyer Gray), states the Resident Magistrates' head-quarters, and not the extent of their jurisdiction. I do not see that any public advantage would be gained in giving the directions suggested, or presenting a further Return.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, in consequence of the right hon. Gentleman's declining to supply a Return showing exactly where the Resident Magistrates were to act, he begged to give Notice that when the Public Houses (Ireland) (Saturday Closing) Bill came before the House he should move that the licensing powers of the Resident Magistrates be strictly confined to the districts for which they were appointed. He asked was it not possible to show exactly the Petty Sessions districts for which Resident Magistrates were appointed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he had already explained that the Resident Magistrates did not go out of their own districts unless when they got special orders. He did not think there was any objection to giving the Return asked for; but he could not see that it would be any great gain.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked whether, in consequence of the systematic absence of the Stipendiary Magistrates supposed to be sitting in Cork, considerable inconvenience had not been caused at the Petty Sessions Court?

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked, whether the Chief Secretary was aware that one of the Resident Magistrates for Cork adjudicated in every one of the six counties of Munster?

[No reply.]

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —DETENTION OF PRINTED MATTER BY WARRANT OF THE HOME SECRETARY.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether sheets of printed matter posted at Chancery Lane on the 26th and 28th of April were delayed by his express warrant; was any such sheet detained two days after the Secretary to the Post Office had written to say that the said sheet had been delivered; and will he give a Return of all letters (see definition of letter) which have been delayed for inspection during 1887 and 1888?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the General Post Office that they presume that the hon. Member is referring to certain sheets printed on a kind of material which had never been previously seen in transmission through the post. No warrant was issued by me for their detention. Any delay which may have arisen in their delivery was owing to doubts as to whether they came within the Book Post Regulations, and whether they could be safely sent by post at all. I am informed that the sheets were sent to the despatching office at the same time as the instructions for their delivery. I cannot give the hon. Member the Return he asks for.

CONDITION OF THE WORKING CLASSES (METROPOLIS)—DEATHS FROM STARVATION—PROSTITUTES.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he would give a Return of the number of deaths from starvation according to Coroner's Inquest during the past year; and, if he can give any approximate Return of the number of men out of work in London during the past winter, and a Return of the prostitutes under 16 years of age who frequent the streets of London?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): A Return is now with the printers, and will shortly be issued, giving the number of deaths in the Metropolitan District in the year 1887 upon which a Coroner's Jury have returned a verdict of death from starvation, or death accelerated by privation. I hope this will be sufficient for the purpose of the hon. Member. I have no information in my Department to furnish the Returns asked for in the last paragraph.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS) — HYDE PARK—ACCIDENTS IN ROTTEN ROW.

BARON DE ROTHSCHILD (Bucks, Aylesbury) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he is aware that about 20 accidents, the last of them terminating fatally, have occurred during the past five years at the entrance to Rotten Row; and, whether he will consider the advisability of levelling and altering the stone crossing where all these accidents have happened, and by which they are believed to have been caused?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): I am aware that accidents have happened—one very sad one ending, I am sorry to say, fatally—at the crossing at the east end of Rotten Row, and I shall certainly do all I can to diminish the risk of such deplorable occurrences; but, of course, there must be a crossing for pedestrians, and people on horseback will, I hope, on their part exercise caution in pulling up their horses before getting off the Ride.

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK (Kensington, S.) asked, whether it was not precisely when riders had no control over their horses that these accidents occurred; and, whether the paved crossing was not placed just at the spot where a runaway horse would be most dangerous?

MR. PLUNKET said, that was very likely to be so, and he should be glad to consider suggestions that might be made to minimize the danger.

BARON DE ROTHSCHILD said, the danger arose, not from the horses cantering, but, as had been stated, from runaway horses.

MR. PLUNKET said, danger must always arise from runaway horses; but the attention of the Board should be particularly directed to the matter.

COAL MINES, &c., REGULATION ACT, 1887—EXAMINATIONS FOR COMPETENCY.

MR. PICKARD (York, W.R., Normanton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to an advertisement which appeared in *The Leeds Mercury*, 4th May, headed—

> "Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887. (Advertisement B.) Examination for first and second class certificates of competency as manager and under manager respectively;"

and concludes with the following note:—

> "N.B.—Persons who do not reside within the district are equally eligible for examination with those who do;"

whether he will state to the House under what clause of the Act the Board derive their authority to examine persons outside their district; and, whether, if they have no such authority under the Act, and knowing the diverse character of the danger in mines in the various districts, he will give instructions that no Board in future shall examine any person for certificates of competency except such person has worked in a mine at least two years in the district for which the Board was formed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir, I am aware of such an advertisement. Under Sections 23 to 25 of the Act the Board appear to have power to examine persons who reside out of their districts. It rests with the Board, and not with the Secretary of State, to make Rules as to the qualification of the candidates; but the Act requires the Board to have regard to such knowledge as is necessary for the practical working of mines in the district for which the Board was formed.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked, whether a certificate given in one district was available for a man who was out of employment in a different district?

Mr. MATTHEWS: It is. I do not know of anything in the Act which prevents an owner in Durham from employing a man who was examined in Wales.

THE SWEATING SYSTEM—THE FACTORY ACTS.

Mr. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If, in order to prevent a continuance of the sweating system, and to insure some modification in the hours and conditions of the poorer class of labour, the Government will consent to enlarge the scope of the Factory Acts by such compulsory registration of all workshops not at present included in those Acts, and by other stringent Regulations and Rules as will give adequate powers to Inspectors appointed for such purposes?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Pending the completion of the inquiry before the Select Committee which is now sitting, it would be premature for the Government to determine whether, by any amendment of the Factory Laws, the evils of the sweating system could be abated. When the Report of the Committee is received the Government will consider what steps can be taken.

SAVINGS BANKS—THE SEVENOAKS TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANK.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is true that one of the auditors of the Sevenoaks Trustee Savings Bank is also auditor of 11 other Trustee Banks, and the actuary of a London Trustee Savings Bank; and, whether, having regard to the fact that the defalcations at the Sevenoaks Bank were carried on over a series of years, the Government will institute an inquiry into the circumstances connected with the defalcations at such bank, under the provisions of the Trustee Banks Act of last Session?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I understand that the firm of accountants who are auditors to the Sevenoaks Bank act in the same capacity for 14 other Trustee Savings Banks, and that a member of the firm is also actuary of a London Trustee Savings Bank. I am informed that the Trustees of the Sevenoaks Bank are still investigating their accounts, and will shortly submit a full Report on the subject. They are also, I am told, taking steps to enforce the bond for £600 given by the late actuary's sureties, to realize his estate, and to institute criminal proceedings. As soon as the Treasury receive the Report of the National Debt Commissioners on the case they will be able to determine whether there is good ground for an inquiry under the Act of last Session.

NAVY ESTIMATES—THE NAVAL RESERVE.

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, To give the names of the ships whose tonnage make up the 70,000 tons mentioned in his Memorandum on the Navy Estimates as having been passed into the Reserve last year?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): At page 12 of my Memorandum on the Navy Estimates I stated that it was estimated that 75,000 tons—not 70,000 tons—would be completed ready for commission in 1887-8. The names of the vessels themselves and their tonnage are given at page 188 of the Navy Estimates. My Memorandum was written a month before the close of the financial year. The actual tonnage passed into the First Reserve for 1887-8 was 64,500; the difference between that figure and my estimate being mainly caused by the unexpected delay in the delivery of guns. The estimate of the amount of tonnage to be passed this year—namely, 1888-9—into the Reserve will be raised by that difference; and should, therefore, come to 88,000 tons, in place of the 77,000 tons of my estimate.

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD: Has every one of the ships got all her guns on board?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes, of course. My noble and gallant Friend is aware that no ship is passed into the

First Reserve unless she is complete, and can be made ready for commission within 48 hours.

WAR OFFICE—FERMOY BARRACKS—SANITARY CONDITION.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he is aware that three fresh cases of pneumonia occurred last Thursday at Fermoy Barracks (County Cork), in addition to the large number of cases which were treated in the hospital within the past few weeks; and, if he will order an inquiry by a competent authority into the sanitary condition of the barracks and the general accommodation available for troops?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Returns show that there were four admissions into hospital at Fermoy for pneumonia during the week ended the 11th instant. One death is also reported from that disease during the same period. Careful inquiry has been made into the circumstances of the case, as promised by me in my answer to the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) on the 30th ultimo, but the sanitary state of the barracks is reported to be good.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —CLOSED POSTAL CARDS.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has taken into consideration the suggestion that postal cards, which can be closed, shall be sold by the Post Office; and, if so, whether he has taken action in the matter?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I have considered the suggestion mentioned by the hon. Member, and shall be very glad to show him some specimens of cards which have been prepared, with a view to arriving at a decision upon the question.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—BUSHEY, HAMPTON COURT, AND RICHMOND PARKS.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether any action has been taken with a view to afford the public greater facilities to enjoy Bushey and Hampton Court Parks; whether he has observed the statement in the Press that there is an outbreak of rabies in Richmond Park; and, whether, in view of the fact that this is the second outbreak within a year, and that the cost of keeping these animals is great, whilst the profit derived from them is nil, he will consider the expediency of ceasing to keep them in Richmond Park?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): I have not lost sight of the question of opening Hampton Court Park, and it is now being discussed by the Departments concerned, but no decision has yet been come to. As to the rabies reported to have broken out among the deer in Richmond Park, I have not yet got full information on the subject; but I do not think that in any case such an event would be a good reason for entirely banishing the deer from the Park.

LICENSING LAWS—LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL —LICENSING CLAUSES.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in the event of the Licensing Clauses of the Local Government Bill becoming law, persons interested in the liquor trade will be prohibited from taking part in the administration of the Licensing Laws?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Bill does not make any alteration in the existing law on the subject.

POST OFFICE (CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE)—PAY OF CLERKS.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that the Treasury recently discovered that clerks employed at the Central Telegraph Office have for the past 18 years been paid a day's pay too much; whether two days' pay was deducted from the salaries of the staff after one week's notice; whether, as a consequence of this discovery, fortnightly payments have been abolished; and, whether the clerks have complained of such change having been made in the mode of payment; and, if so, whether he will consider the advisability of paying these clerks weekly, as is done in several other branches of the Post Office service?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the over-payment to which he alludes in his Question was brought under my notice by the Comptroller and Auditor General. Most of the officers employed at the Central Telegraph Office are paid on a scale of annual salaries, and in consequence of payment being made fortnightly an extra day's payment was made in ordinary years and two days' extra payment in leap years; the question having been referred to the Treasury, it was decided that from and after the 31st of March, 1887, the actual annual salary only should be paid, and, consequently, in making the last payment for the year to the 31st of March last, being leap year, the extra payment for two days was not made. As I was unwilling to alter the period of payment, I gave instructions that an advance of salary calculated to the nearest pound should be made in the middle of every month, the balance being paid at the end of the month. And I do not think it would be the wish of the officers that their wages should be paid weekly.

LAND COMMISSION COURT — FAIR RENTS — JUDGMENT OF COUNTY COURT JUDGE CURRAN.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the following judgment of the Land Commission in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 12th instant:—

> "There were two cases on the property of Colonel King Harman, Michael Killeen, £14 0*s*. 2*d*. old rent and £9 judicial rent, and Thomas Hoey, £15 10*s*. old rent and £9, which were heard before Judge Curran. Judge Curran appended to his order a statement that he thought £12 would be a fair rent in both cases, only for the unreasonable conduct of the landlord as to the cutting of turf by the tenants; and, in consequence of that unreasonable conduct, he made the rent £9 . . . . . . they would make the rent in both cases £10 10*s*.;"

and, were the Government in possession of the text of the Judgment of County Court Judge Curran, or would it be possible to lay a Copy of it upon the Table?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Secretary of the Land Commission telegraphs that the Commissioners are sitting in Court at Roscommon hearing appeals; and that he cannot communicate with them in time to furnish the necessary Report in reply to this Question, which appears on this morning's Paper without previous Notice.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Then, perhaps, when the right hon. and gallant Gentleman comes back, I will ask himself directly.

WAR OFFICE—STORAGE OF POWDER IN BARGES AT WOOLWICH.

COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether a new barge contractor has recently by his neglect placed the Arsenal and town of Woolwich in great danger, by leaving powder and ammunition barges unattended in the River Thames; whether about 750 tons of explosives were in the deserted barges, and that, with the adjacent powder ship and Government barges, a total of 2,000 tons of ammunition and powder was involved in risk; to whom would the people of the Metropolis look for indemnity for loss of life and property in case an accident had happened; whether his attention has been called to the statement of the contractor—

> "That he employed vagrants, whose names and addresses he did not know, and who deserted the barges;"

and, if so, will the Government offer a reward for the said vagrants to come forward and explain whether they swam ashore, or how they all made their escape unobserved, and particularly why they left work for which they were to be paid; and, whether the said contractor will be continued in the service of the Government?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I cannot at present answer the Question fully, inasmuch as I have not obtained sufficient Notice from the hon. Member; but I may say that the contractor is bound to provide suitable watchmen for the barges; and that, having in this case failed to do so, he was summoned by the Thames Conservancy Board and punished with a heavy fine.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—PORTUMNA BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it be true that Mr. Patrick Larkin was appointed rate collector by the Portumna Board of Guardians on March 31 last, and that the Local Government Board refused to sanction his appointment; and, whether the reasons assigned for such refusal were that he had taken part in an assembly at his father's door, and that he had spoken harshly to Constable Clemens, who followed Mr. D. Crilly, M.P., into his (Mr. Larkin's) father's house; and, if so, whether, having regard to the light character of the offence for which Mr. Larkin was held to bail, the Local Government Board will withdraw their opposition to his appointment?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): My reply to the first paragraph of the Question is in the affirmative. Upon the matter coming before the Local Government Board, it was found that this man had, in 1886, been convicted of being one of a party charged with assaulting persons, and he was bound over for six months; again, on the 12th of March last, he was put under a rule of bail for 12 months for using violent and abusive language towards a police sergeant in the discharge of his duty. In these circumstances, the Local Government Board are of opinion that he is a person who should not be entrusted with the office, and they decline, therefore, to sanction the appointment.

RIOTS, &c. (IRELAND)—CAPTAIN L. S. PAYNE AT FERMOY—REMOVAL OF BANNERS, &c.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the report in *The Cork Examiner* of the 8th of May, of the trial of Captain Ludlow Strange Payne, at Fermoy, on a summons charging him with tearing down after midnight certain banners and decorations erected across the streets of Fermoy in honour of the visit of the hon. Member for North East Cork (Mr. O'Brien); whether the evidence showed that Captain Payne was caught in the act by the night watchman; whether, although the summons was dismissed on the ground that the complainant should have been the Town Commissioners, the presiding magistrate stated that—

> "So far as the emblem was concerned there was nothing to object to in it. We cannot understand why Captain Payne interfered with them;"

and added, in giving judgment—

> "That both Mr. Furlong and himself considered that Mr. Payne had acted not only with very bad taste but with the most extreme imprudence and danger. By the insult he committed he not only placed himself in danger, but also other people who might be supposed to regard Mr. Payne's action with favour; but on the legal point they did not see their way to a conviction;"

and, will Captain Payne be allowed to retain his Militia command?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): With regard to the first three Questions asked by the hon. and learned Gentleman, I can only refer him to the answer given for me last night by my hon. Friend the Member for Wigton (Sir Herbert Maxwell). In answer to the fourth Question, I have to say it would depend upon the result of further inquiries, which are being made.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, when it would be convenient for the right hon. Gentleman to answer the Question?

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he was afraid he should not be in a position to answer it on Thursday. He had communicated with the authorities in Ireland; but he had not yet received a reply.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he would repeat the Question on Thursday.

LAW AND POLICE (METROPOLIS)—PROPOSED MEETING IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, if a *bonâ fide* political meeting be called by responsible persons to discuss the Local Government Bill in its bearing upon the Metropolis, in Trafalgar Square, the police will be directed or authorized in any way to interfere with the same?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The Regulation of the Chief Commissioner of Police of November 18, 1887, is still in force. It has been very useful in preserving the peace and good order of the Metropolis, and in protecting the trade and quiet of the neighbourhood. Until it is countermanded the duty of the police will be to prevent any public meeting being held in the Square, or in the adjacent thoroughfares.

Mr. CONYBEARE: When will the Home Secretary direct his subordinate, the Chief Commissioner of Police, to countermand the Order respecting Trafalgar Square?

Mr. MATTHEWS: That is a question for future consideration.

Mr. CONYBEARE: Will that future consideration depend upon the conduct of the people, and the peaceable and orderly character of London, or is coercion in London to be permanent, as in Ireland?

[No reply.]

LAW AND POLICE (METROPOLIS)—INTERFERENCE IN BERMONDSEY.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been directed to the conduct of the police in Bermondsey on Saturday last, at the corner of Grange Road, in refusing to allow Mr. Twelch, one of the candidates for the Bermondsey Vestry, to address the ratepayers, after the other two candidates had spoken; and, if he will inquire into the circumstances of the case?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have made inquiry into this matter. The Inspector of Police gave evidence as stated. I am informed that the magistrates went fully into the evidence on both sides in the first two cases. Upon that evidence, which tended to explain the circumstances deposed to by the Inspector, these cases were dismissed. The Bench at the same time stated that the police had acted very properly in bringing them forward for inquiry. The other informations, which related to the same transactions, were not proceeded with.

NATIONAL DEFENCE BILL—THE FIRST SCHEDULE—ALLOWANCE TO VOLUNTEERS.

Colonel LAURIE (Bath) asked the Secretary of State for War, If Her Majesty's Government will assent to the withdrawal of that part of the 1st Schedule to the National Defence Bill repealing the provision in the Volunteer Act of 1863 of an allowance to Volunteers, on embodiment, of two guineas for the provision of necessaries, and one guinea on disbandment?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The words in the Schedule were due to a mistake, to which my hon. and gallant Friend has recently called my attention, and I have myself given notice to omit them.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER BANN—LEGISLATION.

Sir CHARLES LEWIS (Antrim, N.) (for Mr. Lea) (Londonderry, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On which day he intends to introduce the Bill for the drainage of the Bann?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): As the House is aware, I expressed the hope before now that I should be able to introduce this Bill before Whitsuntide. After consultation with the Leader of the House, I do not see any opportunity of doing it before Whitsuntide, unless on Friday afternoon before the adjournment of the House. I do not know whether that course would be convenient, and I leave that to the Leader of the House to determine.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) repeated the Question.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I suppose the right hon. Gentleman was in communication with some Gentleman near him and did not hear; but I have just answered the Question.

INDIA—THE BOMBAY PRESIDENCY—THE PROPOSED DISMEMBERMENT.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Government of India have lately proposed to dismember the Bombay Presidency, by annexing Sind to the Punjab; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government will place the Correspondence upon the Table of the House before arriving at a final decision on the subject?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): No such proposal has been submitted to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State is aware that a correspondence on the subject is going on between the Government of Bombay and the Government of India; but no such change could be made without the sanction of the Government of India. There is at present no correspondence to lay upon the Table.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—TRIAL AND SENTENCE ON MR. DILLON, M.P.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Can he inform the House of what offence the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) was convicted by the Court presided over by Mr. Hamilton, R.M.; and, will that magistrate be invited to correct his letter to Mr. Speaker?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): The hon. Member for East Mayo was convicted of the offence of taking part in a criminal conspiracy to compel and induce certain tenants of farms in diverse parts of Ireland not to fulfil their legal obligations with regard to payment of rent, and of the further offence of inciting others to take part in such conspiracy. It appears from the evidence that the particular conspiracy for taking part in which the hon. Member was convicted was the conspiracy known as "the Plan of Campaign." As regards the second paragraph of the Question, I have to state that the matter is not within the province of the Government, but rests rather with the Authorities of the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that on Thursday I shall move to expunge the letter of Mr. Hamilton from the Minutes of the House.

METROPOLITAN BUILDING ACT—NEW BUILDING AT ALBERT GATE—EXCESSIVE HEIGHT.

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK (Kensington, S.) (for Mr. WHITMORE) (Chelsea) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he has obtained any definite answer as to the total height to which it is now proposed that the new buildings at Albert Gate should be raised?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): Since I was last questioned on this subject the promoters of the buildings at Albert Gate have been in communication with me, and they have agreed to reduce the proposed mansions by two stories, bringing the ridge of the roof down to a height of 100 feet. The new buildings will thus not much exceed in height the adjoining houses.

MR. W. BECKETT (Notts, Bassetlaw): How many stories will the buildings be?

MR. PLUNKET: Well, they have been reduced two stories. I forget exactly how many stories they are now; but I think the building will be rather a handsome one.

METROPOLIS—OPEN SPACES—VACANT GROUND ADJOINING THE ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) (for Mr. R. T. REID) (Dumfries, &c.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he is aware that the piece of land lying to the west of the buildings of the Royal Courts of Justice, in the Strand, is now lying in a waste and unsightly condition, and has been in that state for some years; and, whether he will cause this land, until required for building, to be laid out in grass, or otherwise made available for recreation, especially for the children of the crowded streets adjoining?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): A considerable portion of the land now vacant on the west side of the Courts of Justice will be almost immediately required in connection with the building of the new Bankruptcy Offices. As to the remainder, it may be at any time wanted for an extension of the Courts of Justice, for which purpose it is reserved.

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER — ST. STEPHEN'S CHAPEL.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether, seeing that the entrance to the St. Stephen's Chapel is through the Members' Cloak Room, there is any reason why hon. Members and their friends should not have the privilege of visiting and showing to their friends this interesting and beautiful portion of the Parliament House; and, whether he will make arrangements to enable them to do so?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): I have referred the question to the Home Office, and I am informed by my right hon. Friend that it is now under the consideration of the Police Authorities.

OFFICIAL TRUSTEE BILL—LEGISLATION.

Mr. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) asked Mr. Attorney General, When the Government propose to introduce their promised Bill for the appointment of an Official Trustee; if it will be introduced in this House or the House of Lords; and, if they will consider the advisability of including in it provisions to permit and facilitate the performance of the burdensome duties of Trustees by Public Companies under proper Regulations?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): I am informed by the First Lord of the Treasury that the Bill in question will be introduced in the House of Lords. With regard to the last part of the Question, I have no doubt the matter therein referred to will be carefully considered.

LAW OF AGISTMENT AND DISTRAINT.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether, in the case of agistment, a landlord can distrain upon stock not the property of the tenant, but which are on other crops sub-let by the tenant to another person?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): In the case of agistment, properly so called, the landlord cannot distrain upon stock not the property of the tenant. But if, as the latter part of the Question of the hon. Member supposes, the crop has been sub-let, it is not a case of agistment so called, and the stock are not free from distress.

PERPETUAL PENSIONS—ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What steps have been taken by the Government to give effect to the recent Resolution of this House relating to hereditary pensions and allowances; and, whether he can now make any statement as to the course the Gove ment intend to take to give effect to remainder of such Resolution?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I am yet in a position to make a statement to the course which the Government tend to pursue. The subject has been lost sight of, and progress is be made towards the solution of a son what difficult question.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he hop the right hon. Gentleman would ta care not to overlook that the Resolut said "forthwith."

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that in case of a difficult question, and of hardly-worked official, "forthwit must be allowed some little latitude.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—WHIT SUNTIDE.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Ru cliffe) asked the First Lord of Treasury, What Business the Gove ment propose to take at the resum Sitting of the House on Thursday, M 31?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): T Government propose to take the C Service Estimates in Committee of Sup on Thursday, the 31st May. Since l evening I have been aware of the f that hon. Gentlemen have remained town—some of them with the view take part in the discussion of Employers' Liability Bill, which it w understood would come on next Thu day—and having regard to that fa and having regard also to the extre desirableness of getting that Bill refer to the Grand Committee on Trade a Commerce, I think it better to revert the original arrangement with regard that Bill and take it on Thursday, place of the Irish Bills which w intended to be taken. It is, therefo proposed that we should take a Vote Account, which is absolutely necess for the Public Services, on Thursd and the second reading of the Employe Liability Bill, in the hope that we m be able to refer it to the Commit on Trade and Commerce. The Irish Bills will then stand for Mond the 4th of June.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingha W.) asked at what hour Progr

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TY COMPANIES—RE-
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Glasgow, Camlachie)
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ES—THE INTERNA-
ONVENTION.

TON (Stirling) asked
e Treasury, Whether
l in the public Press, that the International Conference on Sugar Bounties have concluded a Convention for the abolition of bounties, and that all the Powers have engaged to prohibit absolutely the importation of bounty fed sugar?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): In answer to the hon. Member, I have to say that, at the concluding sitting of the International Conference on Sugar Bounties, the final Protocol, with the Draft Convention, was signed by the Representatives of all the Powers. Those Representatives will now submit the Draft Convention, with the reserves they have made, to their respective Governments, who will communicate their views to Her Majesty's Government by July 5. The Plenipotentiaries will be invited to meet in London, on August 16 at latest, for the signature of the Treaty. Pending the receipt of such communications and the re-assembling of the Plenipotentiaries, it would be obviously improper, and contrary to diplomatic usage, to give to the House the details of a Draft Treaty, which, in its present form, is the property of the Powers collectively, and not of any individual Power. I may add that this view has been adopted by the Delegates of all the Powers, who agreed at their last meeting that no publicity should be given to the Draft Convention until after the re-assembling of the Plenipotentiaries.

Mr. J. C. BOLTON asked, whether the statement, as reported, that all the Powers had engaged to prohibit absolutely the importation of bounty fed sugar was true or false?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The accurate statement is that which I have just read out to the House.

In reply to Mr. Conybeare (Cornwall, Camborne),

Mr. W. H. SMITH added that, with regard to giving an opportunity for the discussion of the Convention, the usual course would be followed.

Mr. J. C. BOLTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury to give a pledge on behalf of the Government that an opportunity would be given to the House of expressing its opinion on the question before the country was finally committed to absolute prohibition.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) asked, whether the

Government had taken into account the increased amount the people of this country would have to pay for their sugar if its importation were prohibited?

MR. PICTON (Leicester) wished to know whether the Government had power to prohibit the importation of any kind of commodity without a Resolution or an Act of Parliament?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Gentleman who asked me the last Question has answered the hon. Member for Stirlingshire. It is absolutely impossible to carry out any engagement without the authority of Parliament.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) asked, whether the 16th of August was the date at which the final ratification of this Treaty was to take place?

MR. W. H. SMITH: That, I believe, is the present arrangement of the Powers; but any agreement springing out of the Convention will be a prospective arrangement.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) asked, whether it was not desirable that legislation in regard to this subject should be as early as possible, in order that if there was a disinclination on the part of Parliament to proceed, other Governments would be saved further trouble in the matter?

MR. W. H. SMITH: It is absolutely impossible for us to propose legislation in the meantime, seeing that the Convention may fall to the ground, or that the Powers, or any of them, may disagree with it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, he meant that as they had taken the initiative in regard to the Conference, so they might in reference to legislation.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—ROYAL NORMAL SCHOOL AT SOUTH KENSINGTON.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether any steps have been taken, and, if so, what steps, for the purpose of providing accommodation for the physical laboratory in the Royal Normal School at South Kensington, in consequence of the appropriation of the site of the present temporary building by the authorities of the Imperial Institute?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Office of Works is in communication with the Science and Art Department; and is about to report to the Treasury as to what arrangements can be made for providing accommodation for the physical laboratory.

WALES—INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION—LEGISLATION.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the promised measure for organizing and promoting intermediate education in Wales will be introduced?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Her Majesty's Government are aware of the interest felt on the subject of intermediate education in Wales, and will be glad to take the earliest opportunity of dealing with it that the state of Public Business and the progress of legislation permit. I cannot consent to send the two Bills already before the House to a Select Committee. The question is one which the Government alone ought to deal with.

CROFTERS' COLONIZATION.

DR. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) (for Dr. CLARK) (Caithness), asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it was the intention of the Government to introduce an Estimate for Crofter Emigration before making arrangements to send out the crofters, or after all the arrangements were made and a portion of the money spent?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): A small advance has been authorized to meet the immediate necessities of the case; but an Estimate will be laid before the House as soon as possible.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked, whether it was the case that agents of the Government had already gone and invited crofters to emigrate?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, it was the case that some few individuals had been invited to emigrate, under very pressing circumstances, with a view to their immediate relief; and also with a view to the fact that, unless they emigrated immediately, it would be impossible for them to do so until next year.

DR. R. MACDONALD asked, whether it was the case that 25 families left Stornoway on Wednesday week?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was not aware whether that was the case or not.

Subsequently,

Dr. CLARK asked, when the right hon. Gentleman intended to lay the Supplementary Estimates relating to the crofters on the Table?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: It will be laid on the Table immediately after Whitsuntide.

Dr. CLARK gave Notice that in Committee he would move to reduce the salary of the First Lord of the Treasury by the amount asked for.

AUSTRALIA—CHINESE IMMIGRANTS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies a Question of which he had given him private Notice, Whether he would lay on the Table of the House a copy of the long and important protest respecting the landing of Chinese in Australia which was cabled by Lord Carrington, the Governor of New South Wales, at the instance of the Premier of his Government to the Secretary of State for the Colonies; also copies of any Treaties between England and China bearing on the important question at issue regarding the influx of Chinese into Australia?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry de Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): It would not be convenient to present to Parliament one part only of a correspondence in progress; and some little time must be allowed in order that a stage in the question permitting of presentation of Papers may be reached.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (PERSONS PROCEEDED AGAINST, &c.)—RETURN.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he would consent to lay on the Table a Return connected with the administration of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, containing the following particulars: (1) Names of all Persons who have been proceeded against under that Act down to Whitsuntide, 1888; (2) the specific Offence charged against each Person; (3) the Result of the Trial; (4) Cases in which there was an Appeal; (5) the Result of the Appeal?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have no objection; but the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to make inquiries in Dublin as to whether there is any difficulty in the way of preparing such a Return.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL—CONSTITUTION.

In reply to Mr. Munro-Ferguson (Leith, &c.),

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had already stated that a Bill for the constitution of an Agricultural Department was in progress; but he was unable to say when it would be possible to introduce it. The Government were giving their serious attention to the matter; and he hoped it would be possible to bring in the measure shortly after Whitsuntide.

MOTIONS.

—o—

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (NOTICES OF MOTION).—RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Order of the Day for the Committee on Imperial Defence [Expenses] have precedence this day of the Notices of Motion and other Orders of the Day."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, he must protest against the course proposed to be adopted by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith). On Thursday last the right hon. Gentleman professed to recognize the importance of a Motion which stood in his (Mr. Broadhurst's) name on the Paper for to-night, and went so far as to give a pledge to keep a House for the discussion of the subject until 10 o'clock at night. But the right hon. Gentleman had broken faith, and now proposed to take the whole of the Sitting for Business which might well be taken at some other time. It was perfectly conceivable that a measure for the Imperial defence of the country was of more pressing importance than the Motion he proposed to bring forward; but that was no answer to his appeal. The reply to that was that the Imperial Defence Bill was of more importance than the King-Harman Salary Bill, and the Imperial Defence Bill could have been taken yesterday in preference to the Colonel King-Harman Bill. If it was irregular to mention the name of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, he would say that the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Salary) Bill could have been taken on some other occasion. They were asked to believe a most astounding proposition—namely, that it was of such importance for the Government to provide a salary for a political friend that the National Defences Bill must be delayed. The appropriation by the Government of a private Members' Sitting at this period of the Session, especially when Public Business was in such a forward position, was altogether unprecedented. They had learned a good deal from right hon. Gentlemen opposite — even from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord himself, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), as well as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen). The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a speech delivered in the country in the early part of the year, told them that this was to be a Session for English legislation, and that the interests of the English people were to command and receive the attention of Her Majesty's Government. But where, up to the present moment, had been the interests of the English people which had been considered? So far, it had been a Session for the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Under Secretary, and it was certainly much more like a King-Harman's Session than anything else. He protested against the proceedings of the Government, and he hoped the House would do something to show the Government how unjustifiable those proceedings were, and he should certainly divide the House as a protest. He had secured a place on the Paper for that evening, which afforded a favourable opportunity for submitting to the consideration of the House a subject of great interest and importance to the poorer classes of the people of the country. He made this protest with some warmth, but he believed that that warmth was fully justified by the conduct of the Government. He begged to give the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury Notice that if any other person, of more importance and authority than himself, would make a proposition, he would willingly divide the House against the Motion which the right hon. Gentleman had just submitted.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury pressed the proverb too far that "silence was golden." He had brought forward a proposal like this, and had not even apologized for it, although it was a distinct breach of a deliberate bargain entered into by the right hon. Gentleman. What was it that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury did last week? When questioned on the subject, he assured the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) that there would be a Morning Sitting to-day, but that at 9 o'clock the Government would keep a House in order that the hon. Gentleman might be able to bring forward his important Motion. Why had not the right hon. Gentleman adhered to his bargain? It was simply because he knew exceedingly little about the Rules of the House. He had jumped up last night, in an autocratic manner, and tried to impose a new Rule upon the House. Indeed, he was only prevented by the intervention of Mr. Deputy Speaker; and then, when 12 o'clock was reached, the right hon. Gentleman proposed that the Under Secretary for Ireland (Salary) Bill should be put down for 2 o'clock to-day. Of course, that would have involved the sitting of the House at 2 o'clock; but when it was explained to the right hon. Gentleman that he was under a delusion, he said he presumed Mr. Deputy Speaker had a right to decide the matter by taking the voices of the House. He was told that there was no such right, and that he was entirely and absolutely in the wrong; and now the hon. Member for West Nottingham was positively to suffer because the right hon. Gentleman had adopted this course, and had, as it were, to be closured by the action of the Chair. Why did the right hon. Gentleman take this course to-day? It was because, as usual, he had blundered over the Business of the House. Why had the right hon. Gentleman forced on the Secretary for Ireland Bill yesterday? Was it of urgent and paramount importance that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) should receive a salary one day before another day? Most assuredly not. If the right hon. Gentleman had felt that the question of the defence of the Colonies was of paramount importance he might have brought it forward on Monday. The House thought that he intended to stand to his bargain, and some surprise was felt that he had not brought on that Bill. Hon. Members did not know that he had made up his mind to throw over the bargain he had entered into with the hon. Member for West Nottingham. In future they would really have to be most careful with the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to be very much like certain persons who, when they found themselves in financial difficulties, endeavoured to get the money out of somebody else. Notwithstanding his pledge to the contrary, he now came forward and endeavoured to take a day from private Members. He (Mr. Labouchere) objected to the whole system, and to the right hon. Gentleman taking days which ought to be devoted to private Members, when there was no absolute and paramount necessity for doing so, at the beginning of a Session. When the House passed the new Procedure Rules it was on the distinct understanding that only under exceptional circumstances would the days of private Members be taken. The right hon. Gentleman could not say that this was a case of exceptional urgency, because, if so, the Bill might have been brought forward yesterday. The right hon. Gentleman had given a specific pledge, and most assuredly it was not a question of importance and urgency that the Defences Bill should be taken today. Even on Friday last the right hon. Gentleman took no steps to keep a House, although it was understood that a House would be kept. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) sought in a previous Parliament to take away all the time of the House for one of the Coercion Bills, it was the Conservative Opposition who opposed the proposition and moved an Amendment. He presumed, therefore, that he should be in Order in moving an Amendment to the Resolution which had just been proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. He begged to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House is not prepared to surrender this day to the Government, in view of the fact that the Government has already pledged itself to arrange to enable the Member for the West Division of Nottingham to bring on this evening the Motion that stands in his name, and Her Majesty's Ministers yesterday devoted the time at their disposal to a stage of the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland Salary Bill, which time would otherwise have been at their disposal for the purposes for which they are now asking for the time of private Members."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had listened to the remarks of the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who accused him of blundering in regard to the conduct of the Business of the House. That was an allegation which the hon. Member had made before, and he was afraid it would not cease as long as he occupied his present position. He really was exceedingly sorry that it had been the duty of the Government to ask for the time of the House that evening for the question they were desirous of bringing forward. The hon. Member for West Nottingham protested that he had entered into an engagement with him. Certainly, he had entered into a provisional engagement to do all in his power to secure the consideration of the hon. Gentleman's Motion, and he had mentioned 2 o'clock to-day as the hour which he trusted the House would sit; but the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), in the exercise of his right, had objected under the Standing Orders to the meeting of the House at 2 o'clock, and had thereby prevented him from keeping the engagement he had entered into. He had, therefore, felt it his duty to put down for 3 o'clock the question which he had intended to proceed with at 2 o'clock. The importance of this question was his answer to the hon. Member, and he was exceedingly sorry that he was prevented from carrying out the engagement. It was, however, the hon. and learned Member for North Longford, who, in the exercise of his undoubted right, had prevented him from carrying out his engagement. If, however, the discussion upon the Defences Bill was kept, as he hoped it might be, within reasonable limits, there would still be a considerable portion of the evening left for the consideration of the important question which the hon. Member for West Nottingham proposed to raise. The hon. Member said that the proceedings of the Government were without precedent. He was sure the hon. Gentleman would find that there were many precedents for the course he had been obliged to take under the pressure of Public Business in the exercise of his duty in putting down the Business for a Morning Sitting. The Government must be responsible for the conduct of Business in that House, and the House would see what a large amount of time had been devoted to a measure which they had hoped would have been soon disposed of—namely, the Bill for creating the Office of Permanent Under Secretary for Ireland.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: For giving a salary, not the creation of the Office.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Hon. Gentlemen had interposed delay in the progress of the Bill. They were quite within their right in doing what they believed to be their bounden duty in submitting this Bill to the consideration of the House. In all the circumstances, he trusted the hon. Member for West Nottingham would feel that the course now proposed to be taken was one that had been forced upon him, and that he had no alternative whatever. He therefore hoped that the hon. Member would not trouble the House to divide, seeing that by so doing he would only defeat the object he had in view of delaying the time when the House would take up the question in which he himself took a personal interest.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, the House was getting quite used to the right hon. Gentleman telling them that the Government, and he in particular, were always actuated by an overwhelming sense of public duty. No doubt, that was the case; but when the right hon. Gentleman had applied exalted maxims of that kind to the provision of a salary for the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, and spoke of the duty he owed to the nation in respect of that salary, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would excuse him for adding that when, with what seemed like infatuated obstinacy, he made that Bill the chief measure of the Government day after day and night after night, hon. Members would hardly moderate their views as to these exalted notions of the public interests and public duty. The right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that this was a Bill which was obnoxious to Members who sat on that side of the House. He knew that it was a measure calculated to provoke violent resistance on the part of the Representatives of the country for whom this Under Secretaryship was being created and salaried. He knew, further, that those who advocated the cause of public economy on the Opposition side of the House would necessarily and properly resist what they regarded as a rank and flagrant job; and, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman had to calculate upon a strong resistance from that side of the House, unless he had been very badly informed indeed by his own agents on the other side. He must have known that the Parliamentary Under Secretary Bill would not receive the support of a great number of hon. Gentlemen who were prepared to support him on almost every other occasion. He ought to have known that it would be opposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), who last night withdrew the light of his countenance from the Government, and yet the Leader of the House pressed upon the House, as a measure of first rate national importance, to take precedence of the question of Imperial Defence, a measure upon which he escaped, like Job, by only the skin of his teeth. Without emulating the virtues of that patriarch, including the virtue of patience, the right hon. Gentleman came forward and told them that he was actuated by an overwhelming sense of public duty in introducing such a Bill, and making it the first Order of the Day, night after night. All he could say was that he entirely agreed with the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) in saying that this was a novel and unexampled method of conducting Public Business; and when, having so conducted Public Business, the right hon. Gentleman came forward, having wasted and abused the time of the Government on the nights appropriated to them, by giving them up to a measure which was not only frivolous but obnoxious to the exclusion of all others, the right hon. Gentleman asked them to set aside for urgent Business a question of interest and importance to the poorer classes of the community, like that which was advocated by the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), it seemed perfectly right that a protest should be made against such a method of conducting Public Business.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.) said, he wished to enter an emphatic protest against the course the Government proposed to take in not allowing time for the discussion of one of the most important Motions brought forward in this generation. If the Government apprehended how the poor of England and the unemployed were looking towards the action to be taken for their benefit, they would have hesitated to refuse one evening for the discussion of the question.

Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, he rose to protest against the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that there had been any obstruction or factious opposition to the Parliamenatry Under Secretary for Ireland Bill last night. He wished to remind the House of what the circumstances of the case were on Monday night. It was not until 20 minutes to 8 o'clock that he could rise to move his Amendment. Four speeches had been made before Mr. Deputy Speaker left the Chair for the usual interval during the dinner hour, the debate went on until 25 minutes past 10, and no Member of the Government rose to ask for a Division. The right hon. Gentleman then rose for the first time, and asked the House if the time had not arrived at which a Division ought to be taken. He (Mr. Heneage) was actually on the point of rising, at the suggestion of his right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), to request other hon. Members who took an interest in the question to allow a Division to be taken. It was at that moment that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury interposed, and if there had been obstruction it was solely attributive to the right hon. Gentleman who moved the closure. Other people had a character at stake in that House as well as the right hon. Gentleman; and, therefore, he could not allow the remarks which had been made to pass by unnoticed. The right hon. Gentleman could, at any time after half-past 9 o'clock, have appealed to the House to take a Division. He (Mr. Heneage) would, however, tell the right hon. Gentleman why he did not take that course. He refrained from taking a Division because he knew that he was in a minority, and although that fact was known to himself, much as he should have liked to have defeated the Bill, he was restrained from moving the closure, because the means by which he acquired his knowledge prevented him from taking advantage of it. He challenged the Government to deny that the debate was not allowed to be continued until the attendance of the supporters of the Government enabled them to take a Division.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, he thought the House was entitled to look at the proposal of the Government from another aspect. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House was himself in a panic, and appeared to have lost his head. He was constantly making his blunders, and there was a fear that they would be continued in an aggravated manner as the Session proceeded. It was most desirable that the proposal of the Government for making provision for the National Defences should not be considered by the House in any sense as if there was a panic. The right hon. Gentleman could have done no more than he now proposed if war had been imminent or actually declared. He could only have declared to the House that there was not an hour to lose; that the country was in a defenceless and dangerous position; and that it was necessary immediately to put aside every other question in order to put the country in a condition of defence. He had no wish to refer to what had taken place in "another place;" but he thought the House must be of opinion that Her Majesty's Government did not appear to have any well-matured policy on military and naval expenditure, or upon any other question that went along with great questions of high policy. He believed the House would be acting wisely if they asked the Government to postpone this question until after the Whitsuntide Holidays, when probably most hon. Members would by that time have been able to study the interesting and instructive discussion which had just taken place in "another place." To come back to the manner in which Her Majesty's Government were putting forward the Public Business. They all knew that Her Majesty's Ministers had treated the question of the salary of the Under Secretary for Ireland as if it were the most important question they had in hand. So much haste had been shown to push forward the Bill to provide a salary of £1,500 a-year for the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) that he (Mr. Illingworth) was disposed to think the Government were under some obligation of which the House was ignorant, and that the Bill was a sop thrown to a certain section of hon. Members on the other side of the House. Certainly the Government must be under some private undertaking of which the House had no knowledge, or otherwise it would be inconceivable that the time of the House should have been frittered away upon such a frivolous proposal. It was quite possible that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had pushed the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) into a corner because he did not like the terms of the Resolution which had been placed on the Paper; but there was ample justification for saying that the unemployed, both in the towns and the country, were of opinion that Parliament might occupy itself much more satisfactorily in considering the great social and economic problems of the day than it was in the habit of doing. When it was seen that such indecent haste was shown for the introduction of changes into our Army and Navy system, and that great social problems were thrust aside for them, he thought the country would see that the present Government was one almost entirely of profession, and had failed in their duty with regard to economy and in all other respects.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to reconsider his position with regard to the Motion of his hon. Friend. It was well known throughout the House that the Motion of the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) was the subject of great interest on the part of the public, for it dealt with the sad problems that were thrust upon them periodically when the cold weather came on. The supporters of the Motion had placed their views before the Ministry in the hope that they might be able to hold out some prospect of aid to the suffering masses. He could not help thinking that the conduct of the Government in postponing the Motion was due to a desire to shirk responsibility which would be thrown upon them if the Motion were carried. He could not congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the crumb of comfort which he had offered to the hon. Member for West Nottingham when he said that Government might be able to come to his Motion in the course of the evening. That he thought was, indeed, adding insult to injury. Did the right hon. Gentleman think that a discussion of one or two hours would be sufficient to decide that for which the supporters of the Motion considered a whole day should be devoted? But, even if half or two-thirds of that time were taken, did the right hon. Gentleman believe that it would be possible for them to go into all the details of this gigantic problem? He thought the Imperial Defence Bill could wait its turn. There were some of them who believed that great home questions were as important as great foreign questions; that in the past too much money and time had been wasted on foreign affairs; and that in the future more of the time of the House should be devoted to the welfare of the masses. He hoped his hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham would divide the House on this question, in order to show who were in favour of this all-important subject receiving proper attention at the hands of the Government.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he wished to make a few remarks in explanation of his action, which had been commented upon by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. As he (Mr. T. M. Healy) had stated last night, he had not the least objection whatever to the Government getting on with the National Defence Question, if they were really serious in their desire to do so; but what he objected to was their putting down as the first question the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Salary) Bill—he objected to give £1,500 a-year to the right hon. and gallant Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) for the reasons which had been over and over again expressed. He thought he might say, in the words of an American orator, that he was willing to give "millions for defence, but not a cent for tribute." The Government had put down this Bill on Monday before the Land Commission Bill, and they had done the same on previous days. The latter measure was one in which the Irish Members, it was needless to say, were greatly interested; but, as in the case of the little boys at Dotheboys Hall, the Government were determined to make them take their treacle before breakfast. He thought that was an inverted mode of procedure. They had never been able to get a satisfactory answer from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury with regard to the discussion of this measure, and they always found that if they obtained a Morning Sitting the right hon. Gentleman immediately dove-tailed to it another measure. What he wished to say to the right hon. Gentleman with reference to this conduct was that he did not get the support of his Colleagues; they might give him their countenance, but they did not give him their counsel. It seemed to him that many of them were very glad to see him floundering in this business. He could see last night the malicious pleasure which some of his Colleagues evinced in the fact that the right hon. Gentleman was not conducting Public Business in the manner in which they thought they could conduct it if only they enjoyed his place. That was the way in which the inferior Members of the Government unfortunately acted on occasions of this kind, bearing out the proverb that persons were able to bear with great equanimity the misfortunes of their friends. He thought the Government had taken a most unfortunate course with regard to the Under Secretary's Bill. They objected to that course, because the Government had already got a man for the post; and it was said that the Bill was not to create but to regulate the Office. But how was it to regulate the Office if the House was only asked to give the right hon. and gallant Gentleman £1,500 a-year? The effect of the opposition of Members on that side of the House would be that his salary would only date from the passing of the Bill; and if the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had managed to screw a large amount of rack-rents from his tenants, they had fined him, at any rate, to the extent of £100.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): If we have interfered but little in this debate, it is because we are anxious to get to the next Order upon the Paper—namely, the Imperial Defence Bill, and because it did not seem necessary to answer some of the observations which have been made. It has been said that we wish to evade the important discussion which is to be inaugurated by the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst). Hon. Members will bear in mind that we pledged ourselves to make a House for the hon. Member, and that but for the action taken by the hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) the Motion would have stood on the Paper for 9 o'clock to-night, and we should have proceeded at 9 o'clock to discuss that Motion. I think that any hon. Member who views the circumstances with fairness and impartiality in his mind will at once see that the suggestion that we wish to evade discussion is utterly absurd. The suggestion can only have been pressed into the debate in order to prejudice our case. An hon. Member has complained of the management of the Business of the House by the First Lord of the Treasury. Well, I am glad to be able to point to the results which have already been reached this Session. Business is more advanced than it has been at this time in many previous Sessions. [An hon. MEMBER: No thanks to you.] We have listened with great patience while much insult has been heaped upon us. Hon. Members opposite seem hardly able to keep silence when a defence of any Member of the Government is made on this side of the House—a defence which we are entitled to make, and one which I think any Gentleman who is accustomed to decent society would tolerate. The interruptions and laughter which proceed from hon. Members above and below the Gangway are sometimes such as to make right hon. Gentlemen and many hon. Gentlemen on the Benches opposite rather ashamed of the conduct of their friends. I was saying that we are content with the management of the Business of the House, and the country knows that this year we have, under the guidance of my right hon. Friend, been able to bring the Business of the country to a more advanced point than has been possible during many past Sessions. It, therefore, ill becomes hon. Members, under these circumstances, to cast blame on my right hon. Friend. It has been said that we are forcing on the Parliamentary Under Secretary Bill, and hon. Members opposite have expressed surprise that the word "Obstruction" should have fallen from the First Lord of the Treasury during his remarks about the opposition which that Bill had met with. But do hon. Members remember that yesterday, if I am not mistaken, was the seventh night of their opposition to this Bill? It is a Bill of two clauses only, and the principle involved is very small. That principle is one which has been generally accepted in practice by right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench. It is that a man is entitled to his hire, and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, by drawing their salaries when in Office, have shown their respect for that principle. The hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) said that we have got the man, and was not that enough? And another hon. Member has hinted that we must be under some private obligations to the right hon. and gallant Member for the Isle of Thanet. No; we are not under a private obligation; but we are under an obligation of honour. If the right hon. and gallant Member is doing his part in the service of his country, he is as much entitled to his salary as any other Member of the Government, or as any right hon. Gentleman or any hon. Member opposite would be. We shall go through with the Bill, because we think this an obligation of honour. This is the reason why we consider it absolutely necessary. We, moreover, do not think it would be right for hon. Members opposite, after taking seven nights in discussing that Bill—["Oh!"] —well, at any rate, after discussing it on seven separate occasions—to occupy more of the time of Parliament, when there is but one clause left in the Bill, which might have been disposed of in an hour. Everything has been said about it that could have been said— ["Hear, hear!"]—and the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) cheers that, and yet he, with others, is continually voting for more of the time of the House in order further to discuss this Bill. It would be well if we could accept that as the conduct of hon. Members opposite—that their object in discussing this Bill upon seven occasions is to drive the majority to do that which they had objected to on so many occasions—that it was to get the majority to surrender their will to the minority, and that that could be accomplished, provided they only spoke often enough, and interposed their opposition with sufficient frequency. It was not my intention to interfere in this debate; but I must protest once more against the injustice of Members in placing blame for this matter upon the First Lord of the Treasury, who has been able to advance the Business of the House in such a way as even to receive the compliments of right hon. Gentlemen opposite.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): The Chancellor of the Exchequer has informed us that the Bill for granting a salary to the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, which has been the unfortunate cause of all these difficulties—for it is quite evident that the embarrassment in which we are placed and the censure passed on the First Lord of the Treasury is due to that—is pressed forward by the Government because it is a matter of honourable obligation to provide the salary, and because the labourer is worthy of his hire. If it is a matter of honourable obligation to provide this salary, why was it not provided last year? Last year it was made a matter of boasting by the Government that they were providing gratuitously for the valuable services of this right hon. and gallant Gentleman. You cannot take it both ways. You cannot make it a matter of boast and credit to yourselves that you are giving us the great advantage of such valuable services for nothing, and then plead that it is a matter of honourable obligation which makes you invade the rights of private Members to furnish a salary for that purpose. For my part, I am bound to say I do not recognize the argument in the other form in which it has been put by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He says you have enjoyed the benefit of these services, and therefore you ought to be ready to pay for them. I am not ready to pay for them, and I do not recognize the benefit of the services. I am not of opinion that they are, or have been, beneficial. I do not ask how far it is the fault of the right hon. Gentleman; but I am bound to say that, quite independent of the fact that this is the creation by Parliament of a totally unnecessary Office, it has been made the occasion for selecting for that Office a Gentleman whose appointment, in the unfortunate circumstances in which it stands, is no less than an insult to the people of Ireland. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says that you have objected to this again and again, whereas everything that had to be said could be said in the course of an hour. I have never heard anything of an obstructive or over-prolonged debate upon this Bill. I was not present—[*Ministerial Cheers*]—I was going to say that I was absent from the House during a portion of the evening when, as I understand, there was a prolonged debate—not prolonged by the opponents of the Bill, but by its supporters, from a dread of being placed in a minority. If, therefore, there is any foundation for the complaint of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it is a complaint against his own side of the House. But when the Chancellor of the Exchequer objects to our repeating our objections to a Bill like this, I say this is the very purpose for which the House provides successive stages in a Bill, so that when a Bill is judged by a large portion of the House to be of a most objectionable character, both in principle and effect, that objection may be repeated at every stage of the Bill, and I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer may fully expect that he will see that objection repeated upon the stages of the Bill which yet remain; not, I hope, in obstruction to the general Business, but undoubtedly in such a manner as to draw the attention of the House more and more to the nature and character of a Bill which I think to be one of the most objectionable ever submitted to us upon the creation of an Office, with regard to which, if it lays an honourable obligation on the Government to promote it, it is an equally honourable obligation on the objectors to record their votes again and again in condemnation of it. I mean to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton, not simply on account of the objectionable character of the Bill, but on account of the fact that this Bill—being one of the simplest scope, and one affecting personal convenience—was last night most improperly preferred to other measures of the greatest importance concerning the national defences. That precedence having been given, it is proposed to inflict the penalty of that error—to call it by a mild name—upon my hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham, and through my hon. Friend upon those vast masses of the labouring classes of this country who take an interest in his Motion alike legitimate and profound.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to correct an error into which he has fallen. He has told us that if there was Obstruction, the Obstruction was Conservative; that there were speeches made on our side with a view of delaying a Division until a majority were secure for the Government. I do not know where the right hon. Gentleman got his information from.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) made the statement about an hour before.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Wherever the right hon. Gentleman got his information from he was wrongly informed.

MR. HENEAGE: What I stated was this—that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House never asked the House to come to a decision upon the Amendment of which I had charge until 25 minutes past 10, and that at any time between half-past 9 and half-past 10 he could have had a Division if he had asked for one, and I said that the reason he did not do so was very well known to himself—because he did not desire a Division at that time. But I did not say that speeches were made on the opposite side of the House. In that my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was mistaken.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Now we know exactly what Tory Obstruction means. It means that the closure was not put on one hour and a-half earlier than it was. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian will now perceive that he gave a totally wrong version of the information which he received, because he distinctly stated that the Division was delayed by the speeches made on the Government side.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): The right hon. Gentleman said nothing of the kind.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the right hon. Gentleman could, and would, contradict me if I were wrong. The only speech made on this side of the House was made by the hon. and learned Member for Stafford (Mr. Staveley Hill); and if that was made with a view of aiding the Government, my hon. and learned Friend disguised his friendship in a very singular manner, because he spoke against the Bill. Now, if the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian tells us that we boasted last Session that the Under Secretary was to take Office without salary, he will allow me, for the second time, to correct him. We never boasted anything of the kind. The condition of Public Business last Session was such that everyone who was in the House knows that it was absolutely impossible to ask Parliament to pass the Bill which is now before the House. The duty which was cast upon us then remains a duty, though we were unable to carry it through last Session. We were bound by every principle of public policy and honour to carry out that duty, and we mean to do so. The right hon. Gentleman has attacked my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who said that the labourer was worthy of his hire, and said—"We do not admit that we get any benefit from his services. We do not want his services. We do not think he ought to be paid for them." Well, Sir, my experience of Members of the Opposition is that they very seldom think that the Members of the Government are worth their salaries. If I had often been tempted to think that the right hon. Gentleman opposite was, when he was in power, considerably overpaid for any benefit conferred on the country, I never thought that was a sufficient reason to come down to the House and oppose a Vote for giving him his salary. The right hon. Gentleman worked hard and conscientiously for what he thought was the interest of the country. I think he was mistaken—we all on this side of the House thought he was mistaken. But that did not make it a matter of public policy that the right hon. Gentleman should be deprived of his salary. I cannot admit that the criterion of merit laid down by the right hon. Gentleman that the action of Ministers must meet the approval of the Opposition Bench is one that will be accepted by the House. Then the right hon. Gentleman talked about our overriding the convenience of the House. Who is it that is overriding the convenience of the House? The right hon. Gentleman seems to think that, because he objects to a Bill, he has not only an unlimited right but an unlimited duty to discuss that Bill. If that principle is accepted you give up every argument against Obstruction once and for ever. The whole principle, as I understand the matter, in which in restoring to Parliament the right to manage its own Business is that when a question has once been adequately discussed and accepted by the majority, the minority shall accept the situation. It is a pure accident—a Parliamentary accident I may call it—that so many opportunities have been given for the discussion of this particular Bill. The Bill having been brought in by a Resolution of the House, undoubtedly opportunities have been given to hon. Members, which they have very seldom availed themselves of with regard to other Bills, of discussing the question on four or five separate stages; and every opportunity has been used for repeating over and over again the same stock arguments and the same violent personal invective. I deny the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman opposite; I deny that the Opposition have a duty cast upon them of repeating and repeating and repeating indefinitely precisely the same speeches, precisely the same arguments, and precisely the same statements; and I deny, above all, that the Government are bound to regulate their policy in managing the Business of this House by the degree of Obstruction it may please the right hon. Gentleman to oppose to them. If you once admit that principle it is perfectly clear that the persons who will arrange the order of Business will not be the Government, who are responsible for that Business, but the irresponsible Gentlemen of the Opposition, who think they have a right to speak as long and as often as they like on every question. I confess I think that if the right hon. Gentleman will only examine into the principles which underlie the speech he has just made to the House, he will see that they are absolutely subversive of the conduct of the whole of the Public Business of the House; and on that ground, if on no other, I object to the Amendment he supports.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I think the right hon. Gentleman is rather ungrateful to me when he says that the Members of the Opposition always deem Members of the Government unworthy of their salaries, because the right hon. Gentleman will remember that last night I vindicated the right of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to his salary. The right hon. Gentleman has attempted once more to vindicate the position taken up by the Government last year. I am not again going to read to the House the answers made to me last year by the First Lord of the Treasury and by the right hon. Gentleman himself; but when the right hon. Gentleman says that last year the Government had recognized it in their own minds as an obligation of honour to remunerate the Parliamentary Under Secretary, I cannot help recalling a speech made outside this House by the Under Secretary himself. On a certain day in April the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) made a speech to his constituents at Margate, in which "he thanked God he was not like Irish Members, who took their payments from the maidservants of New York." "Here am I," he said, "serving and going to serve my country for nothing." [MR. T. M. HEALY: For 15 hours a day.] I do not want to lay stress upon that, because the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is not here to defend himself; but the Chief Secretary must know that that statement was made. Therefore, my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian was perfectly justified in saying that the country and the House last year understood, not only from Gentlemen on the Front Bench opposite, but from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet himself, that the Office was to be a gratuitous one. We were charged —and I never heard a more unjust charge made—by the First Lord of the Treasury last night with unnecessarily wasting the time of the House. As a matter of fact, I said to my right hon. Friend the Member for Grimsby—"Surely this has gone on long enough; why do not you get up and urge them not to go on any longer?" He was on the point of doing so when the First Lord of the Treasury got up and stopped the debate; and for a reason of his own which I did not then know—and now I know it I do not quite sympathize with it—my right hon. Friend did not press for a Division. It was notorious that if we had taken a Division before 10 o'clock we should have put the Government into a minority on this Bill, and I now wish that we had done it. We have heard a great deal as to the right of the majority, and I can understand if the majority had been 100 or 120 all that high language might have been used; but when a minority which comes within eight or nine of the majority prolongs a discussion, it is monstrous that that should be called "factious opposition." The right hon. Gentleman said that the discussion last night turned on points which had been argued repeatedly. I submit to him that several new points were made—as he himself will admit, if, as I hope, he has some candour still left—none of which could be said to have been over-argued or over-laboured. I can only tell the right hon. Gentleman that, as far as I am concerned, it is my full intention to argue out all the points the three clauses of the Bill contain, and I hope that before we come to the end of the Bill we shall find it possible to drive the Government a little closer than we drove them last night.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he hoped the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) would press his Amendment to a Division, and that it would be made clear to the country what they were dividing about. They asked, on the Motion of the hon. Member for West Nottingham, to consider a question of the utmost importance to the masses of the people both in towns and in the country; a question which was inquired into and reported upon by a Royal Commission some three or four years ago, but on which no practical steps had been taken, and a question which was evidently as acute to-day as it was then. They were now asked by the Government to brush aside the important Motion of which the hon. Member had given Notice, in order to consider the advisability of spending nearly £1,000,000 on Colonial defence. He had yet to learn that there was any Colonial danger; and if there were any such danger to be apprehended, he could not conceive the wisdom of spending this £1,000,000 in fortifying the Australian Colonies. He and his hon. Friends wished to make it clear to their countrymen that night after night, during the present Session, had been devoted to the consideration of questions relating to the Army and Navy; but that not one night had been given to the consideration of the all-important subject which the hon. Member for West Nottingham invited the House to consider. This was the old story of the people asking for bread and receiving a stone. The people said—"We want better wages," and the Government offered to build more iron-clads, which proved that they were out of sympathy with the demands and wishes of the people; and the sooner that was made clear to the people's apprehension the better. The Government were asking the House to vote money which would lead the Colonies into a swaggering and defiant attitude; and he hoped when they had secured their mechanical majority they would tell the House where the danger existed, whence the foe was likely to come, and from what source of taxation this £1,000,000 was to be raised. The Government were not willing to give even one night of the Session to the consideration of the requirements of the people; while night after night they were frittering away the time of the House and the country on the consideration of questions which were not of the enormous and pressing importance attaching to that dealt with in the Motion of the hon. Member for West Nottingham.

MR. LABOUCHERE rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. Cremer

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House *divided:*—Ayes 290; Noes 187: Majority 103.

AYES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Aird, J.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Barclay, J. W.
Baring, T. C.
Barnes, A.
Barry, A. H. S.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bass, H.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Bazley-White, J.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Beckett, W.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. de la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Biddulph, M.
Bigwood, J.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bolitho, T. B.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Brooks, Sir W. C.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chamberlain, R.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Churchill, right hon. Lord R. H. S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Collings, J.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Compton, F.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corbett, A. C.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, H. S.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Currie, Sir D.
Curzon, Viscount
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Darling, C. J.
Davenport, H. T.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon, G.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donkin, R. S.
Dugdale, J. S.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Ebrington, Viscount
Egerton, hon. A. J. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elliot, G. W.
Ewart, Sir W.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fielden, T.
Finch, G. H.
Finlay, R. B.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J. W.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, L.
Fulton, J. F.
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.

Gedge, S.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Goldsworthy, Major General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Green, Sir E.
Greene, E.
Grimston, Viscount
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Haldane, R. B.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hambro, Col. C. J. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, E.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Havelock - Allan, Sir H. M.
Heaton, J. H.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hill, A. S.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Hornby, W. H.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Howard, J.
Howorth, H. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, hon. E.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes - Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hulse, E. H.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
James, rt. hon. Sir H.
Jardine, Sir R.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jennings, L. J.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenrick, W.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kenyon - Slaney, Col. W.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, L.
Lambert, C.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lea, T.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lees, E.
Leighton, S.
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lymington, Viscount
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, rt. hon. J. H. A.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
Madden, D. H.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Adml. R. C.
Mildmay, F. B.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
Morgan, hon. F.
Morrison, W.
Moss, R.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muncaster, Lord
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, hon. F.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Powell, F. S.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Quilter, W. C.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Richardson, T.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, rt. hn. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Ross, A. H.
Rothschild, Baron F. J. de
Russell, T. W.
Salt, T.
Sandys, Lt.-Col. T. M.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Sellar, A. C.
Selwin-Ibbetson, right hon. Sir H. J.
Selwyn, Captain C. W.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, right hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stephens, H. C
Stewart, M. J.
Stokes, G. G.
Swetenham, E.
Sykes, C.
Talbot, J. G.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Thorburn, W.
Townsend, F.
Trotter, Col. H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Watson, J.
Webster, R. G.
Wharton, J. L.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wilson, Sir S.
Winn, hon. R.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Acland, A. H. D.
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asquith, H. H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, Sir G.
Barran, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Bolton, J. C.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, Jacob
Brown, A. L.
Brunner, J. T.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Buxton, S. C.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, C.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carew, J. L.
Causton, R. K.
Cavan, Earl of
Channing, F. A.
Childers, right hon. H. C. E.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Colman, J. J.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cossham, H.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Craig, J.
Crawford, D.
Crawford, W.
Cremer, W. R.
Davies, W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Duff, R. W.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Firth, J. F. B.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Forster, Sir C.
Foster, Sir W. B.
Fowler, right hon. H. H.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Gane, J. L.
Gardner, H.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gladstone, right hon. W. E.
Gourley, E. T.
Graham, R. C.
Grey, Sir E.
Gully, W. C.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Harrington, E.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Healy, M.
Healy, T. M.
Hingley, B.
Howell, G.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
Joicey, J.
Jordan, J.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kenny, C. S.
Kilbride, D.

Lalor, R.
Lawson, Sir W.
Leahy, J.
Leake, R.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Lockwood, F.
Lyell, L.
Mac Innes, M.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Arthur, W. A.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Ewan, W.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
M'Lagan, P.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Mayne, T.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Morley, A.
Mundella, rt. hon. A. J.
Murphy, W. M.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Doherty, J. E.
O'Keeffe, F. A.
O'Kelly, J.
Palmer, Sir C. M.
Parker, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Pease, A. E.
Pease, H. F.
Philipps, J. W.
Pickard, B.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Playfair, right hon. Sir L.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Provand, A. D.
Pugh, D.
Randell, D.
Rathbone, W.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, R. T.
Rendel, S.
Reynolds, W. J.
Richard, H.
Roberts, J.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Samuelson, Sir B.
Samuelson, G. B.
Schwann, C. E.
Shaw, T.
Sheehan, J. D.
Simon, Sir J.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stansfeld, right hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Sullivan, T. D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Tanner, C. K.
Thomas, A.
Thomas, D. A.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waddy, S. D.
Wallace, R.
Warmington, C. M.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williamson, J.
Williamson, S.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, H. J.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodhead, J.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.
Broadhurst, H.
Labouchere, H.

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That the Order of the Day for the Committee on Imperial Defence [Expenses], have precedence this day of the Notices of Motion and other Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

IMPERIAL DEFENCE [EXPENSES].

COMMITTEE.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I rise, Sir, to invite the Committee to consider proposals which the Government deem to be of great importance in the interests of the country—proposals deliberately adopted by the Government after considerable and careful study, and which are the issue of consultation with, and advice and assistance of, eminent Naval and Military Authorities during last year and the winter which has just passed. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) and my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) have both explained in their Statements the course which the Government propose to adopt, and the scheme itself was alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) in his Statement with regard to the finances of the year. The House is not, therefore, in any way without notice of the deliberate intention of the Government, which I have explained to be the result of long study and deliberation. The proposals which we now make are an addition to the expenditure on the Estimates for the Army and Navy for the defence of the country. The course which we have adopted is one which, as we think, may well be adopted not only with regard to the particular works we now recommend, but might with advantage be adopted with regard to any other serious works for the defence of the country. With regard to works which are vital and necessary to be provided for by Parliament once for all, economy, efficiency, and safety alike demand that they should be final in their character, and that the work on which we are entering should be thoroughly carried out. It has not been customary in the past to provide for expenditure in any year of more money than is required for particular works, and it has been customary to postpone the completion of such works for one, two, or three years until the Estimates of the year are brought under the notice of the House, and until the money is provided under the financial arrangements of the year. There is a great deal to be said in favour of that view; but I think hon. Members will see that it is inadvisable to propose from time to time the provision for works which are useless unless they are completed, and for fortifications and ships which are useless unless armed—and a gun takes almost as long as a ship to construct, and is almost as expensive as some ships, the construction of which may be undertaken by Naval Authorities. It is a matter of the highest vital importance that the whole cost of any enterprize in which the country may be embarked should be stated, and should be faced by Parliament as a liability to be met within the period which the completion of the work will occupy. The Government have decided to make these proposals to the House upon information obtained by Royal Commissions and Committees which have sat during the last six or seven years, at the instance first of one Government and then of another, and also upon information existing at the Admiralty and the War Office. We came to the conclusion last year that it was our duty to apply that information for the purpose of providing for the defences of the country. These proposals are the results of the inquiries we have made. With regard, first of all, to the Navy, the Resolution provides that there shall be an addition to the Australian Squadron, the cost of which is to be £850,000. The agreement was arrived at in the course of last year during the progress of the Conference which was held in London, and at which the Australian Colonies were represented. The proposals agreed to at the Conference in 1887 may be thus summarized. There is a provision for an additional force of sea-going ships of war for the protection of the floating trade in the Australian waters at the joint cost of the Imperial and Colonial funds, such additional force to be manned by officers and men of the Royal Navy, and to be under the sole control and orders of the Admiral commanding Her Majesty's ships and vessels on the Australian Station. The vessels are to be employed on the station in the same way as the other ships of the Squadron, and not to be removed beyond the limits of the station without the consent of the Colonial Governments. No reduction is to be made in the normal strength of the force maintained on the Australian Station in consequence of such additional force. The vessels are to consist of five fast cruisers of the improved *Archer* class, and torpedo gunboats of the *Rattlesnake* class, of which three cruisers and one gunboat are to be kept constantly in commission, the Imperial Government to bear the first cost of constructing and equipping these vessels. The Colonies are to pay interest at 5 per cent per annum on the first cost of the vessels to an amount not exceeding £35,000 annually, and to bear the actual cost of maintaining four vessels in commission and three in reserve, including liability on account of retired pay, of pensions to officers and men, and charge for relief of crews to an amount not exceeding £91,000 per annum. The Imperial Government are to bear the cost of commissioning and maintaining the three vessels in reserve in time of emergency or actual war. Any of these vessels that may be lost are to be replaced at the cost of the Imperial Government. The agreement, in the first instance, is to be enforced for a period of 10 years from the date of commissioning the first of these vessels, terminable then, or subsequently, only on notice being given two years previously. On the termination of the Agreement the vessels are to remain the property of the Imperial Government, and nothing in the agreement is to affect the purely local Naval Defence Forces, which are to be paid for by, and are solely under the control of, the several Colonies. It may be within the knowledge of hon. Members that some of the Colonies have small Naval Forces of their own, which have long been recognized as being exceedingly useful for police purposes on their coasts. The total cost, as estimated, is as follows:—Hulls and engines of the five improved *Archers*, £605,000; armament and stores, £125,000; total, £730,000; hulls and engines of two *Rattlesnakes*, £95,000; armament and stores, £25,000; total, £120,000, or, altogether for the hulls, engines, armaments, and stores of the vessels, £850,000. Provided that the armaments are ready at the same time as the ships, the five *Archers* could, it is estimated, be completed in 18 months, and the two *Rattlesnakes* in 15 months. There is, therefore, every hope that these vessels will be efficient for the purposes of the Service by the end of next year, or of the March following that—that is, by December, 1889, or March, 31, 1890. A pledge was given by the Admiralty that, so soon as the negotiations for the increase of the Australian Squadron at the joint charge of the Imperial and Colonial Governments had been brought to a satisfactory conclusion, steps would be taken to obtain the sanction of Parliament to the proposals on which they were agreed. Acts sanctioning the Agreement, which was provisionally approved at the Colonial Conference of 1887, having been passed by the Legislatures of five out of the seven Colonies concerned, it now becomes incumbent on the Imperial Government to obtain the sanction of Parliament to the expenditure for which the Home Country will be responsible. I may state to the Committee for its information the development which has taken place upon naval construction. The arrangement I have described was made with the Colonies at the Colonial Conference last year. At that time it was proposed to provide a certain class of ship which, it was thought, in point of tonnage, speed, and fighting power, would be adequate for the protection of the commerce of England and Australia, and of the common interests of a united Empire. Of the vessels of the *Archer* class which it was proposed to construct, and which the Colonial Conference accepted, the length proposed was 225 feet, the length now approved is 265 feet; the displacement proposed was 1,770 tons, that now approved is 2,500 tons; and speed 17 knots, now 19 knots. The armament was to have been six 6-inch breech-loading guns, but now it is to be eight 36-pounder quick-firing guns. A similar development has followed the arrangement with regard to the torpedo boats. The Committee will observe that this development of power is a progressive development. A capacity now exists for producing vessels of great speed and great offensive power, which did not exist two, three, or four years ago; and even in one year there is an addition of one, two, or three knots speed of our ships, and also, I am sorry to add, an addition to their cost. But, Mr. Courtney, in this respect we are bound to provide the most efficient vessels we can for the objects we have in view. Those objects are the protection and safety of the commerce of the country, and the security of the great enterprizes in which the merchants of this country embark from time to time. Unless we can protect our commerce, our harbours, and our shores alike at Home and in our Colonies, I am afraid the time may come when a great disaster may overtake us. I cannot help remarking on the extreme value of the principle which underlies the engagement which has been made between this country and the Australian Colonies. We have in this Agreement recognized the principle of a common duty by the people of this country and our cousins, friends, and children in the Colonies in connection with the protection and defence of the Empire. They recognize that they must do something for the protection of their own interests, and they express their confidence in the capacity of this country to aid and protect them. They do something in the way of protecting themselves by imposing on themselves a considerable annual charge, while they place the entire control of the Naval Force in the hands of our naval officers in the South Seas. I think we have in this Agreement—which we now ask Parliament to ratify and enable us to carry out—the indication of a policy which we may distinctly follow with great advantage to the common interests of all who call themselves Englishmen, whether they are found in England or Australia, in Canada or the Cape of Good Hope, or in any other Colony. Once more I wish to point out that this is an addition to the strength of the Navy; it is in no way substitutionary for the provision made in the Estimates for the general purposes of the Navy. The sums I refer to are to be regarded as additional in all respects to the sum already asked for by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty for the service of the country in the coming year. Now, I will refer to the second part of the plan for which we ask the approval of Parliament. We ask for a sum not exceeding £2,600,000, such as may be required for the defence of certain ports and coaling stations, and for making further provisions for Imperial defence. In asking for this provision we are only seeking to supply deficiencies which have been ascertained in past years. I am not going to impute blame or neglect to those who have gone before. It is no part of my purpose to endeavour to arouse any Party feeling or sentiment whatever with respect to this grave proposal to which I desire the attention of the Committee and the assent of Parliament. Whether or not adequate provision has been made from the point of view of right hon. Gentlemen who have been responsible during the time being for the necessities of the country, is not a question to which I now desire to ask the attention of the Committee. What we now desire the House to say is that existing deficiencies, from whatever cause they may have arisen, must, as far as possible, be made good in the interests of the country at large, and of the safety of the Empire. I have stated that Commissions have sat and reported on the unprotected condition of our coaling stations and ports. It was the duty of the Government to bring together all the information they could obtain, and it was obtained after careful examination by a Committee which my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War invited to consider the Reports and recommendations of previous Commissions and take evidence. That Committee included the hon. and gallant Member —well known in this House as a great authority on all matters of fortification— I refer to the hon. and gallant Member for Birkenhead (Sir Edward Hamley), and upon the Committee which rendered these good services to the country were Sir Frederick Bramwell, Admiral Sir William M. Dowell, the hon. Baronet the Member for North-West Manchester (Sir William Houldsworth), the hon. Member for the Penrith Division of Cumberland (Mr. J. W. Lowther), Mr. G. W. Lowther, the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), and the hon. Member for Bath (Mr. E. R. Wodehouse). These Gentlemen were requested to consider the plan proposed for the fortification and armament of our military and home mercantile ports, and the relative importance and approximate cost of the works and armaments necessary for the adequate defence of these stations. I should greatly regret to weary the House with long quotations; but the importance of the subject will, I hope, be my excuse for quoting some of the statements from this most valuable and interesting Report for which the Government and the country are so greatly indebted to those distinguished and hon. Gentlemen who have devoted their time and attention to the matter. The Committee, in their Report, state—

> "In order to form an opinion as to the relative importance of the defence of the ports under consideration, and of the particular works proposed at each of them, the Committee have examined many of our most eminent Naval and Military Authorities, including His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, General Viscount Wolseley, Admiral Sir G. Phipps Hornby, General Sir J. Lintorn Simmons, Lieutenant General Sir Andrew Clarke, the Inspector General of Fortifications, the Director of Artillery and Stores, the Director of the Intelligence Division of the War Office, the Directors of Naval Ordnance and Intelligence, the Inspector of Submarine Mining Defences, the Assistant Director of Torpedoes, and others. These witnesses have been unanimous in pointing out the weakness of our present position, and in urging the imperative necessity of strengthening and adding to the existing defences, though with some natural divergence of opinion on minor questions. The Estimates before the Committee appeared to represent the full amount which, in the judgment of experts, are required to put all these ports into a state of security against all probable contingencies. In the case of the principal military ports, the scheme is framed on the assumption that the command of the Channel has been temporarily lost to us by the fact that the Channel Squadron is absent or disabled, and that these ports and dockyards might have suddenly to rely exclusively on their own resources for defence against attacks by a powerful squadron of armour-clads. On the other hand, the plans for the defence of the mercantile ports do not generally contemplate anything more serious than an attack by one or two armoured cruisers, accompanied by torpedo boats and other small crafts."

I have quoted this in order to show hon. Members that the matter has been gone into exhaustively, with a full sense of the danger to which the country is exposed, or would be exposed in the event of the temporary absence or dispersion of the Channel Squadron. In their opinion these recommendations appear to meet the requirements which, in the judgment of experts, it is necessary to meet. Well, Sir, they go on to say—

> "After inquiring carefully into the condition of each of these forts, the Committee have no hesitation in stating their conviction that deficiencies exist in the defences of each of them which render our position dangerously insecure. It must not, indeed, be supposed from this statement that the money spent upon fortifications since 1860 has been injudiciously applied. They gave us adequate protection for many years; but now the enormously increased range and penetration of modern guns, and the great strength of iron-clads (what at the time of the erection of the fortifications could not have been foreseen), render partial, and in some cases very extensive, reconstruction essential, and necessitate an armament equal to modern requirements."

It appears to me that in these few words the Committee state, what all who have any knowledge of the changes which have been going on during the last 10 years will admit, that these changes make it imperative upon us to take measures for the increase of the defence of our coasts, and also for increasing the strength of our Navy. These changes involve alterations in the power of guns and in the strength of iron-clads which could not have been foreseen, because these guns did not exist seven, eight, nine, or ten years ago. It was only in 1879 that I signed, on behalf of the Navy, the drawings of the first breech-loading gun for mounting on our ships, and that gun certainly was not made for two or three years after those drawings were signed. Small breech-loading guns had been in use for many years before; but hon. Gentlemen who are acquainted with the affairs of the Navy are aware that these breech-loading guns were withdrawn from the Service, owing to the strong objections entertained for some years previously to the date I have named, and it was only when we came to realize the absolute necessity of being able to meet the increasing strength of foreign guns and ships that we felt we must have breech-loading guns instead of muzzle-loading guns. It is not that a breech-loading gun in itself is a better gun than a muzzle-loading gun; but the objection is that you cannot handle them long—you cannot load and fire them as you can a breech-loading gun. The Committee go on to say that the next matters in importance to the Channel and Home defences are the defences of Gibraltar and Malta; and I am sure that any Gentleman capable of forming a judgment and of taking a survey of the responsibilities of the country, and of the dangers we should run if Gibraltar and Malta were not preserved as strong places for the security of the Empire, will readily agree with the Committee as to the absolute necessity of keeping these two fortresses in a proper condition of defence. Gibraltar and Malta, in common with our military ports at home, have suffered from the enormous increase in the power of large guns; and it is, therefore, necessary to give them guns and works which will enable them to resist any attack which may be made upon them. I would remind the Committee that the amount required, in the opinion of experts, to put these ports in a state of security in all contingencies is not less than £1,500,000. For that expenditure we shall be able to put the military ports in the Channel, Malta, and Gibraltar in a condition of security. [Sir GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): How about powder?] Powder and projectiles are not provided for in this loan. The principle upon which we have proceeded is this—and I think the Committee will agree that it is a sound principle. We have provided for permanent works, and for that which is next in endurance to permanent works, heavy guns, by this loan. We thought we would not be justified in providing powder and projectiles, matters which come under revision in the ordinary way in Annual Estimates. [Sir GEORGE BALFOUR dissented.] Whether my hon. and gallant Friend agrees with me or not, I am afraid I cannot retract from the position I take up—namely, that we should not have been justified in asking for money on loan which was to be spent from day to day and week to week, and which would disappear altogether by the use of powder and projectiles. That is a matter for the Estimates. Well, Sir, I will not occupy the House long on the question of mercantile ports. I have stated the principle upon which we have proceeded with regard to them. They will be made reasonably secure against attacks from gunboats or torpedo boats; but it is obvious that to fortify our mercantile ports, or make them strong places in the ordinary sense of the word, would be a mistake of the gravest character, for it would draw upon them the fire of the enemy, and the results might be serious, even if the attack were beaten off. There is one point in this Report to which I wish to draw special attention, and that is the remark of the Committee as to the necessity of providing for garrisons. They say—

> "The Committee have received from the head of the Intelligence Division of the War Office evidence as to the necessity of providing for the requisite garrisons, and for their maintenance in an effective state. Moreover, every battery of modern guns has its peculiar features, which, if it is to be worked effectively, ought to be thoroughly studied beforehand by the actual troops (whether of the Regular or Auxiliary Forces) likely to have charge of it in war time. Many circumstances combine to make it very difficult for our garrisons to have sufficient experience of the guns they will have to serve. This is a point which, in the opinion of the Committee, requires very careful attention, and they would recommend that every arm of the Service which is told off for the defence of a particular port should, wherever reasonably practicable, have an opportunity of being exercised upon the ground which it may have to

defend, and with the guns which it may have to use."

Well, I think any reasonable man will fully recognize the importance and value of these recommendations, and I am happy to be able to say that steps have been taken to provide garrisons, to provide arrangements under which the men, whether they belong to the Regular or Auxiliary Forces, who will be told off to work the guns and man the fortifications will be practised on the guns, and will be employed for this purpose. An increase in the Garrison Artillery has been made for the purpose, and I think an increase has been sanctioned in the Fortress Engineers also.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The whole increase asked for is not yet made.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Anyhow, before the fortresses are ready an increase will be provided. The Volunteer Artillery and Sub-Marine Miners will be increased according to the necessity of each part of the coast. We provide the necessary money for the permanent works at home and abroad which are required. We provide money for heavy guns; but all the naval, all the light guns, all the small arms, and all the ammunition are provided for in the Estimates, and we consider that it is necessary to adhere to that arrangement, so that no guns for the Navy will be provided for out of the loan. The expenditure which will be involved in this scheme altogether is £2,600,000, and the cost of the small arms, ammunition, and light guns which falls on the Estimates will be £900,000, making £3,500,000 which we propose for the Services we have undertaken. We have reason to believe that the guns will be complete in the time mentioned—three years. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Three years may appear to be a very long time; but I am sorry to say our experience during the last four or five years has been that heavy guns are never completed within the time named in the first instance, either by the contractors or the Gun Factory. I make no complaint of the individuals who are themselves responsible in some measure for this delay, because when we come to examine the facts of the case it turns out that the delays arise in many cases from circumstances beyond their control. A gun may fail under the severe tests which are applied, and then the heavy forging has to be done over again and the gun is delayed. It is only fair, right, and just to the men who are doing their best to fulfil their engagements with the country that these facts should be stated. But, on the other hand, it is the duty of the Government to look these facts in the face, to look a long way ahead, and to avail themselves of the dearly-bought experience they have obtained from, I will not say the errors of the past, but from the facts of the past, and see that any work upon which they may enter shall be so carefully thought out beforehand, that when ships and fortifications are ready for guns, the guns shall be ready for them. I do not despair of even accelerating the delivery of these guns. I will only mention one fact to justify the statements I have made as to the period required for the delivery of the guns. I was myself responsible for an order given to a great firm in September, 1885, and I am sorry to say that but a very small portion of that order has as yet been executed. It was an order for £150,000 worth of guns. I believe the manufacturers have exercised due diligence in the endeavour to complete the order; but they have not yet completed it, and the result is that some of our ships are waiting for guns which we had every reason to believe would have been put in the ships by this time. I say this without, in the slightest degree, imputing blame to my Predecessors. They, no doubt, believed that when they ordered guns two or three years would be a reasonable time within which to expect delivery of them; but that has not proved to be the case, and disappointments and delays have resulted. Neither the Royal Gun Factories nor the private manufacturers have been able to complete guns within the contract time, and we are without them at the present time. But as soon as we knew that these delays were occurring the Government took every step in their power to see that due diligence was exercised in completing the guns now in arrear. We have put such pressure as we are able to put upon the manufacturers themselves; we have requested a competent engineer to visit the works, and see whether he can suggest any definite measures to secure earlier delivery of the guns; and, taking warning from the past, we have ourselves provided against the repetition of a delay which is not only exceedingly disappointing, but which may be very dangerous to the public interest. A remark has been made in the course of the discussions upon this question as to the new rifle. Now, I wish to tell the Committee frankly what has occurred in this matter. If anything is kept back, it may be said we have some motive in keeping it back. Like other countries, we have been for a long time desirous of having a new rifle, the best rifle obtainable. For six years, I think, the subject has been studied by the Military Authorities. A Committee of experts, under pressure from myself I am afraid, reported two years ago in favour of a particular rifle; but no sooner had the Report been adopted and some rifles had been manufactured than it became clear to the Military Authorities that a better rifle was in prospect. Therefore, the manufacture was stopped, new experiments were undertaken, and the Committee was re-assembled; and now at last, after the lapse of another two years, we have a pattern which is approved by the Military Authorities, and is about to be tried in all climates and under all circumstances before it is finally adopted. But our experience is precisely the experience of other countries. It is said that France has got a start in the manufacture of a rifle; but we are not quite certain that that is the case, and certainly Germany has not yet started the manufacture of a new small-bore Magazine rifle, which is the arm that to our Military Authorities seems to be most necessary. I mention these circumstances in order to show that, however great may be the faults of our civilian administration of the War Department—and I am far from saying they have not faults—here is a particular question which has been entirely in the hands of experts during the last six years. [An hon. MEMBER: Seven years.] A right hon. Gentleman opposite says longer—that it is seven years. These experts have had every assistance, and all available resources which successive Governments possessed placed at their disposal; but so great are the difficulties, so many are the considerations involved in the choice of weapons, that it is only now that the Military Authorities have succeeded in deciding for themselves that they believe they have at last got the best weapon. One of the complaints made against the Government is, that we are slow in adopting improvements, and that so soon as we have adopted an improvement we do not immediately replace all the material of war that we possess by the improved article. In the first place, we must have some trial of a new article before we can know whether it is an improved weapon; and, in the next place, we must consider what expenditure is required to replace the rifle in the hands of 650,000 men who are mentioned as the strength of our Army, including Volunteers, but omitting the forces in India. It is complained that we have not organized the Departments and welded them into one vast machine. No efforts have been spared during the last three years—and I doubt not in years preceding, but certainly not on the part of Her Majesty's present Government—to avail themselves of the intelligence at their command at the War Office in the endeavour to improve the organization of the Army, to render it capable of undertaking any duties it may be called upon to discharge—in point of fact, to make it what it ought to be, ready to go anywhere, and to discharge any duty the country can reasonably call upon it to discharge. We have had great assistance from our Military Advisers and from experts specially called in. I should delay the Committee too much if I were to attempt to describe the work which has been done. Most valuable work has been done in the Departments of the Adjutant General and the Quartermaster General and by the head of the Intelligence Department, and they have combined in framing a scheme which has received the approval of the Secretary for War, and which has gone very far indeed to make the Army mobile and an easily-used machine for the purpose for which it is intended. I do not say this for the purpose of eliciting expressions of praise or of confidence. I know it is only natural that members of the Military and Naval Professions should have a certain want of confidence in civilians in the administration of great Services like the Army and Navy; but it is only fair that I should state that both at the Admiralty and at the War Department the professional officers who have been selected have been seriously at work, and certainly, in our time, every effort has been made to take a comprehensive view of our military system. In the discharge of that duty it is utterly impossible that some changes should not have been made, some steps should not have been taken, which have not met with the approval of every naval or military officer; but still the changes have been made on the best advice that could be obtained, and my own belief is that if during this period there had been a military Secretary of State, or a naval First Lord of the Admiralty, there would have been at least as many differences of opinion as have been expressed during the last few years upon the policy of the Government in from time to time effecting changes in the Services. I have a long Report of the work which has been done from a most distinguished officer, but I will not now weary the House with it. Another complaint is that sufficient provision has not been made for warlike stores in the Army and Navy. I am very far from saying that we have made up leeway, and that we have overcome all the difficulties of the position which the rapid changes and extraordinary developments of destructive weapons have created during the last three years; but it is right the Committee should realize what has been done as regards warlike stores alone. Four or five years ago, it was held that £1,600,000 or thereabouts would supply new guns to the Navy, and make good the wear and tear of military ports, and supply projectiles required for both Services, and also supply arms required for both—in fact, would meet all the necessities of warlike stores for both the Army and the Navy. Within four years our Estimates for these Services have gone up to £3,600,000. We now ask Parliament for £3,600,000, whereas in 1884-5 only £1,619,000 was required. This sum which appears on the Estimates is altogether irrespective of the loan we now propose to contract. I assure the Committee we should noh ave asked for a single farthing of this money unless we had felt it was our absolute duty to do so, having regard to the interests of the country. We know that the country will not be secure unless our soldiers and sailors are armed with the best weapons which the country can obtain for them, and unless the country is furnished with the best material of war which it is possible to procure. In endeavouring to obtain the best arms and other material of war, we believe we are doing our duty to the country and meeting the obligations imposed upon us. Now, Sir, I think I ought to refer to some questions which have been raised during the last three or four weeks. The Government, on the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), undertook to grant an inquiry into the extent to which our naval and military systems, as at present organized and administered, are adapted to the national wants. I have explained to my hon. and gallant Friend that the Government have been unable to constitute a Commission to undertake all that is included in that Reference; but the noble Marquess the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington) has undertaken to preside over a Commission—

> "To inquire into the civil and professional administration of the Naval and Military Departments, and the relation of those Departments to each other and to the Treasury; and to report what changes in the existing system would tend to the efficiency and economy of the Public Service."

I am challenged as to the method by which the inquiry shall be conducted into the important question of naval and military organization originally intended to be reported upon by the Royal Commission; for example, into the system under which English troops are found for Indian and Colonial Services, and for the garrisons of our coaling stations, and the experience we have gained of the operation of short service and of the Reserve. It is the intention of the Government to conduct the inquiry with the assistance of officers and civilians who are acquainted with the very difficult questions at issue, with the view of determining for themselves, and upon their own responsibility, whether changes ought not to be made in a system which, though perfect in theory, is certainly one which involves a very great drain on the resources of the country. It must be remembered that at the present time we have 70,000 men in India; that we have large garrisons scattered all over the world; that these troops are entitled to relief at certain intervals of time; and that the effect of the relief is to create a considerable drain upon the Army in this country, and to expose the battalions serving at home to an amount of exhaustion, so to speak, in order to maintain the strength of the battalions serving abroad of which few people have any conception. We think that the system has now been in operation long enough to justify a careful examination of its results, and we shall take care that that examination is complete and thorough. The Prime Minister himself is giving attention to the question, with the view of ascertaining whether the system is one which ought to be maintained. Sir, I am no optimist. On the contrary, I am willing to admit that there are many deficiencies to be supplied, many evils to be grappled with, many improvements to be effected. But the recognition of invention and improvement brings upon us some of the charges now made. A fast ship with a powerful battery discredits the slower and the weaker vessels; a new gun of great range and penetration, a new rifle, or a new explosive by the side of the weapons previously relied upon, condemns them as obsolete, although they have done good service to the country. It is our duty to avail ourselves of the ingenuity, the scientific skill, and the mechanical power of the country to obtain the best arms that can be put into the hands of our soldiers and sailors; but there are enormous difficulties in manufacture, failures and delays in new material, new designs, and immensely developed powers. It is impossible to improvise at once complete supplies for Services like ours of the best and the latest patterns. I do not say that to excuse inefficiency, to excuse indifference, to excuse procrastination. It is our duty to consider what the necessities of the country are, to examine them with care upon our responsibility, and to see that, to the best of our ability, those necessities are met as they from time to time arise. But hon. Gentlemen should remember that we are sometimes apt to insist upon absolute perfection, and we are inclined to wait until we get absolute perfection. We have waited seven years, for instance, for a rifle, because we had not got that which was the very best. We have to use the material at our hands from day to day; we have to take the men who are at our disposal; we have to take the ships which we can find; we have to adopt the guns which are at hand; we have to put the best weapon we can into the hands of our soldiers and sailors; and we believe that, in doing so, we shall best protect the interests of the country at large, and do our duty to the people who have sent us here. We have shown our readiness to effect any economy which knowledge and experience can suggest. We welcome inquiry and criticism. We do not seek to conceal shortcomings or mistakes for which either we ourselves or the system may be responsible. We do not shelter ourselves by aid of a storm of Party recrimination; but, adhering loyally to the principles of Parliamentary government which we are bound to maintain, we still hold to our view that the Government, and the Government alone, must be responsible for the measures to be recommended to Parliament and for the cost involved. If we fail to secure for ourselves the best advice, the most competent guidance, and to form a judgment upon the facts—to give shape and direction to a policy suited to the necessities of the country; or if, in the judgment of the House of Commons, we are deemed to be incapable of doing so, it becomes at once the duty of Parliament to replace the men in whom it has no confidence for the discharge of the most important function of any Government—the provision for the safety of the country. I beg to move the 1st Resolution which stands in my name.

The CHAIRMAN: Before a discussion begins, I may point out that though the right hon. Gentleman has naturally dealt with several questions, there are nine separate Resolutions to be proposed. The first four deal exclusively with the arrangement with the Australian Colonies. The general discussion, therefore, would more properly and consistently with Parliamentary usage take place on the 5th Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it is expedient to ratify an Agreement for Naval Defence made between Her Majesty's Government and the Governments of Her Majesty's Australasian Colonies."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, there were one or two points which certainly required a little further explanation. As far as he could gather from the speech—the very clear speech—of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, we were practically to give £4,440,000 towards certain ships. [*Cries of* "No!"] Yes; he thought so.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that the entire expenditure for ships, including armaments, was £850,000, and the entire expenditure in respect of the military ports at home and abroad, coaling stations, and mercantile ports was £3,500,000, of which £2,600,000 only was to be raised on loan.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked, if he was to understand that only £850,000 was to be given to Australia?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that £850,000 was the total to be spent on the Australian Squadron. The ships would be ours at the end of the 10 years.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked, what good would the ships be when they were turned over to us? The whole thing amounted to this—that certain ships were to be built by us and used by Australia. We were to contribute £850,000 towards the ships. In order to be quite correct, he would like to ask what we were to expend upon the ships per annum—was the Australian Government to pay a farthing?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing) said, that the whole arrangement was contained in the Report of the proceedings of the Colonial Conference which was laid before Parliament last year, and which had been discussed over and over again.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that he imagined he was right in supposing that £35,000 was to be spent by us upon these ships annually?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the hon. Gentleman had quite misunderstood the arrangement. The Colonies were to pay £35,000 per annum as interest on the capital expended on the ships, and they were to pay the whole of the cost, including superannuation, of the officers and crews, and the estimated cost of the maintenance of the ships during the 10 years, which amounted to £91,000 per annum.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that in that case we were to give a grant-in-aid of these ships to the Australian Colonies of £850,000, and the ships were to be used exclusively for the defence of Australian ports and shores. He objected to that entirely, and he objected to it so strongly that, so far from letting the thing go by default, of which there seemed a great likelihood before he rose, he should take a Division if he could find any Member to tell with him. They had heard lately a very great deal about Imperial Federation. He was no very great believer in the schemes and proposals to federate the Empire. He thought that the relations which existed at present between the Colonies and ourselves were a far better tie than any which could be devised. He had always known that when Imperial Federation was translated into deeds it would mean that we should be called upon to spend money for the Colonies. What was this? Surely, it was nothing but a call upon us to spend money for the Australian Colonies. [Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): No.] The hon. and gallant Gentleman said "No;" but it was. It must be remembered that we, at the present moment, had our Fleet spread out all over the globe. We had to defend all our commerce upon the seas; we had to defend all our fortresses; we had, as they saw from these Resolutions, to vote money for coaling stations; and all this not only for our own benefit, but also for the benefit of the commerce of our Colonies. At present, it was thought by the Australian Colonies desirable to have a Fleet which was not to cruise on the high seas, but which was to be there to defend their ports and shores. He said that, far from our paying for that Fleet, the Australians ought to pay for it. If the Australians wanted to come into Imperial Federation, it seemed to him it would be only reasonable that they should commence by making a contribution to those Imperial charges, from which they benefited—the charges for the Diplomatic Services, and the like. Who paid those charges? We in the United Kingdom paid them, though the Colonists benefited from them equally with us. Who paid for the Army? We paid for it? Some time ago, when we sent some troops to Suakin, we were told that the expedition would benefit India. India paid something towards the cost of the expedition. We were also told that the Colonies would be benefited by the expedition; but the Colonies contributed absolutely nothing towards the expenses. It was true the Australians did send a number of men to Suakin; but they misconducted themselves. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen cried "Oh, oh!" but he challenged the Government to produce any report as to what the men did in Malta. [An hon. MEMBER: They did not go to Malta.] They put in at Malta. [*Cries of* "No!"] He begged hon. Members' pardon; they did. The Canadian Contingent — the Voyageurs—did. At any rate, he did not think any single military man who was in the expedition—he said nothing about despatches, because some of the despatches were written with the object of patting the Colonists on the back—would say that the expedition to Suakin was in any sort of way benefited by the presence of the Australians, or that the operations on the Nile were benefited by the presence of the Canadian Voyageurs. Therefore, he maintained that although the Colonies benefited in every way by the vast expenditure, not only military, but civil, which we incurred, they did not pay their share. At the present moment the Australians wished to have a Home Squadron, and they asked us to pay a portion of the cost of it. We might be considered to be the parent of the Colonies. The Colonies were thriving children; we were getting old; we had very large debts to pay; we had to pay the interest on loans incurred during wars which were of benefit to the Colonies. Surely, if we were to keep up the large establishment we now kept up, if we were to expend and extend our establishment as was suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, we ought, instead of being called on to make any contribution to the home defences of Australia, to receive some contribution from the Australian Colonies. It was said we should derive some benefit from this arrangement, because the ships were to be called ours. But they were to become ours when they were perfectly useless. Instead of indulging in generous, recklessly generous, ideas, because the thing was labelled "Imperial Federation," which was only a phrase, and worth nothing at all, the House ought to refuse to sanction this arrangement. The House should at once say—"What we believe is, that the Colonies ought to contribute to the general expenditure of the Empire, and the Colonies themselves should pay for the expenditure which is necessary for each of them." He should take a Division upon this Resolution.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he wished, in a few sentences, to make it quite clear what the arrangement was. Perhaps he had better say what the arrangement was in the first instance. The ships were originally to cost £700,000. On that cost the Australians agreed to pay 5 per cent for 10 years, at the end of which time the ships would not belong to Australia but remain ours. That did not strike him as a particularly bad bargain for this country. There was no gift of any kind. We were to advance the money, the Colonies were to pay the interest upon the money, and at the end of 10 years the ships were to revert to us. The increase in the cost of the ships from £700,000 to £850,000 reduced the contribution of £35,000 a-year to about 4 per cent instead of 5 per cent. That was the position in which the matter stood at present. The ships were not to be for the defence of the inland ports of Australia, if one might use such a phrase, but for the defence of the general commerce of Australia; and as the commerce of Australia was mostly carried on in English bottoms, no one would deny that English commerce had as great an interest in this matter as Colonial commerce. He was bound to say that the Colonies had shown every disposition to make an equitable bargain with us, and one which would not be heavy on the Mother Country. The arrangement which had been arrived at seemed to him to be fairly equitable between the Colonies and ourselves. He did not wish to enter upon the question as to whether the Colonies ought to pay the entire cost of their own defence. What he wanted to make clear was that this was not a gift. At the end of 10 years the ships would, of course, not be as valuable as they were now; but if at the end of 10 years, when old ships, they reverted to us, we should have been paid at the rate of 4 per cent for the use of the capital expended upon them.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had done them a good service in making somewhat more plain the arrangement between the Imperial Government and the Colonies; because although he had nothing but praise for the very lucid and ample statement of the First Lord of the Treasury, the right hon. Gentleman did not give to the Committee full particulars, especially as to the payment to be made by the Colonies. He had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman trusted to knowledge on the part of Members of the Committee which all of them did not possess. The right hon. Gentleman ought to have remembered that the information was hidden away in a mass of Papers, and that it was difficult to glean it from the Report of the proceedings of the Colonial Conference last year. But there were one or two points he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) would still like a little more information upon. As he understood the First Lord of the Treasury, the development of the size and of other qualities of these ships, and the consequent development of their cost, was represented by an additional £150,000, the difference between £700,000 and £850,000, £700,000 having been the amount originally decided upon, and £850,000 being the amount dealt with in these Resolutions. The Colonies were to pay, as he understood, £35,000 a-year, and they were to pay the whole cost of the crews. But would not the addition of these ships to the Navy involve an addition to the number of men under training, and would the ships be manned from the British Navy? Would the Colonies pay, not only the direct cost of the maintenance of the crews on the station, but the indirect charges, which sometimes were very heavy in such cases, which would otherwise fall on the British taxpayer? It would be interesting to be informed on these points. Now, he was not disposed, like his hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere) to raise an objection to this arrangement; but he thought it right to remark that he believed it was absolutely the first time that the expenses of building ships had been met by a loan of public money. Hitherto such an expenditure as this had always been met and charged upon the current Estimates of the year. That was a new departure, and he hoped it would not be regarded as a precedent in the case of our own expenditure; that it would be considered as solely justified on the ground of the peculiar relations between ourselves and the Colonies, and of the bargain that had been made between the two. The sum was small to be got by way of loan, and the object was one which he believed had never been met in the way proposed. Loans had only been raised, as he had been taught to understand, for such great objects as fortifications, or some definite and tangible work. But, as he had said, he did not share the objection of his hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere). If the arrangement stood as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had explained, it did not seem to him to be a disadvantageous one for this country, as the commerce which was to be protected by those vessels was substantially British commerce rather than Australian. He certainly did not think it would be right to put any impediment in the way of an encouragement of a patriotic spirit on the part of the Colonies.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked to be allowed to explain a little more in detail the arrangement which was negotiated with the Colonial Representatives. The financial part of the arrangement had been properly described by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Colonists undertook to pay on the cost of these vessels a sum not exceeding £35,000 a-year for 10 years—that was on the cost of construction. They further arranged that of the ships constructed, three of the larger, and one of the smaller, should be permanently in commission, and that the remainder should have a certain staff and crew, and be in such a condition as to be ready for commission at a moment's notice. The whole cost of the maintenance of the ships in commission, and of the ships out of commission—the whole cost, both direct and indirect, everything connected with their maintenance—was to be borne by the Colonies, provided it did not exceed the sum of £91,000 a-year. In other words, the Colonies undertook to pay practically an appropriation in aid of the Imperial Naval Estimates amounting to £91,000. [An hon. Member: For 10 years?] Yes; and at the end of that time the ships were to become the property of the British Government. That arrangement was arrived at after long and careful negotiation between them, and he thought it was one equitable to the Mother Country as well as to the Colonies. It established for the first time the great principle of financial partner-ship between the Colonies and the Mother Country; and, so far from taking the view which the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) entertained that this arrangement was unjust to the English taxpayer, he believed it might operate in precisely the opposite direction. The Colonial Representatives showed no narrow or prejudiced spirit. They were not influenced by local considerations; indeed, the last words a leading Delegate said to him before leaving this country were—

> "I am glad the Imperial Government have met us in a frank and liberal spirit. We, in Australia, are now only 4,000,000; but in 30 or 40 years we may be 40,000,000 or 50,000,000, and then, when our riches and our power have increased, we shall be able to treat the Mother Country in as generous and liberal a spirit as it now treats us."

He (Lord George Hamilton) trusted, when a question of such Imperial importance came before the Imperial Parliament, that Parliament would not be found wanting. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had called attention to the increase in the cost of the ships, and that was a point on which he (Lord George Hamilton) desired to say a few words, because it brought home at once to anybody who was in any way interested in naval affairs the danger of attempting to embark upon a wholesale expenditure upon ships. The march of mechanical science was now extraordinarily rapid. One of the arrangements they made at the Colonial Conference was that whatever type of ship was adopted it should, so far as its displacement was concerned, be equal in power and speed to anything afloat. The Colonists said that, being a new and go-a-head people, they would only be satisfied with the most modern type of war ship. The ship the Admiralty proposed was an improved type of the *Archer* class, which, at that time, fulfilled these conditions; but, owing to a delay on the part of one of the Colonies in assenting to the proposal, they were unable to put out last year the tenders for the building of the ships. In the meantime, certain foreign nations designed and commenced ships more powerful than the vessels of the *Archer* class; and the Admiralty were therefore obliged, in order to fulfil their bargain, to substitute, for the vessels originally decided upon, ships of the size mentioned by his right hon. Friend. It, therefore, came to this—that although they had lost five months in point of time, they had gained considerably by an increase in the power, speed, and generally efficiency of the ships. If the vessels had been laid down last year they would have been inferior to the vessels subsequently laid down. That, he thought, brought home very clearly the unwisdom of prematurely rushing into shipbuilding. They might be confident that, as soon as a vessel was laid down, one superior in speed and probably in power would be commenced. He thought he had answered all the questions put to him; and he hoped the Committee, considering the manner in which these proposals were treated by the Colonial Legislature, would endeavour to act in a reciprocal spirit, and not go to a Division.

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.) said, he desired to reserve what he had to say upon the Resolutions until a later period, and what he rose for now was to repudiate what the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) said about the Australians who came to help us at Suakin. He went up the Nile, and he went to Suakin afterwards, and he might say, on behalf of every soldier and sailor serving in that expedition, that they were very grateful to the Australians for the help they rendered. Their discipline in camp was splendid, they were excellent soldiers, and they could not have done better then they did. As to the Canadian Voyageurs, he very much doubted whether our men could have got as far as they did if they had not had the Voyageurs with them. The experience on the Nile was something totally new to our officers and men; but the Voyageurs took charge of the boats; it was an old game of theirs. They understood the rapids and rocks, and they were, in truth, found most useful. He was fully persuaded he only expressed the opinion of every man in the expedition, when he said they were most grateful to the Canadians for what they did on the Nile. As to the Australians, he did not think they went to Malta. The hon. Gentleman was totally misinformed upon that point. The Canadians did go to Malta; but he had never heard anything but a good account of them in whatever they undertook.

MR. R. W. DUFF (Banffshire) said, he entirely approved of the policy of the Government in regard to the vessels which the First Lord of the Treasury had told them they were going to supply. There was one point, however, upon which he should like further information. The Government told them what their policy was to be, but he had considerable doubt as to whether they would be able to carry it out. He was obliged to make that statement, in consequence of the answer given by the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) with regard to our own guns. If we were unable to supply our own naval guns, how were we going to find the guns for the Australian vessels?

THE CHAIRMAN: Order!

MR. R. W. DUFF said, that he was only going to raise the question of guns, as far as the Navy was concerned; and on the question of the supply of these ships he presumed he should be in Order in doing that?

THE CHAIRMAN said, that, if guns were provided for in the 5th Resolution, it would be much more appropriate that the question of guns should be raised upon that Resolution.

MR. R. W. DUFF said, he was anxious that an opportunity of raising the question should not be allowed to pass.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, there was no difficulty in providing guns for this class of ship. The difficulty was confined to the large guns—the 22-ton guns, and upwards. In the supply of six-inch guns there had been no delay, and, as a matter of fact, the orders for the guns for these ships had been already placed.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked, whether the sum of £91,000 included the £35,000, or was an additional sum?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, that a sum of £35,000 was to be paid annually for 10 years on the original cost of construction, and a sum not exceeding £91,000 was to be paid annually for the maintenance of the ships in commission.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, he wanted to understand what the view of the Chairman was with regard to the course of the debate. As he understood at present with regard to the whole of the Resolutions, so far as they dealt with the defence of our Australian Colonies, they would be discussed now; but everything else arising out of them would have to be considered on the Fifth Resolution, which authorized the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of £2,600,000.

THE CHAIRMAN: There are nine separate Resolutions which will be submitted separately to the Committee. Each Resolution has its proper sphere of discussion; but on the fifth, which is of an extensive and comprehensive character, any question relating to Imperial Defence may be discussed except that part with reference to the Australian Colonies.

MR. WADDY said, that was what he understood, and he had only wished to have it clearly laid down. Now, he agreed with what had been said with reference to drawing tighter the bonds between the Mother Country and the Colonies, and the sentiments of generosity which had been expressed by the Government in this matter were, no doubt, shared by hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House. But he must say it appeared to him that a false issue had been raised as to this £850,000. It was stated that this was not a gift. Well, it was not a loan, because it was said that the Colonies were not to pay it back. It was a gift, if anything. We were to find the £850,000 to begin with, and just let the Committee see how the figures would work out. We were to find £850,000 to begin with, and what were we to have at the end of the time? We were going, he supposed, to raise the money under the new arrangement—at any rate, that was the most favourable light to put it in—and to pay 2½ per cent for it. We were to get 4 per cent per annum for the money, and to get it for 10 years; therefore, we should receive as the difference between the two percentages—the two rates of interest—£12,750 a-year. In other words, we should get back of our £850,000 in cash, spread over the whole term of 10 years, £127,500. Therefore, in reality, there would be £722,500 out of the £850,000 which, as cash, we should never see back again at all, and all that we should get in exchange for this large amount of money would be the return of the ships at the end of 10 years. Well, he supposed it would be agreed that at the end of 10 years the ships and engines, if not worn out, would be so much depreciated that they would not be worth taking into account. They would be more like old iron than anything else; so that at the end of the 10 years all we should get would be the value of the ships as they would be then. We should receive the ships back, and he supposed they would be sent to the Dockyards and broken up.

An hon. MEMBER: We do not break up war vessels 10 years old.

MR. WADDY said, he was glad to hear it. Though the vessels might not have to be destroyed at the end of 10 years, still they would clearly be in a very depreciated condition, and would be comparatively useless. Whatever might be their state of depreciation—and on this point he did not wish to insist—the article they would get back at the end of the period of 10 years would not be of the value of £850,000 which they were now spending. It might be a very desirable arrangement that the Government proposed to make; but, inasmuch as it was such an arrangement as he had described, it was evidently important to them that they should consider what had been said by a right hon. Member from the Front Bench on the Opposition side of the House—namely, that this was the first time the Government of this country was found borrowing money in this way for such a purpose. It did seem to him (Mr. Waddy) that if this was a proper outlay—and that it was not a proper outlay he did not suggest, because he did not wish to contest that point at this moment—it, at any rate, appeared to him that we were in this position. We were making a provision for what were said to be the ordinary requirements of the Empire—[*Cries of* "No, no!"] Yes; that was what was said now. We were undertaking an entirely new system of provision for the ordinary requirements of the Empire, for the Government declared that these ships were not wanted for the protection of the Colonies, but for the defence of the Empire generally. The ships were required for the protection of our own commerce, and, no doubt, that was true; but it had always been the case. The only difference was that we were now making a better provision for the protection of our commerce in far-off parts of the world than had been made before. Then let us have our eyes quite open as to what we were doing. If it was necessary and desirable that this money should be spent, then by all means let it be spent; but it surely was not desirable to raise the money in the manner proposed? It ought to be raised on the ordinary Estimates of the year. He felt this point very strongly indeed—that, for a purpose which the Government held to be necessary, they were spending more money on the ordinary provision for the year, without allowing the expenditure to come into the ordinary Estimates of the year. It was, in point of fact, an attempt to conceal the real expenditure of the country by calling it by a new name, and spreading the amount over 10 years. If, as he said, the money ought to be spent, in the name of common sense spend it; but let the expenditure take place in the ordinary fashion.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport), in reply to the hon. and learned Member for the Brigg Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Waddy), said, that if this arrangement was not made with the co-operation of Australia, we should still have to supply these vessels ourselves for the protection of our commerce, though, instead of its costing the country the sum which the hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think it would cost, we should be actually receiving something like £90,000 from Australia in support of these vessels. There was one bit of information which he (Captain Price) should have liked to have received from the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) as to the control of this Australian Squadron. He understood that the Squadron was to be under the control of the senior naval officer on that Station, but, at the same time, it was only to be used in Australian waters. Now, he wished to know who was to be the judge as to how, from the Australian shores, this Squadron should act, because there was one very important duty which a Squadron such as this would be called upon to fulfil in connection with commerce—that was to say, the duty of convoy? He would put this question to the noble Lord, who, perhaps, would be able to give them an answer before the end of the discussion, and say whether some arrangement could not be made with the Australian Government by which, in case of war, these vessels would be allowed to convoy merchantmen for a certain distance from the shores of Australia, say, to the Cape or to Singapore, or to such other place as the merchantmen could be handed over to the Imperial Navy? It certainly seemed to him that there should be some definite arrangement between ourselves and the Australian Colonies for this purpose. Before he sat down he should like to express his great regret for the slur which had been cast upon our Australian Colonies by the hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) in regard to their having sent troops to Egypt to our assistance. Whether or not what the hon. Member had said this evening was calculated to advance his notoriety in this country, at any rate he (Captain Price) sincerely trusted that the hon. Member's words would not, in any shape, reach the shores of our Australian Colonies.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that whilst he objected to the proposal to raise money for the purpose of Imperial defence by loan, he should feel bound, if a Division were challenged, to vote in favour of ratifying the agreement which had been entered into with the Australian Colonies.

COLONEL BRIDGEMAN (Bolton) said, he wished to protest against the language used by the hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) with reference to the New South Wales contingent at Suakin, and to bear out what had been said by the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) and the hon. and gallant Member for Devonport (Captain Price). It would be a very serious thing if it should go forth from England to Australia that the services of the Colonial troops who served in the Soudan were not appreciated. The hon. Member for Northampton had said that no soldier would rise to say that those Volunteers had been of any use; but, having served in the same brigade with them, he (Colonel Bridgeman) wished to bear testimony to the admirable manner in which they had performed their duty. No men could have worked harder or more willingly, or shown a keener anxiety to learn a soldier's duties. It was a splendid thing for a Colony to have sent men out, at its own expense, to the help of the Mother Country in a time of danger, and it would be a national misfortune if it went forth to Australia that England had failed to appreciate the loyalty which was shown to her.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he wished to know whether the Colonies were to pay for the repair and maintenance of the vessels in commission, in addition to the payment of the £91,000 referred to?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, that the arrangement was that the Colonies were to bear the expense of the maintenance of the ships in commission up to £91,000. That sum, it had been estimated, would be sufficient to keep them in proper repair, and to pay for their coaling and for caretakers of the vessels when out of commission. They also estimated that the indirect charges would fall within that sum of £91,000, though he did not mean to say that that sum would never be exceeded.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked, if it were exceeded, whether this country would have to pay the extra expenditure?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he desired to add a word or two to what had fallen from his right hon. Friend (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) at an earlier part of the debate. They would probably have a great deal to say upon the 5th and some of the following Resolutions. No doubt, the Committee would be glad of further elucidation as to the effect of those Resolutions; but as regarded the present Resolution, as affecting the arrangement with the Australian Government, he was bound to say—and he said it with some recollection of the arrangement made a long time ago, in fact before he occupied the post of First Lord of the Admiralty, in connection with the Victorian Squadron of that day—that he thought the Government had made a very fair and reasonable arrangement. The Government were going to spend £850,000—an enlarged expenditure from the sum of £700,000 originally contemplated—upon this Squadron, which, though it would be for service in Australian waters, would be entirely under the command of Her Majesty's officers. That amount appeared to him to be a reasonable sum to spend as the initial cost of these ships. What he understood would happen would be this, that the Australian Governments amongst them would contribute every year, during a period of 10 years, somewhere about £125,000 towards the capital expenditure on the ships, and the annual maintenance of the vessels, that was to say, we should receive £1,250,000 towards a fleet which in all probability, even if it had not been for this arrangement with the Colony, the necessity for protecting our commerce would have compelled us to establish ourselves. He did not say that if it were not for this arrangement with the Colonies, we should be spending an amount equal to that which it was proposed now to spend, but, at any rate, we should have had to incur a large outlay for the protection of our enormous commerce to and from Australia, and the fact remained that that burden was shared by the Australian Colonies to the extent of £1,250,000, spread over a period of 10 years. So far, then, as regarded the arrangement with the Colonies, he was well satisfied; but he must say that he was not quite so sure of the wisdom of the arrangement between the Admiralty and the Treasury. He confessed he shared the apprehensions of some of those who had asked whether as between the Admiralty and the Treasury, in regard to a strictly internal arrangement in the matter of the cost of providing these ships, was it worth while to break through the great principle on which all ships had hitherto been built? The cost of these works had hitherto been defrayed out of the annual Votes of Parliament, but now it was proposed to defray the cost of so small a charge as £850,000 by means of a loan. If the money were to be borrowed, he admitted that the arrangements for the loan itself were not unreasonable. The repayment of capital and interest was to be spread over a period of 10 years, and that was preferable to the 20 years for which loans of the same kind had formerly been raised—that, for instance, for fortifications which was contracted under Lord Palmerston's Government. What he was afraid of, was, that if once they began to raise loans for perishable things such as ships, although they only began with the small amount of £850,000, the time would come when it would be quoted as a precedent, and they would be asked to build a much larger Navy by the aid of money raised on loan. He did not suggest that such a proposal would be made by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury or the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. He did not believe it would be made by them; they had disavowed any such idea, but the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) would forgive him for reminding him that such a proposal was made by a distinguished statesman not many years ago, and that it was possible it might be renewed on some future occasion. If the proposal were not made now it was not the noble Lord's fault that it was not. He (Mr. Childers) remembered perfectly well the controversy which took place when that proposal was made, and he shared very much the apprehensions of those who feared that what was now being done would be quoted as a precedent on some future occasion. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) had assured them that so far as he was concerned, this would not be made a precedent of, and that assurance would find a place on the authentic records of the debates of Parliament, and, therefore, he (Mr. Childers) would at that moment say no more on the subject. He had risen not only to say that, but to express his great satisfaction with the words to which the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty had given utterance as to shipbuilding. The noble Lord had put before them the unreasonableness of embarking upon an enormous amount of shipbuilding of the type which happened to be the best type of the year. There, again, we had had, and should have both now and in the future, proposals made for an enormous amount of shipbuilding to be undertaken for the reason that some person in authority might come to the conclusion that our Navy was insufficient, and that a very large amount of tonnage ought to be built. But the noble Lord had spoken clearly as to the grave objections which existed to such a policy, and he (Mr. Childers) hoped that the very wise words of which the noble Lord had made use would not be forgotten. They would remember that the French had fallen into precisely the same error which it was so essential that the Parliament of this country should avoid in this matter. A very able Commission was appointed not so many years ago in France, and he remembered very well its inception, and its recommending to the Imperial Government of France that it should embark upon a very large programme of shipbuilding. The French Government approved of the recommendation, and ordered a very large Fleet to be prepared, the expenditure on that Fleet to be spread over, he thought, 10 years or some such period. Well, what had been the result? Why by the end of the 10 years two-thirds of the vessels built were found to be of an obsolete character. The French had thus been engaged in a most wild shipbuilding speculation, quite forgetting that the type and character of modern ships of war changed very rapidly. Ten years, or certainly 12 years, after these ships were taken in hand, it was found that they were, to a great extent, obsolete, and those who had compared the strength of the French Fleet with our own at that time—and it was his business to take part in that comparison—had felt very easy as to the final outcome of the enormous shipbuilding speculation undertaken by the French Government. Therefore, he was very glad when he heard the noble Lord lay down such a sound doctrine. Might he ask the noble Lord to add another principle to that which he had laid down, and it was this, that whatever decision might be arrived at as to the number of ships to be laid down, do not be afraid to finish them—that it was better to undertake three or four new ships, and not be afraid to finish them, than to contemplate building a large fleet, and spend a small sum on each, but then to patch and alter them from time to time as shipbuilding science advanced, and never complete them according to the original designs. If they undertook three or four new ships and finished them, when they were well forward with these they could commence another batch, in which all more recent improvements would find place. In this way they would get the advantage from time to time of whatever advance was made in shipbuilding, gunnery, and engineering science, as the Government had shown that within 12 months they had been forced to take advantage of the most modern principles in the type of vessel to be built for the Australian Station. He hoped he was not unduly pressing this principle upon the attention of the Government. It was one that all Admiralties always disliked to face; but he hoped it was one that the Government would adhere to. He thought he saw signs of its having been adhered to by the noble Lord, and he congratulated the noble Lord upon the circumstance, and he trusted that the principle would receive the approval of the House.

Sir WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth) said, he only rose to refer to a remark which had fallen from the hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) as to the part taken by the Australian Colonies in the expenditure for Imperial defence. He (Sir William Crossman) had visited the Colonies some seven years ago, and had been very much struck by the preparations which had been made by the Colonists in the direction of fortifications for their own ports. From all he had heard, the Colonies were keeping pace with the times, and were improving their fortifications year by year. The Colonies had done very much for their own defence; and he thought that when it came to a question of the defence of British commerce, it was for the Government to make the best bargain in their power with the Colonies.

Mr. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham) said, the principle involved in this Resolution was so important and novel that he thought the Government ought to feel very well satisfied with the general acceptance it had obtained in this country as well as in Australia. He confessed that, looking at the matter as a financial operation, it seemed to him that the English people had not altogether got the best of the bargain. From the statement made by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty this evening, it appeared that originally the cost of these ships was to be £700,000; but the Australians, who were a go-â-head people, came forward and said they wanted the best and fastest ships which could be supplied, the result being that the expenditure had been increased to £850,000. He did not find, however, that the Australians were to pay any more on account of this increase in the expenditure. It was very easy for the Colonists to appear a go-a-head people in this way with the money of other persons. Nor was he greatly comforted by the assurance of the Australian delegates, which the First Lord of the Admiralty had quoted with so much satisfaction, that Australia, if generously treated by England now, would repay the debt a hundred-fold at some future time when she became a nation of 40,000,000; for no people had the right to pledge their descendants in this way, and, besides, the Australians were very much better off now, when they had a small population possessing boundless mineral and agricultural resources, than they were likely to be when their numbers had largely increased. If then, he looked upon this as a purely business arrangement, in that light he considered that the Australians had made a very good bargain indeed for themselves with the taxpayers of this country. The real defence of this proposal seemed to him to be that it was an immense improvement upon the existing state of things, for at the present moment the Australian Colonies enjoyed all the benefits of being protected by this mighty Empire, whilst they did not share in its expense and responsibility. Now, for the first time, the Government had succeeded in inducing them to enter formally into an arrangement by which they would pay a portion of the expenses of the Imperial Government, and by which they were willing to join us in defending the commerce of the Empire. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) had said that the ships which went to Australia were English ships, and that, therefore, it was only right that we should contribute a large proportion of the expenditure necessary for protecting them. But if we entered into any scheme of Imperial Federation, or entered into the consideration of the principle upon which such a federation could be carried out, they would all agree that each portion of the Empire should pay for its own defence. That was the principle we acted upon in regard to India. We treated India in a very different fashion to the way in which we treated our Colonies. We required her to pay for every man and every pound of powder she got from us, and the principle of protecting at our own expense all the British ships that traded with India was not recognized in our treatment of her in the slightest degree. If a scheme of anything like a real federation were adopted, we should have to give our Colonies an equal control with ourselves over the policy of the whole Empire. At present, the Colonies did not possess that, and therefore it was perhaps only reasonable to expect that they should not contribute as largely as they should otherwise do towards the defence of the whole Empire. All that could be said for the present proposal was that a beginning had been made in the right direction, and that now, for the first time, the Australian Colonies recognized their responsibilities, and were willing to take a share in the defence of the Empire.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he congratulated the hon. Gentleman the Member for Oldham (Mr. J. M. Maclean) in having delivered the most sensible speech which had been made on that side of the House, although he was very much afraid the hon. Member was about to vote precisely in opposition to the views he had expressed. The noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) had complained that he (Mr. Labouchere) had stated that the New South Wales contingent had not conducted themselves properly at Malta. He had been speaking not only of the New South Wales contingent, but of the Canadian Voyageurs, and the fact was that this force was composed principally of young men who had emigrated as boys from England to Canada, and were very glad of this opportunity of getting back to Europe for a holiday. With respect to the New South Wales contingent, he only wished that hon. Gentlemen, instead of reading the Jingo organs in this country, would consult the newspapers published in Australia—there might be three or four Jingo organs in Australia; but he would recommend to the attention of hon. Members those organs which were best appreciated by the inhabitants of that country. It would be seen, from the statements in those papers, that all persons in Australia not of a Jingo disposition were of opinion that the whole expedition of the New South Wales contingent to Egypt was entirely a mistake. The idea was put forward by a Prime Minister, who had naturally a servile spirit, and who wished to show his servility to this country. It was a most undesirable and regrettable circumstance that they had dragged the Australian Colonies into this miserable warfare—to make war upon people, who in the words of the late Prime Minister, were "rightly struggling to be free."

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he would not go into the question of the expedition to Suakin; but with respect to this particular Vote he desired to say that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) had made the matter clear to them, so that they now knew exactly what the arrangement would cost. Financially, it was most unquestionably a bad bargain; and it was desirable that the electors of this country should perfectly understand this, that taking the price at which we could borrow money at this time, and the amount we were to be paid, the operation of raising the money would cost us, from first to last, £220,000. Now, an hon. Member on the other side had said that this was an addition to the Imperial Navy. It was not a bit of an addition to the Imperial Navy. These ships would be essentially a local Navy to protect the Australian waters. They would do no more than that, as they would have not only to protect vessels in Australian waters, but also to protect Australian forts. He had read the speeches made by gentlemen who were touched with this Imperial Federation mania. He had read the speeches of gentlemen from Canada, protesting against their ports being open to attacks from the Navies of other nations when those nations might be at war with this country. He had seen it stated that, in the event of a war breaking out between England and some Foreign Power, a hostile ship might go in front of one of their towns and insist on bombarding it, unless some ransom were paid. That also was the argument used by the Australians when this proposal was made, and that was one of the grounds upon which the arrangement was carried out; but now the Government turned round and said it was British commerce that was to be protected by these proposed new vessels. How was British commerce to be protected by these ships? British commerce would have to go out to Australia before it could receive protection. We were to bear the expense of protecting our commerce between England and Australia, and when it arrived in Australian waters we were still to share the expense of protecting it in the manner proposed. As a matter of fact, the Australians had few ships of their own; but Australian imports came in ships which went to Australia from this country, and therefore it was Australian commerce which required to be protected in Australian waters. If we were to say to the Australians—"We want you to contribute not towards a general Fleet to defend British commerce all over the world, but towards the maintenance of a special local Fleet in British waters, in order to protect ships coming from Australia, because in those ships there happen to be Australian goods," what would be the reply of the people of Australia? And yet that *mutatis mutandis* was the argument hon. Gentlemen opposite used on this occasion. The hon. Member for Oldham had said that this was the beginning of a new principle, and that was precisely what he (Mr. Labouchere) objected to. It was, no doubt, the commencement of a new principle, and what he complained of was that, if sanctioned in this case, it would be extended to other Colonies. If they made this bargain with Australia, how could they refuse to enter into a similar one with Canada and the Cape? In the future they should find that wherever they had Colonies, those Colonies would come sponging upon them and asking to have ships built and equipped for them for the defence of their shores, and, forsooth, that they would support them when they were built, and, generous creatures, give them back to this country when they were worth nothing. With regard to this condition that this country was to get the ships back again, if he were a prophet he should be inclined to say that they should not even get them back at the end of the 10 years, or if they did get them back that it would be simply on condition of giving new ships to replace them, at a cost of another £700,000 or £800,000. An hon. Member opposite had stated that the Australian Colonies had spent a large sum of money upon fortifications for the protection of our commerce; but that seemed to him (Mr. Labouchere) a most extraordinary argument. He should certainly vote against the proposal of the Government. The matter really resolved itself into this, practically. He was sorry he should not have the support of the hon. Members sitting on the Front Opposition Bench; but it had sometimes occurred to him to divide the House without having had the privilege of that support. The question was really this—they had, at the beginning of the evening, to choose whether they would discuss the proposal—this wretched proposal, for giving £850,000 raised from the taxpayers of this country, from the tea and coffee and tobacco of the poor people of the country—in the method suggested —or the mature proposal of the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) for finding some means of spending English money in housing poor persons at home. He was in favour of that proposal, but the Government had shirked it in order to bring forward this miserable plan of spending £850,000 for the benefit of Australia.

COLONEL DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) said, he was sure the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) always desired to be historically correct, but in his description of the Canadian Voyageurs he had made an error which he (Colonel Duncan) should like to correct. The hon. Member had said that the Voyageurs who had been employed in the Soudan were men who had emigrated as boys from this country. He (Colonel Duncan), however, could assure the hon. Member that, as a rule, they had been either French, Indians, or English Canadians of the second or third generation.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 85; Noes 37: Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 111.)

(1.) *Resolved*, That it is expedient to ratify an Agreement for Naval Defence made between Her Majesty's Government and the Governments of Her Majesty's Australasian Colonies.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of such sums, not exceeding £850,000, as may be required for building, arming, and completing the vessels mentioned in the Agreement."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, he did not wish to repeat what he had already stated as to this matter; but here, at all events, there could be no justification for the particular Resolution. Assuming the justice of the Resolution just agreed to, and assuming that this money ought to be raised for these Colonial ships, surely the mode of raising the money proposed in the present Resolution could not be justified. It was admitted that what was wanted was to defend our own commerce as well as that of the Colonies, and that was unquestionably a legitimate outgoing expenditure for the year. The expenditure ought, therefore, to appear in the financial statements for the year. If the Government desired to provide these ships the Government should pay for them, and should not leave the cost as a burden upon incoming Governments. There could be no excuse for allowing the expenditure to run over a period of 10 years, during part of which period in all probability other Governments would have to share the burden of finding the necessary finds. The invariable custom had been time out of mind to provide the money for ships as they were required. The Government would now obtain the whole of this £850,000, but it was to be paid back year by year, and, therefore, the debt would be practically one which would fall upon the shoulders of other Governments. He, for one, strongly protested against this mode of dealing with the simple financial question, and, therefore, if no one else cared to do so, he should divide the House upon this Resolution.

• MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked, whether they were not to have some statement from the Treasury Bench on this subject? No doubt, as was suggested on the Treasury Bench, they had had a full statement with regard to these Resolutions from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) at the commencement of the proceedings in Committee, but the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means had stated that the Resolutions were to be put separately in order that there might be a discussion upon each one. Well, to discuss a thing required two parties to the arrangement, two persons of different opinions. As yet, upon the resolution before the Committee they had had only one opinion, that of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Brigg Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Waddy), and he would put it to the Government that to leave that expression of opinion unanswered could hardly be called discussion. As a matter of fact the history of this transaction was only part of the whole history of Conservative Governments—Conservatives spending money and Liberals providing it. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was looking forward to having a surplus next year. Well, if the right hon. Gentleman could secure a surplus by making savings, well and good; but what he (Mr. Labouchere) strongly objected to was making a surplus at the expense of future Chancellors of the Exchequer and then swaggering about it. He did not believe in making surpluses by postponing the burden of expenditure of one year to future years. Here they had a large amount of money to be spent at once, which was to be borrowed or got in some sort of way, the repayment being deferred to future years. He (Mr. Labouchere) certainly hoped his hon. and learned Friend (Mr Waddy) would do what he had just declared to be his intention of doing, namely—to divide the Committee on this Vote.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, that as the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken seemed to desire that there should be a discussion upon this subject, perhaps it would be as well if he (Mr. Goschen) said a word or two in reply to the hon. Member who had started the conversation.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Hear, hear!

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. GOSCHEN said, he did not know whether the hon. Member opposite (Dr. Tanner) thought that his interruption was a Parliamentary contribution to the discussion of the subject. It would certainly seem that hon. Gentlemen sitting behind and supporting the hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) were not inclined to give much encouragement to that Parliamentary discussion which was demanded.

DR. TANNER: I rise to Order. I wish to ask you, Mr. Chairman, whether I am out of Order in saying "Hear, hear!" to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he is ashamed of my cheer?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is not entitled to rise in that way.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he rose to answer the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton, if that hon. Gentleman wished to know the views of the Government upon this subject. The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Waddy) who started this discussion stated that this was only the ordinary way of edging in an expenditure which was initiated by one Party and borne by another. He (Mr. Goschen) thought that if there was ever an occasion upon which that method of proceeding had been carefully avoided it was the present, for though the expenditure might be right or wrong, the Government had taken special pains that no burdens whatever should be thrown upon their Successors.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that the Successors of the Government would have to pay the interest on the money.

MR. GOSCHEN: The interest will be more than covered by the contribution received from the Colonies.

MR. LABOUCHERE: For the 10 years?

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes, for the 10 years. The interest will be more than paid, and also the loan itself will be more than paid off out of the interest we receive out of the Suez Canal Shares.

MR. LABOUCHERE: That interest is ours already, and is applicable for other things.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he saw the hon. Gentleman's idea of discussion—which he himself had invited—was that he should keep up a running fire of comment upon every statement he (Mr. Goschen) made. The hon. and learned Member for the Brigg Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Waddy) had endeavoured to give some Party colour to this debate by referring to Tory tactics; but, as a matter of fact, the Government had endeavoured to keep everything like Party out of the question; and, notwithstanding the provocation which was given to them, they would not allow themselves to be led into the discussion of how far they had now to touch the revenues of the year in order to meet the defects in the system of defences of the Empire, which had been left to them by their Predecessors. The Government would not enter upon that field of discussion, and desired to prevent such a disturbing element from being imported into it, and to discuss the question simply on its merits. In the present case, as he had said, they threw no burden upon their Successors; and, if they had raised this money by loan, it was simply because it was an entirely separate operation, and he was glad the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had called attention to the subject, because it enabled him to say once more, and most clearly, that the present proposal of the Government could not be drawn into a precedent for building ships by means of loans. The operation they proposed would be rather a loan of ships to the Colonies for a certain number of years. The cost of the ships was provided by loan, the interest upon which loan, together with the principal, would be defrayed in yearly instalments by the Colonies. He should himself very much deplore the fact if this were in any way turned into a precedent for meeting the needs of the year by means of a loan. He should always adhere to the principle that the needs of the year should be met out of the revenue of the year.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) said, he wished to know whether the capital as well as the interest was to be wholly repaid by the Colonies? If not, the arrangement was one which anybody would be glad to avail himself of in ordinary life, if it were within the bounds of possibility—that was to say, to supply himself with luxuries on borrowed money which he would not be called upon to repay. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to the income from the Suez Canal Shares; but he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that, if the arrangement for the purchase of these ships had not been entered into, this money would have been received from the shares, and there would have been so much more in the Exchequer.

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member that he has anticipated a subsequent part of the discussion.

Mr. PICTON said, he did not wish to do that; but he only made reference to the point in reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had stated that the money for the repayment of capital and interest would be obtained out of the interest on the Suez Canal Shares. What he (Mr. Picton) wished to insist upon was that, if this money was to be borrowed, it was also to be repaid, and, whether it was to be repaid from money derived from interest in other directions made no difference. This was merely the beginning of an objectionable system, and he was very much afraid that before long they would find other Colonies coming forward for similar assistance to that we were giving to the Australian Colonies, and the result would be the rolling up of another National Debt in addition to that with which the country was already saddled.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that he wished to make quite distinct the objection which he had foreshadowed when they were discussing the last resolution. He objected to the method in which this grant was to be provided for, and he failed to follow the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his statement that no burden would be imposed upon those who might have the duty of managing the finances of the country during the 12 years over which the repayment of this money was spread. Whether the money was to be raised by loan, or, however else it was to be obtained, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the year during the next 12 years would have to provide means for the repayment of the principal and interest, which was covered by the amount of the terminable annuity. When they came to the Resolution dealing with the other provision to which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer alluded, he (Mr. Bradlaugh) should have something to say on the adoption of that as an asset. Whether the ships were to be paid for year by year, or, whether the interest merely was to be paid, the charge would be clearly one upon Governments hereafter, and a delusive appearance would be presented by the arrangement, inasmuch as it would seem as though future Governments were meeting the ordinary charges of the year, whereas they were merely paying the debts of a Government which had gone before.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, the Resolution under consideration asked them to confirm the statement that it was expedient that to authorize the issue of such sums not exceeding £850,000 as might be required for building, arming, and completing certain vessels of war, and it was because he believed that it was not expedient that these sums should be authorized, or any other sums, that he should follow the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Brigg Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Waddy) into the Lobby to protest against it. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) had told them that this outlay was proposed for the purposes of Imperial defence. Well, it seemed that Imperial defence implied Colonial defence, and he should have been very glad if the right hon. Gentleman had told the House where he thought attack was likely to come from, and who, he thought, were likely to be the foes we should have to meet in Colonial waters. If the right hon. Gentleman had shown who was likely to attack our Colonies, and had pointed out the danger in which we stood, hon. Members on these (the Opposition) Benches would have been much more likely to follow him into the Lobby and support him in this Resolution than they were under the existing circumstances. He (Mr. Cremer) had long since learnt to look with a great deal of suspicion upon all statements of this kind, and upon scares raised for political purposes from time to time. It was the special province of the other side of the House to manufacture scares. Unfortunately, scares of this kind had been too frequently manufactured by either Party in the State. He had ventured to take the common sense view of the matter, and had asked himself whether there was any real fear of our being attacked by any Foreign Power if we minded our own affairs. The Australian Colonies had got along very well for something like half-a-century without being placed in the predicament which hon. Members opposite seemed to dread. No one had interfered with them, and the Colonies, for their part, had not interfered with anyone. He could not help thinking, however, that these Colonies had pursued the even tenor of their way as they had done because they had not possessed the means of mischief. If the means of mischief had been given to them, there would sure to have been difference and strife between themselves and foreign countries. The late Lord Aberdeen used to make a statement to the effect that nations in possession of large Armies and Navies were like boys with new knives, they must cut sticks with them. It was because he was anxious to prevent any such thing taking place, it was because he was anxious to prevent strife between our Colonists and other people, that he should oppose this Resolution. Quite recently there had been some difficulty between our Australian Colonies and a Foreign Power on the subject of New Guinea, and it had seemed to him that at one time there was some danger of hostile feeling being exhibited by our Australian Colonies; but, fortunately, the matter was settled by amicable means, without the expenditure of blood or treasure. And why was this? Simply because the Colonies had none of the means of mischief at their disposal which the Committee was asked by this Resolution to enable them to become possessed of. Had they possessed a powerful Navy they would probably have resorted to its use to carry out their policy, for that which was characteristic of individuals when in a state of "armed defence," as it was called, was also characteristic of nations. It was because of the absence of fighting forces that the Australian Colonies were ready to settle their differences by peaceful means. He should oppose this Resolution, because it seemed to him that the nation had no guarantee that the money which it was proposed to vote would be wisely or well spent. He had said that he did not believe it would be wisely spent, but they had no guarantee that it would be well or efficiently spent either. In revolving in his mind, during the past few moments, what had occurred on former occasions, he thought he could justify the position he had taken up by reference to what had happened on those occasions. Many hon. Members in the House would remember the Palmerstonian panic prevalent some 25 years ago, which, under the influence of that bogey French invasion, was manufactured for the purpose of inducing the country to spend something like £10,000,000 on the fortifications of our naval stations. In consequence of that panic a considerable sum of money was expended at our chief naval station—Portsmouth. When a boy, he had frequently walked round the ramparts constructed out of that £10,000,000, and had thought wonderingly upon how impossible it would be for any foe to invade that fortress; but the fortifications which at that time were considered impregnable were now regarded as utterly useless, and some of them were dismantled and absolutely destroyed. Then we had magnificent forts constructed for miles around that naval station, and he had been informed by people living in the neighbourhood that these forts had never been armed with guns of sufficient calibre to do injury to an enemy making an attack upon the positions. In fact it had been said that it would be dangerous to do so, for the reason that if guns mounted there of sufficient power to carry shot at the distance at which an enemy's vessel would lie when making an attack upon Portsmouth, or to carry a sufficient distance to prevent an enemy from landing, the first gun fired off would cause the forts to crumble into pieces. He did not say that this was true, but this was the prevailing opinion in the locality, and probably some hon. and gallant Gentlemen who were familiar with these subjects would tell the House whether the account which had been stated to him was accurate or not. If these allegations were true, the enormous sums of money expended upon these fortifications might just as well have been pitched into the harbour at Portsmouth or carried out to Spithead and dropped overboard into the Ocean. Then, coming down to more recent years, there was another scare manufactured at the time of the Franco-Prussian War, £4,000,000 being voted for pressing military and naval necessities. What good had come of that expenditure? And then, coming down to a later period, a Vote of £11,000,000 was rushed through this House after two or three hours' debate in consequence of a Russian scare. He used the phrase "rushed through" advisedly, because he considered that the passage of a Vote of £11,000,000 after three hours' debate deserved to be described in such language. And why was it that this money was voted? It was because it was stated that Russia had taken a strip of land somewhere or other on the frontier of Afghanistan which somebody or other said it was not right to take. Well, it turned out ultimately that that strip of land belonged to Russia, and that, therefore, under all circumstances the scare was ill-timed and the expenditure involved absolutely unnecessary. But whether the strip of land did or did not belong to Russia everyone admitted in the, end that it was not worth 2*s.* 6*d.*, to say nothing of £11,000,000. No one could be found to give 5*s.* for it to-day, and yet we were very nearly going to war with Russia about that miserable strip of sandy desert on the frontiers of Afghanistan. It must be remembered that the Afghans whom we were supposed to be so anxious to protect, declared that we should not enter their territory with our troops in order to afford them that protection we were so anxious to render against their terrible foe, Russia. An hon. Member behind him asked what was done with the £11,000,000. He (Mr. Cremer) should very much like to know what had become of it, for the nation had never yet heard that it had received any value for it. Therefore, the nation had every proof that the money voted during the Palmerstonian craze was wasted. The nation never knew what was done with the whole £10,000,000. The same was to be said with regard to the £4,000,000 voted during the Franco-Prussian scare, and also of the £11,000,000 voted during the Afghan scare. Until they had some assurance that the nation got more value for moneys voted in this way than they had secured in the past, he for one should go into the Lobby with any one opposing such Votes, and vote with him against such an anomalous manner of spending the money of the nation. After having read the statements of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope), he had thought at last something like reason was coming to guide Her Majesty's Government. If he remembered right it was said that it was not so much money that was required as organization. There was plenty of money voted, and if the money voted were properly applied there could be no doubt that we should have one of the best and most efficient armies in the world, and he took it that it was not millions of money that were required but organization. After all these large sums had been expended in one year, it was customary for Governments to tell them the following year, or at any rate in a very short time afterwards, that the country was in an absolutely defenceless position.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member was not in the Committee when the distinction between the several Resolutions was pointed out. The observations he is making now would be perfectly appropriate to the 5th Resolution upon which the general discussion of questions relating to Imperial defence can be taken. His observations, therefore, have no bearing upon the particular Resolution before the Committee.

Mr. CREMER said, he thanked the hon. Gentleman for reminding him that he had wandered somewhat from the immediate subject under discussion. He was not aware that the larger sum involved in the proposal of the Government was not under consideration. He would, however, now turn to the immediate question under discussion, and that was the Vote of £850,000 for building, arming, and completing certain vessels of war for the purpose of the defence of the Australian Colonies. He had only to say in regard to that—reserving any other observations he had to make as to the larger Vote—that he opposed the grant, because he thought it was a very bad example they were setting our Colonies. He could not help contrasting the proposal now made by Her Majesty's Government with a proposal at the present moment before the United States Congress. Our own Government were preparing to arm our Colonies, in order to prevent some imaginary foe from invading them; but in the American Congress there was a much more sensible proposal under consideration, and one which had been considered and reported upon by the Foreign Relations Committee, and he thought it had a very good prospect of being accepted by the Senate and House of Representatives. The proposal was to authorize the President of the United States to appoint a Committee to consider the question of establishing a tribunal to adjudicate upon questions arising between the different autonomous Governments of the Continent of America. A sum of money was to be set apart for a Conference to consider the proposal. If Her Majesty's Government would follow the example of the Government of the United States, and make as good and serious an effort to keep the peace as they were now making for the means of breaking it, he would have been very glad to have supported them in their proposal. It was because he believed the example they were setting to other Colonies was a bad one, and one which was sure to be taken up by other Colonies; and it was because he did not wish to see the evils which existed in other parts of the globe introduced amongst our Colonies, that he thought it his duty to oppose this Resolution. The Parliament of this country ought to set a good rather than a bad example, and it was because he believed in the force of the words used by Shakespeare, that—

> "The sight of means to do ill deeds
> Too oft make ill deeds done,"

—that he should vote with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Brigg Division of Lincolnshire.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not in the House when he (Mr. Childers) had spoken on the first Resolution, and when he had endeavoured to make a distinction between the arrangement made by this country and the Australian Colonies, and the internal arrangement between the two Departments of the Government—namely, the Treasury and the Admiralty. As to the first point, he had supported Her Majesty's Government in their Resolution; but, as to the second, he ventured to point out that it was of a very different character, and authorized a proceeding which might be very dangerous. He had admitted that with the distinct pledge of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the effect that this proposal for purchasing ships out of a loan would not be used as a precedent by the present Government, the danger would not be so great as would otherwise have been the case; but, at the same time, he must repeat to the House the statement that we had never yet borrowed money for the purpose of building ships. The only purpose for which we had borrowed money had been for the carrying out of permanent works; but for perishable things such as ships we had never followed that course, and he was bound to say—having regard to the smallness of the amount in question—that it was a great pity we should have such an example set. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had a surplus considerably larger than this amount, which went towards the remission of 1*d.* in the Income Tax, and it seemed to him (Mr. Childers) that even if the whole charge fell on one financial year, which he doubted, it would have been much better if this money had been expended on the shipbuilding declared to be necessary, so that it would have been taken out of the annual revenue of the country.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 92; Noes 48: Majority 44.—(Div. List, No. 112.)

(2.) *Resolved,* That it is expedient to authorize the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of such sums, not exceeding £850,000, as may be required for building, arming, and completing the vessels mentioned in the Agreement.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the sums so issued shall be repaid to the Consolidated Fund, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for Naval Services, by an annuity of such amount as will repay the same, with interest at three per cent per annum, within twelve years." — (*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) asked, whether there would be any objection to substitute 10 years for 12 years?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing) said, that the right hon. Gentleman would see at once what the objection was. The arrangement was for 10 years, and the arrangement did not come into operation until the ships were in commission, and probably two years would elapse between the passing of the Bill on which was founded these results and the commissioning of the ships.

MR. CHILDERS said, he did not think that the statement of the noble Lord coincided with that made by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, that he hoped he would be allowed to explain. The ships would take 18 or 20 months to build. They would be put in hand immediately, and there was every reason to hope that they would be completed by the end of next year, or, at all events, by the end of the next financial year.

MR. CHILDERS said, that if it was quite understood that the two arrangements ran together—that the arrangement with the Colonies and the loan were concurrent—he had nothing further to say.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that if he and his hon. Friends did not challenge a Division upon this and the next Resolution, it would be because they had already asserted a principle by challenging a Division upon the 2nd Resolution.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

(3.) *Resolved,* That the sums so issued shall be repaid to the Consolidated Fund, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for Naval Services, by an annuity of such amount as will repay the same, with interest at three per centum per annum, within twelve years.

(4.) *Resolved,* That it is expedient to authorize the Treasury to raise such sums by means of terminable annuities charged on the Consolidated Fund.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums not exceeding £2,600,000, as may be required for the defence of certain Ports and Coaling Stations, and making further provisions for Imperial Defence."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.) said, that no one would deny the grave and the great importance of the present Resolution. He also did not think that anyone would deny that his right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had made a most clear and most lucid statement to the House in introducing his Resolutions. His right hon. Friend put several propositions before the House. Almost the first statement that he made was that existing deficiencies must be supplied in the interest of the nation. Now, he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) desired to ask whether his right hon. Friend had taken into account all those deficiencies, as that was absolutely necessary in forming an opinion of what ought to be done? Another statement his right hon. Friend made was that Malta and Gibraltar, two fortresses of absolute necessity to this country, must be properly not only fortified, but properly garrisoned, as quickly as possible. He did not think that his right hon. Friend would deny that neither of those fortresses or stations were properly armed, and, perhaps, he might say in regard to one of them, not properly garrisoned. Those places were on our main highway, not only to India, but also to our great Colonies, and no stone must be left unturned in making them absolutely efficient for defensive purposes against whatever force might be brought against them. His right hon. Friend referred to the difficulty of getting guns, and he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) would have a word or two to say upon that point presently; but the First Lord of the Treasury said that although guns had been ordered in the year 1885 they had not yet been delivered. To that also he would refer presently. Another question which his right hon. Friend raised had regard to the new rifles, and he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) would in the course of his speech make a few observations upon that as well. But, before he went into those questions, he thought it would be right to ask his right hon. Friend exactly what he intended to do with regard to the Royal Commission which was promised to them, and in regard to which he did not quite understand how they stood. He had had a good deal of conversation with his right hon. Friend, and he was bound to say, and he said it with all sincerity, that he had received from the right hon. Gentleman the greatest courtesy and the greatest consideration in regard to all the statements which he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had had to make upon this question. It would be in the recollection of the House that, on the 5th of March, the question raised was that there should be appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into and to report upon the question, whether the Army and Navy were, in fact, in such a condition as to be absolutely efficient for the protection of the Empire? That, no doubt, was very wide; it raised a great question, because it raised what should be the number of men that we ought to have, whether we had got that number, whether our Army was, in fact, efficient and sufficient, and especially whether our Navy was efficient and sufficient for our protection. The Government said they could not possibly go into that question; that they were absolutely responsible for the condition of the Army and Navy; and then they proposed to give another inquiry, and that inquiry was as to what extent our present naval and military system was adapted to the national wants. He and his hon. and gallant Friends accepted that in all good faith; it was given in good faith, and they accepted it in good faith. On a subsequent occasion the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) was appointed Chairman of the Royal Commission; and there was no one in the House who would contradict him (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) when he said that there was no man in the country they would rather see at the head of a Royal Commission than the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale. But he thought he should not be committing any breach of confidence—for the noble Marquess told him so himself—when he said that the noble Marquess thought that even the inquiry which had been promised was too wide, and one into which he did not think he would like himself to go. It was, therefore, arranged that an inquiry of a less wide nature should be granted, and that it should be an inquiry into the civil and professional administration of the Naval and Military Departments, and the relation of those Departments to each other and to the Treasury, and that a Report should be made as to what changes in the existing system would tend to the efficiency and economy of the Public Service. Now, what he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) wanted to ask was, first of all, whether the Commission and the two Committees which were now sitting on the Army and Navy Estimates would not extract all the information that the proposed Royal Commission would extract? He put that strongly to his right hon. Friend, who, this evening, had gone the length of stating that he would be prepared to grant another Royal Commission or a Committee which should have the effect of carrying out the views he expressed so strongly in the House so short a time ago. The right hon. Gentleman indicated the proposal he would make to the House, upon the condition that he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) withdrew the Resolution which he had then proposed. Suppose his right hon. Friend carried out the proposal he made, what did it involve? In the first place, everyone would admit—no one would admit it more readily than his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope)—that organization was the one thing which we required, and that in regard to certain affairs we had not got organization. He would not go into the question from a naval point of view, because around him were naval officers who would state exactly the case of the Navy; but the Navy was our first line of defence, and it, as he was told, required organization just as much as the Army did. He left the Navy to be dealt with by his naval Friends who would follow him, simply asserting that if there was one thing that the country would vote money for, it was that our Navy should be more effective and more efficient than any combination of Navies which could possibly be brought against it. Now, were we to have any difference made between the Home Army and the Army in India; was the Army in India to be enlisted for a longer time, and was it in future to rely on drawing the best men out of the Army at home for the purpose of filling up its ranks? The Army at home was depleted by having its men over 20 years of age, and who had been in the Service some time, taken away to fill up the ranks of the Army in India. Of course, there ought to be a wide difference in the length of service in India and the length of service at home. If we had shorter service at home, we would get a larger Reserve, and we should have more men at home to defend our interests. The next question which ought to come under the notice of the Royal Commission would be the strength of our Cavalry regiments; and was there a man who would say that our Cavalry regiments were fit to be sent abroad at a moment's notice? He did not believe they were, though he believed his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War had been doing a great deal to improve the condition of the Cavalry. Surely, that was a question which deserved their most serious attention. Next came the question of the Artillery. He would not go into the question further to-night than to say that, having listened most attentively and read most carefully afterwards the answer that his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War gave to his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wirral Division of Cheshire (Captain Cotton), he could only gather that, after the first two Army Corps had been made complete and efficient, the number of guns which would be left for the Home Force was only 56. What would be left behind? There would be something like 400,000 men, who would require to have guns found for them. Perhaps he ought not to say 400,000 men, because they knew perfectly well that many of the men, in case of great necessity, would have to go into the different fortresses in the country; we should, however, want a very large number of guns in addition to those we had at the present time. And here he might mention the Magazine rifle, absolutely necessary at the present moment In what position were we with regard to it? After all the Committees and experiments, no rifle was yet approved. The next question which arose, and which his right hon. Friend said it would be perfectly competent for the Royal Commission to inquire into, was the question of the Militia. Could anything be more important than to inquire into the condition of the Militia, from which we now got 30,000 men in the Reserve? If, however, the Militia was recruited to its full strength, and the conditions of service somewhat altered, we might get the whole of the Militia willing to volunteer. If we paid the Militia £1 extra per annum per man—the same as the Militia Reserve—he had no doubt that we should find the whole of the men would be prepared to serve in any part of the world, and they would be organized in reality, and not in name, as the 3rd and 4th Battalions of the Line Regiments to which they belong. Then let them take the case of the Volunteers. Surely, we ought to make the organization of the Volunteers in every way effective and efficient, because we should have to depend in case of need—God grant that it might never occur—very largely indeed upon the Volunteers of the country. Then there was the question of the Reserve Force. Were we going to call our Reserve Force out every year to see what we had got? Surely, there was no nation in the world but the English nation who slept and believed they could get men out whenever they wanted them, without even knowing where they were, or whether they were or were not fit to do duty. That was another question which the Royal Commission might inquire into. A further question was, and it was a great question—namely, that of the garrisons for the Coaling Stations. His right hon. Friend spoke of that to-night as a question which might be inquired into by the Royal Commission in the same way as the other questions which he had specified. But, turning to the next point, the illustrious Duke at the head of the Army had said distinctly that 11,900 more men were wanted. It had been said over and over again since short service had come in, that we wanted an increase of men in our Army. What we wanted was that men should never go into the ranks who had not been one year in the Service, and if we had an extra number of recruits we should always be able to fill up the ranks with men who had been a year in the Service. But there was still another point deserving of attention. [*Opposition ironical cheers.*] Yes; hon. Gentlemen might think that these were questions for which they should have no care; but they might find some-day or other that they would require to have a great deal of care for these things, and if we were ever found unprepared in case of necessity, the very Gentlemen who now sneered would be the first to cry out against the Government, whichever Government might be in Office, for having neglected its duty. He was about to say that there was one thing he was very much struck with, arising out of the inquiries made by the Committee sitting upon the Army Estimates, and it had reference to the barracks. The estimate for the repair of barracks was nearly £1,000,000.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I rise to Order. The evidence given before that Committee is not at present before the House, and it cannot be quoted with the least approach to accuracy from what has appeared in the newspapers. The evidence is at present before the Committee, and not before the House of Commons.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he would say nothing more upon that point; but he was very glad that he had called the right hon. Gentleman's attention to it, because his right hon. Friend might make a statement with regard to the reports which had gone the round of all the newspapers. If those statements were inaccurate, they ought to be contradicted; because they were statements so startling that he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) could hardly have believed it possible they could have been made, unless they were true and correct. [*Opposition ironical cheers.*] Some hon. Gentlemen opposite tried very hard to make this a Party question, but it was a non-Party question, and he hoped that the question of the defences which were absolutely necessary for the safety of the Empire would never be made a Party question. Now, he was exceedingly surprised to read the statement of Lord Brassey with regard to guns. Lord Brassey distinctly stated that we had not thought it right to employ our large manufacturers of guns at home, but that we had allowed France to precede us; for he said, speaking of Messrs. Whitworth, that they had a contract to make guns for France, and that, therefore, we were unable to get any guns from that firm.

MR. E. STANHOPE: Allow me at once to offer the same explanation that I offered to this House yesterday, through my hon. Friend the Member for Wigtonshire (Sir Herbert E. Maxwell). When that statement was made by Lord Brassey, I made inquiry personally of Messrs. Whitworth, and they assured me that they were making no guns whatever for the French Government, and that they had no intention or anticipation of doing so.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he was very glad to hear that; but the noble Lord (Lord Brassey) wrote emphatically that he had made himself acquainted with the fact, and he gave full particulars which were printed in the newspapers. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) should regard it as a most extraordinary thing—indeed, as a most intolerable thing—if he were to make a statement in writing in the newspapers without one word of foundation for it. Lord Brassey was a man of high position, and a man who had been in Office. The only thing which struck him (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) as very odd was that while Lord Brassey was in Office they never heard one word from him in regard to these questions; but since he had been out of Office, since he had had nothing to do with the Government, they found repeated notices not only of the coaling stations, but also of the guns and other matters by the noble Lord. His right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War must not be too sensitive upon these things. He could get up and contradict them, and, if he did, they would be quite ready to believe his contradiction. Certainly, his right hon. Friend ought to thank him for placing this question before him, and thus giving him an opportunity which he would not have otherwise been given of contradicting statements which, as his right hon. Friend had said, were absolutely without foundation. Surely, there was nothing more important to the country than that it should have a proper supply of guns. There had been many statements made in the newspapers in regard to the supply of guns, and they were told that from Portland Bill up to the Tweed there was not a gun of new pattern in any one of our ports at the present time. They were also told that there was only one gun in Gibraltar that could cope with the ironclads of the present day. These were questions which ought to be considered, and what he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) and his hon. Friends were asking was that there should be placed on record the number of guns we absolutely required, and that the supply should be kept up so that all our ports could be properly armed, and all our ships properly supplied with the guns requisite for them. But there was another question connected with the guns, and that was the question of the condition of the Royal Artillery. If there was one matter of importance in the present days of fighting, it was that our Artillery should be armed with the very best guns which could be found. He knew the Secretary of State for War was doing all he could to arm the batteries of Artillery with the best and newest guns; but how many of these batteries were still armed with the old weapons which had been declared by competent authorities to be the very worst weapons with which any Artillery in Europe were armed? It was impossible that we could be prepared for war, unless we had a sufficient number of the very best guns, and a sufficient number of artillerymen understanding those guns to work them. No doubt our men would fight well—our Volunteers would fight well—but he had endeavoured to point out that it was the organization which it was so absolutely necessary and essential should be perfect. Unless it was perfect, we should be able to do nothing whatever, and it was because the Royal Commission which he thought they were to have was to inquire carefully into the organization both of the Army and of the Navy that he was so anxious that the Royal Commission should be appointed. He could not refrain for one moment from going into one or two other questions with regard to statements which had been made. He said nothing about what had occurred in "another place," but would take the statements which had appeared in the newspapers, and he recollected that the illustrious Duke had made a statement with regard to our present defences—not very different in its details from that made both in "another place" last night, as well as at a celebrated dinner, by the noble and gallant Viscount (Viscount Wolseley). His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Birkenhead (General Sir Edward Hamley), than whom no one was better able to describe the condition of affairs, and who had done so much good not only in the House, but out of it, and had written so ably on the defence of London, had made similar statements; and, besides that of his noble and gallant Friend the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) with regard to the Navy, they had the declarations of the hon. and gallant Admiral (Sir John Commerell), whom they all congratulated on his appointment, and of Sir Geoffrey Hornby. He knew the Government did not repudiate these statements, and that they felt there was a great deal of force in what had been said; and he admitted that they were striving to the full to carry out, as best they might, the views which had been expressed. But there was still something more to be done. If they had such a man as the noble Marquess at the head of the Royal Commission; if his right hon. Friend would extend the Commission and its inquiry as far as they were anxious to see it extended—namely, to ascertain what was required both for the Army and Navy, and to enable this to be known by the House and the country, the Government might feel certain that they would be backed up by the people in carrying out those proposals which were essential to their welfare. He thought no one would deny that the first duty of a State was self-preservation; and notwithstanding what had been said about non-interference with the affairs of others, he asked what would be their position as a nation if they ceased to hold their place amongst other powers? If, when they were prepared to speak, they were not prepared to act, what would be their position amongst those nations who knew exactly how they stood with regard to armaments? Hem aintained that there was man in that House who would get up and declare that for the want of sufficient armament he was willing that the country should decline from the high position which it now held in this 19th century amongst the nations of the world.

MR. E. STANHOPE: There have been so many questions raised in the speech of my hon. and gallant Friend who has just spoken that I think it desirable that I should offer a few observations in reply before the debate goes any further. In the first place, with regard to the Royal Commission, I think that anybody who has listened to the speech of my hon. and gallant Friend will have observed the enormous number of questions which he desires to see decided by that Commission. The scope of the inquiry which he desires would be absolutely enormous—the period of inquiry would extend over years. I venture to say that we should have no Report of any sensible value, until, at any rate, one or two years had passed over our heads. The object of the Government is not to have Blue Books and hold exhaustive inquiries, but to take action, and our belief is that the best means of attaining that object is to split up the subjects of inquiry. We have told the House in the course of the debate on the Army Estimates the subjects which we think are proper for inquiry. We thoroughly adhere to—we do not withdraw from—that statement; but when we came to examine the details of the proposals as to what should be the Reference to the Royal Commission we found it would be impossible to ask the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) to undertake such an inquiry. If we wish to obtain useful results, the inquiry over which the noble Marquess is to preside must be so limited that he will be able to exhaust it, and present a Report before many months are over which will be of real value to us in the position in which we are placed. The noble Marquess has kindly undertaken that inquiry; we believe it will produce valuable results, and we think it would be most ill-advised on the part of the Government if we were to attempt to place additional work upon it which would prevent the noble Marquess discharging the duty which he has undertaken. But we do not shrink from inquiring into the remainder of the subject, and, after carefully considering the best method of procedure, we came to the conclusion that it is not by taking volumes of evidence that we can arrive shortly at a determination on the great subjects which are of such enormous importance to the future interests of the country. We shall, therefore, proceed with all the speed possible under the circumstances, determined to take a full view of all the important questions relating to the Empire as a whole, and determined also that any action we may take shall be based on full consideration of all the facts of the case. I now pass from that subject to the basis of my hon. and gallant Friend's speech. He complains of certain deficiencies that he says ought to be supplied. I should like to be allowed, in a spirit of explanation, not of controversy, to follow him into each of the complaints he has made. My hon. and gallant Friend, in the first place, complained of the want of organization. So far from differing from him, I have most publicly stated that organization, and not the expenditure of enormous sums of money, was the remedy we had to seek. We are undertaking that organization with the fullest determination to carry it out. I hope I am not saying anything too favourable of my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury or of myself when I say that, during the time that this Government has held Office, we have applied ourselves to the question of organization without delay and without cessation. We have in that time done a good deal, and laid the basis for a good deal more, and I am strongly impressed with the belief that the new system of administration which we have introduced at the War Office is a step which will enable us to carry out our intention with the least possible delay. I am sure the Committee will not wish me to follow this matter into further details at the present moment; but I shall be very glad to explain in detail how I think our plan will be worked out, if an opportunity is given me hereafter. I pass, then, from this subject to that of the state of our defences, which my hon. and gallant Friend says is one which demands inquiry. We are perfectly well aware of the state of our defences, and I have told the country as plainly as I possibly can in the Memorandum, only excluding those details which my Military Advisers think ought not to be communicated, that the state of our defences is eminently unsatisfactory. I have told in general terms what is the nature of the improvements required in those defences; and we have asked Parliament to give us this large sum of money, amounting to £3,500,000, for the purpose of meeting the most urgent of our deficiencies. First of all, we have dealt with our Colonial stations. We do not want to lie under the reproach, which no honourable Government could endure, that we have made a bargain with the Colonies and not carried it out. We have come, at the earliest possible moment, to Parliament and said—"Give us the money necessary for completing our part of the bargain." And here I may state that every one of the guns necessary to complete that bargain is in hand, and not only that, but the greater part of them are very far advanced. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) will be glad to hear that although the defence of Table Bay—probably the most important in the whole of the defences we have undertaken—was only undertaken last year, yet I am going to send out in the next few weeks the first big gun for the works at Table Bay, which I hope will be ready for its reception; and so we shall go on, with the expectation that as the works are ready for the guns the guns will be ready for the works. As regards Malta and Gibraltar, there, again, is a case which demands no further inquiry. We know perfectly well that the defences at those places are not of a satisfactory character, and in the Bill now before Parliament we have taken a very large sum for adding to the defences of those stations. I am not quite sure of the exact sum, but I am aware that it is considerably more than £300,000 that we are going to expend on improving the defences of Gibraltar and Malta. And so with all the other military ports at home and abroad. Every gun that is contemplated in the Report of the Committee, over which I had the honour to preside, has already been ordered; and although my right hon. Friend told the Committee that he would not be justified in saying that all that work can be completed very much before the period we have ventured to fix, I myself feel somewhat more sanguine, every effort having been made during the last two months to expedite the completion of the guns. We have been somewhat successful in our endeavours, and at the end of the year we trust we shall be able to place in position the lighter guns necessary for the defence of our ports; but the completion of the larger guns of 10 and 12 inches must, as everyone knows, take a longer time. I can, however, assure the Committee that nothing will be omitted on our part to secure their early completion. We have put a large part of what we propose to do on the Estimates, and I hope we shall be able to keep the pledges given in my Memorandum; but if the Estimates for the year should not be sufficient for the ammunition required for the guns, we must ask the House for a Supplementary Estimate to enable the guns to be supplied with it. With regard to our mercantile ports, these stand in a different position, and we have in their case to provide against different kinds of danger; but we are pushing forward all the defences. We have ordered all the light armaments; and I hope before many months have passed to be able to say that the submarine defences are complete and in good order, and that the light armament is on its way to the ports. My hon. and gallant Friend has asked that inquiry should take place into the matter of the garrisons at coaling stations. But there, again, we have had the most careful inquiry, and I am sure that the House will understand that the Government has done a good deal towards making the garrisons effective. We have added all the Garrison Artillery necessary for the defence of our ports at home and abroad; we have added a force of Engineers, and increased the Estimates by a sum for Submarine Miners necessary at the coaling stations. It is, therefore, impossible to say that we have not paid considerable attention to the question of the garrisoning of our coaling stations and ports abroad, although, as I stated to the deputation that waited on me, when the defences of certain coaling stations approach completion some moderate additions to the Infantry garrisons will be absolutely necessary. And this is most essential, because we ask, in the Bill about to be presented, for powers to complete the barracks at the coaling stations at which the troops are to be placed. I do not want to deal with the evidence that is being taken by the Committee upstairs. I do not dispute that it is exceedingly probable that very great improvements might take place in the barrack accommodation of the country; but is it contended for a moment that it is possible for the Government or for Parliament to do everything that is needful in a single year, or that when a Secretary of State is brought face to face with an enormous question of national defence it is to be said that he must at once make provision for every need in the shape of barrack accommodation in every part of the world? Is he not rather to be trusted when he says that the matter can wait, but that the armament of the coaling stations cannot be allowed to remain over? Now, as to the question of guns, there, again, I thought I had explained to the House that we had taken all the steps we can to remedy what I fully admit to be a grievous state of things—namely, the delay in the supply of the necessary guns. We hope we have reached thoroughly the causes of that delay, and that we have remedied it. My hon. and gallant Friend also dwelt upon this subject, and I may say here, as I am responsible with regard to guns not only for the Land Service, but also for the Naval Service, that we have not only ordered the guns which are necessary for the Naval Service, but have taken every step we possibly can to expedite their production, and we believe we have reason for the statement that instances of ships waiting for their guns will not occur in future. First of all, we determined to lay down the principle that the guns for the ships and the Army shall be absolutely, so far as is possible, interchangeable; we intend, further, to consider that the Navy has the first claim upon us; and we have laid down the principle that if guns are short in number and are required by the Navy, the Navy shall have them, and the Army shall give way. Then I come to the question of lighter guns. My hon. and gallant Friend spoke in very strong terms indeed upon this subject; but I think if he will look at my Memorandum on the Army Estimates, and which I am afraid I made a mistake in circulating, for it does not appear to have been read, he will see that in the Estimates of the year we provide for 12-pounder guns for two Army Corps batteries. We intend to push on that work, and to complete the armament for the whole Field Artillery. But when my hon. and gallant Friend says that the guns they now have are inferior, I beg to say, upon the authority of my most skilful advisers, that he is entirely mistaken, and that a great portion of the Field Artillery is armed with a gun which, although inferior to the 12-pounder, is, nevertheless, a better one than any Army on the Continent possesses. As regards the strength of the Royal Artillery, the Government, in the course they have taken, have acted solely and entirely upon military advice. If the Committee will allow me to say so in these terms, I decline altogether to accept responsibility in reference to matters which are of a purely military nature—I decline to accept responsibility, for instance, for the proportion which either arm of the Service shall bear to the other. That is a question for Military Advisers, and a Secretary of State would be mad if he were to deal with them without reference to those Military Advisers. The Artillery Force asked for, then, is one which has been recommended to the Secretary of State by the best military advice, and I hope and believe that, in addition to the Force of Artillery which we now possess, we shall be able before long to put into the field a number of batteries of Volunteer Artillery—not necessarily to move about as the Regular Artillery can, but able to take up the position assigned to them if they should be called out. Looking on the capacity of the Royal Artillery for home defence, I can say that, acting as any foreign Government must—strengthening the *cadres* of our Artillery by calling out the Reserve and getting the horses necessary—we have, at the present time, Artillery not only for two Army Corps, but for a third Army Corps, and behind this we should have the Volunteer Artillery, which, if a little time were given them, would prove exceedingly useful. I trust the Committee will forgive me for entering at greater length than I intended into this subject; but the speech of my hon. and gallant Friend has rendered a somewhat detailed reply on my part necessary. I feel very deeply the responsibility of the position in which I am placed. It is only after the most careful consideration of the evidence placed before us, that we have laid before the country the programme contained in the Bill before the Committee, which, I believe, will advance the best interests and add enormously to the safety of the Empire. I do not, for a moment, expect that the term of our official life will enable us to see the fulfilment of the whole of the programme now initiated; but it is proposed by the Government, on my initiative, with a firm belief that what we are doing is necessary for the best interests of the country.

SIR HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.) said, he desired to preface the observations which he had to address to the Committee by expressing to the First Lord of the Treasury his thanks for the clearness of his statement, which had been ably supplemented by that of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. Nothing was further from his intention, nor from the intention of those on either side of the House with whom he had the honour of acting in asking for further inquiry, than to interfere with the responsibility of the Government in their measures for the defence of the country. They had no desire to weaken that responsibility, or to share it; their only desire was to accentuate, and, if possible, to make it clearer—to bring it home not only to the mind of Her Majesty's Government, but to the mind of every elector in the country. He might be permitted to say that, so far from desiring in any way unfairly to criticize the proposals of the Secretary of State for War, he admitted that since the reforms initiated by Lord Cardwell in 1871, some of which were of very questionable utility, no measures had been more valuable than those initiated by the right hon. Gentleman during the short time he had been in Office. If the right hon. Gentleman thought that it was his (Sir Henry Havelock-Allan's) desire, or the desire of those who asked for further inquiry, to delay the work in hand, he was justified in saying that they had no such intention, and that they had every wish to strengthen his hands, with the firm hope that his term of Office might be fruitful of great and beneficial changes in the administration of the Service. When he had the honour of addressing the House on the 8th of March last, he and his hon. Friends had asked simply that certain inquiries might be made as to whether the military and naval resources then at the disposal of the country were sufficient for its requirements, and whether they required to be supplemented in any degree, and if so to what degree, and from what source. That inquiry, to their great regret, was narrowed by the First Lord of the Treasury to the inquiry which they understood was to be presided over by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale. There was no man in the House in whom the country had greater confidence than in the noble Marquess; but the inquiry which had been granted had resolved itself into an inquiry into administration—as between one Department and another. They had had many inquiries of that nature during the last 40 years, which had resulted in nothing at all. It was because they were now brought face to face with a crisis which the military resources of the country were unable to meet that they desired to have an inquiry which should extend over as few weeks as possible, which he believed might be finished in six weeks from the present time, reported in eight weeks, and upon which Report the Government might take action before the end of the Session. If he might be allowed to detain the House one or two minutes longer, he would point out that there were only three or four military contingencies to which this country was exposed. Providence had provided us with a wet ditch all round us, and we had a very good Fleet. He might say that he had observed with some regret, during the time the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was speaking, the flippant way in which his remarks were received by hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Opposition side of the House—hon. Gentlemen who, in the event of any serious emergency arising, would be the first to cry out that the defences of the country had been neglected. It was of the utmost importance, having regard to our insular position, that our Navy should be kept in a thorough state of efficiency. The electors of this country were marvellously ignorant on the subject of naval and military reform and efficiency — the subject being naturally uncongenial to minds which had not been obliged to deal with it — and he had often wondered whether they ever contemplated the position we should be in, drawing, as we did, half our food supplies from abroad, if we lost command of the sea for even a week. If we lost command of the sea for a week it would be one or perhaps two years before we could regain it, because we should not lose it without some serious disaster to our Navy. During the time we were regaining our supremacy he wondered what would be the condition of our people? Speaking as a distressed agriculturist, he could say that wheat was now 28*s.* a-quarter. Well, it would go up at once to 80*s.* or 100*s.*, and no doubt the electors would then think that that was a rather high price to pay for a paltry and petty economy, and an enormous penalty for present want of courage in voting necessary strength to our Navy. The right hon. Gentleman the present Secretary of State for War and the noble Lord the present First Lord of the Admiralty had done their best; but he maintained that if any great improvement was to be effected in our naval and military position it must be by making a totally new departure and taking the electors of the country into their entire confidence. That was a thing he declared recent Administrations had not done. Numerous Reports had been presented by Royal Commissions and Committees, but nobody ever read them; and numerous Blue Books had been circulated with the same result. The popular mind was still impressed with the belief that naval and military experts were only engaged in pushing their own individual interests. With regard to the inquiry which military men had expected, but as to which they had been disappointed, he must say he was glad the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) had refused to increase its scope, seeing that they now had the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War that the investigation to be made would take a wider scope, and would be presided over by the Prime Minister—who, it must be remembered, was also Foreign Secretary —himself. The inquiry could not be in better hands, considering that the question of our defences was so bound up with the question of foreign policy that it was impossible to separate the one from the other. If there was anything in which we had shown a want of moral courage, it was in not facing what the possibilities of our foreign policy might be—like the ostrich, which hid its head in the sand, and had the idea that its other and more ignoble parts were likewise concealed from view. He had heard the Prime Minister declare not long ago that it would be insane to proclaim to other countries what our real necessities were. But did the Government think that they were deceiving foreign nations? They might throw dust in the eyes of their own people; they need not think that they were throwing dust in the eyes of foreign nations. There was scarcely a capital in Europe in which you might not buy for an expenditure of 5*s.* a more accurate description of our military and naval wants and deficiencies than were at the disposal of any hon. Member of that House. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War was aware that in the Library of the House, month by month, there were placed confidential Returns as to the condition of the Army. Those Papers were at the disposal of every hon. Member of the House. If anyone wanted to see the confidential Reports about the British Army, or wished to write a treatise about our military and naval resources, he had only to go into the Library of the House and satisfy himself upon all the details as to the disposition of every man, gun, and horse available for the defence of the country both at home and abroad. Within the past month there had been a Blue Book published giving full details as to the strength and character of our forces in India, and as to our military administration of that country, and all the information circulated in this way was in the possession of every European Power. We admitted foreigners into our arsenals, our shipbuilding yards, and into our Government factories. Was it supposed that foreigners when they went to these places kept their eyes shut? To talk of secrecy in these matters was ludicrous. It was absurd to suppose that the foreigner was not perfectly alive to everything that went on in our arsenals and building yards, and was not perfectly aware of all the shortcomings of our Army and Navy. The inquiry that military men had so long wished for—and which it was so satisfactory to hear was to be now presided over by the noble Marquess at the head of Foreign Affairs—need not last longer than six weeks; and in two months Her Majesty's Government might be in possession of full facts, and in a position to come to the House and ask for the Supplies which they wanted. We had to prepare ourselves against but three contingencies—the invasion of this country by a Foreign Power—against which the splendid force of Volunteers which we possessed, together with the Militia and the Regular Army at home, rendered us tolerably secure—the invasion of India—or a war in the East of Europe, which might involve the necessity of sending two or three Army Corps abroad. Had we not the courage of our opinions? It was a mere absurdity and sentimentality to talk as if these things were not possible. It was quite possible that within 15 or 18 months one of these contingencies might happen, and it was not wise, for the sake of false sentiment, to hide from the people of the country, who could give the Government power to act, facts which were as well known to every Foreign Power as everything connected with our organization had for years been known to them. He was exceedingly glad to hear that Her Majesty's Government had changed their mind with regard to this inquiry, and that they had increased the scope of it. Let him ask them humbly but earnestly to stick to these three points indicated just now. He would ask them to appoint a Commission with the noble Marquess at the head of the Government as Chief—who should be supported by three experts from the Army and three from the Navy — say, His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Wolseley, and Sir Donald Stewart (for the Indian Service), as representing the Army, and Sir Geoffrey Hornby and two other Admirals—of whom there were plenty in that House —as representing the Navy. Let the Government consult those authorities, and put before them the three contingencies he had mentioned, and let them ask those Gentlemen what would be our condition to cope with each contingency, and to say frankly what provision should be made in the shape of guns, stores, and men under either of those circumstances. He would undertake to say that within two months the Commission would have presented its Report, and the Government would be in a position to act upon it. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had told the House something about our guns, great and small, but he had said nothing about our small arms, and he (Sir Henry Havelock-Allan) had noticed the omission with great regret. What were the facts with regard to the adoption of the Magazine rifle by the Armies of Europe? Why, the German Army, numbering 16 corps, was supplied with a Magazine rifle, containing eight rounds in its stock, for every one of 600,000 men. It was true that Germany was seeking for a better weapon; but, at the same time, they were now in possession of a Magazine rifle possessing the fullest requirements of a serviceable weapon in war. France had three corps of 120,000 men armed with the Magazine rifle; Austria had 200,000 men; and Russia, with a detachable Magazine gun, had 300,000 men so armed; whilst the British Army absolutely possessed not a single Magazine rifle in use. Three hundred and fifty of these rifles had been manufactured for the purposes of experiment only. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had stated, in introducing his Army Estimates, that he hoped by the end of the year to have 80,000 of the new rifles manufactured; but in answer to a Question put by himself (Sir Henry Havelock-Allan) the right hon. Gentleman admitted that there was not one of these guns yet manufactured, except 350, as he had said, for experimental purposes, and that even the pattern was not yet decided. He imagined that it would be fortunate if by the end of the year we had as many as 20,000 of these weapons in the hands of our soldiers. With regard to field guns, our supply in India was totally inadequate. Only three weeks ago he had asked what field guns there were in India, and he was told——

Mr. E. STANHOPE (interrupting) said, that the Question was answered by the Under Secretary of State for India, and not by himself.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN said, that the right hon. Gentleman was the person who did—or, rather, did not —supply the guns to the Indian Army.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, that if the Indian Government gave orders for guns they might be manufactured in our arsenals, but that he had no responsibility in regard to ordering them.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN said, that with regard to Field Artillery at home, it was a fact that there were not three complete batteries in the country of the 13-pounder gun, or of the 12-pounder gun, of which they had heard so much. It was said that a number of batteries were to be armed with the 16-pounder guns; but it would take some time to do that, the bulk of the 13 and 12-pounder guns not having yet been served out. He (Sir Henry Havelock-Allan) was very much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War for the courtesy and completeness with which he had answered him; but if the facts revealed were satisfactory to the electors of the country it would be a matter of great surprise. He wished to give the right hon. Gentleman the greatest credit for what he had done; but he desired to point out that while we were deliberating how best to lock the stable door the steed might be stolen. The Government were making preparations to complete the armaments of the country and of its foreign Dependencies in the course of two and a-half years or three years; but could they guarantee that these men and guns would not be wanted in 15 months from the present time? He, at all events, should be sorry to make any definite promise upon that point. He would claim for military Members of the House of Commons that they were only endeavouring—and they probably succeeded only more or less indifferently—to discharge their duty to the country in a conscientious way in pressing these matters upon the attention of the Government. In the last resort it would not be a question of the expenditure of thousands or even of millions of pounds, but when an emergency of war arose they would have to spend money like water. They might also have to spend something far dearer—the lives of brave men wantonly and foolishly thrown away. The military critics wished, therefore, to fix responsibility upon the Government, and not to share it themselves. They had done their duty when they had brought the deficiencies of the Services publicly before the notice of the country. He had received with great pleasure and gratitude the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman opposite that the Government intended to take action in this matter shortly, and that the inquiry, so long promised and so earnestly asked for, was now actually to take place. He would urge upon the Government not to lose a single moment in carrying their intentions into effect. In any case, if emergency arose, it would not be the military Members of the House who would have failed in their duty, nor would they share in the responsibility if disaster occurred. They knew that British soldiers would, as they had ever done in the past, stand in the field and die at their post; and he repeated that if any emergency arose, and if disaster came, he, along with other military Members of the House, would have the satisfaction of knowing that they, at all events, had delivered their souls, and that not on them, but on Her Majesty's Government, would rest the sole responsibility—he hoped he might not have to say the crime.

Sir EDWARD HAMLEY (Birkenhead) said, he wished to express his satisfaction—satisfaction which was now felt generally throughout the country—that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had seen his way to ask for a loan which was to be especially devoted to the national defences. He was so well satisfied that he could not even suggest any way by which it could have been disposed of better than as the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) had proposed. He hoped that this was an instalment only, and that when the right hon. Gentleman who guarded the public purse had taken his first plunge in these unaccustomed waters he would be less chary of repeating it, and would even grow fond of the exercise, and go on plunging again and again, amid the plaudits of delighted taxpayers. He would endeavour, in a few sentences, to show how far the requirements of defence rendered this measure necessary. He had been always ready to avow that, when the national defences were in question, the Navy must hold the first place. He would go a great deal further than that, and say that, considering the geographical conditions of the Kingdom and the Empire—the Kingdom in the midst of the sea, and the Empire composed of Dependencies which we could only reach by the highways of the ocean—considering, too, that every sea was covered with our merchantmen, and that they brought us, not only the general prosperity that flowed from commerce, but the very food on which we depended for existence, so that the interruption of these lines meant national starvation—under these peculiar circumstances, he maintained, it would be a wise thing to make maritime supremacy the very basis of our policy; to encourage by legislation, and in every other way, all whose business was on the waters that surrounded us; to foster the growth of a seafaring population; to rear and train ample supplies of seamen for our Merchant Navy and our Fleet; and to render that Fleet adequate beyond all doubt for all its purposes. That was to say, the Fleet should have sufficient line of battle ships to dominate the Home waters after detaching the necessary Squadrons, sufficient swift cruisers to protect our trade lines, and sufficient floating defences of other kinds to place our commercial ports, our coaling stations, and our Colonial harbours in security. And it might, perhaps, be permissible to think that such a policy, founded on our national conditions, would be an eminently national policy not less worthy of the people, not less suited to our circumstances, than that other policy that now guided us, which it was almost sacrilege to touch. It might be said, and had been said, not without show of reason, that if our defences by sea were thus complete we needed no defences by land. But he would endeavour to show that we should still need them. For ships were, by their nature, precarious defences. They were peculiarly liable to unforeseen disaster. He spoke with extreme deference of such matters; but, perhaps, naval officers would agree with him that naval tactics were still very much in the clouds; that with ships and guns of which they knew the qualities rather by computation—he might almost say by guess—than by proof, and that with the new element of the torpedo entering into the problem as an unknown quantity, there must be great uncertainty as to the naval actions of the future. It was to be noted, too, that in the days of our most undisputed supremacy on the ocean naval strategy demanded that our Fleet should seek its enemies in distant waters; and only some strokes of good fortune prevented that concentration of foreign fleets in the Channel, which was all that Napoleon was waiting for to cross with his army. Here was a case where efficient land defences would have rendered the project of a would-be invader vain, and where, consequently, our Admirals would have been free to act with a light heart on any point where they could best protect the country by seeking out and destroying the enemy. He thought that naval Members might agree that it would double the value of the Fleet to have its action thus left free. Again, supposing the temporary absence of the Fleet, it might be well worth the risk of an enemy's force to make a dash on London, careless of its communications, if it could reach its object; but it would be quite a different thing to find, on landing, that it was confronted with a strong defensive line, while the Fleet might return and cut off its retreat by sea. If a considerable augmentation of the Fleet were necessary to raise it to a proper strength, time would be required to build the ships and train the seamen; whereas our Land Forces were already in existence, and only wanted the finishing touches. Therefore, he hailed with satisfaction the recent declaration of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War of his projects for our defence by land. He (Mr. Stanhope) had announced, in terms that must give general satisfaction, that plans were in progress for facilitating defensive operations, and for so organizing our forces as to supply us with an Army for the defence of England, and other troops for the defence of London. These plans and organizations were indispensable as preliminaries, and they were what everybody could conscientiously approve, since they were attended by no expense. But it was with regard to these matters that he would once more point out how a certain expenditure was indispensable in other directions. We had an immense body of defenders in the Volunteers, but they were still, in great measure, without field equipment. This national Army now represented the progressive growth of a whole generation. It was full of the most earnest spirit, but it had been doomed to inefficiency by being left incomplete. It was as if after money and skill had reared some splendid building a sudden access of thrift had left it without a roof. This was not economy—it must be called by some other name. He should, therefore, be well content to see steps taken at once for the equipment of the National Forces. And along with this there was another item entailing expenditure—namely, the supply of arms—both rifles and guns. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had most judiciously arranged for the immediate issue to the Volunteers of all the guns, suitable for positions in the field, which we now possessed. But these were old and short of the present mark of efficiency, and not only should the Volunteers as soon as possible receive a new and better class of such guns, but a certain proportion should be also supplied to our Field Army in aid of the lighter Field Artillery. It was of the nature of modern tactics that the attack of Infantry in a battle should be preceded by a duel of Artillery; the assailant endeavoured to overpower the defender's Artillery in order that his troops might not be fatally devastated by it in their advance. Therefore, as an Army operating in its own country could make use of heavier Artillery than one which crossed the sea to attack it, and which, by the nature of the case, would only be accompanied by more portable Field Batteries, it was to be hoped that we might always overpower the assailant's guns, who might thus be unable to launch his Infantry to the attack at all, except under desperate conditions, and a possible inferiority of force on our part might thus receive an immense compensation. Consequently, besides the superior field gun now in preparation, we should want an adequate supply of guns of position, and, further, of effective guns for our coast batteries. He said nothing of ships' guns, a question that was best left to naval Members of the House. He had also been glad to learn that the great Armstrong firm was prepared, on due notice, to turn out guns of all the kinds needed at the most rapid rate practicable. He had often mentioned before these items of necessary expenditure; but he did so again because the ears of the people were opening, and also because he would endeavour to acclimatize, so to speak, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) to these new atmospheric conditions which he might have to live in. There was one other point he would touch on, because it had excited some interest of late—he meant the expected Royal Commission. The original proposal, as embodied in the Resolution of the hon. and gallant Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), was that the Commission should inquire into the strength of the Forces by sea and land and the amount of war material necessary for the public security throughout the Empire. He did not profess himself an ardent admirer of Royal Commissions—they sometimes spent much time to small purpose, and accumulated evidence which few read and fewer profited by; but this one would have had a distinct purpose. It would have been of great value both to the Ministers concerned by providing them with a standard of efficiency to which they could at all times refer, and to the nation by assuring it that, so long as that standard was conformed to, it would be impossible to take the country by surprise. Now, they knew that in "another place" an opinion adverse to this inquiry had been expressed by a personage whose views all Conservatives were bound to respect; and the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had again told them that night that though he did grant a Commission the inquiry would be one very different from what was asked for, and which some hon. Members did not see a sufficient object in pursuing. The objection was that the Government considered that in some way such a Commission would deprive Ministers of due responsibility. But he (Sir Edward Hamley) confessed he was unable to understand the difficulty thus raised. For it was not to be supposed that Ministers, individually or collectively, would take on themselves the task of prescribing what the strength of the Navy should be, what the number and organization of the troops, and the quantity of war material which were requisite for the service of the nation. They must apply to somebody of whose calculations they must assume the responsibility; and to whom could they apply with such confidence and safety as to a body of men selected by themselves, publicly appointed, and empowered to bring full inquiry to the aid of their own experience? The responsibility of accepting their recommendations must still rest, as in any case, with the Ministry, and the responsibility also of departing from the standard in case of need, either by diminishing or increasing the Forces. It had been made a strong point that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell Bannerman) supported the Government in deprecating the inquiry asked for; it was said that when politicians so opposed in general to a Conservative Ministry happened to agree with it their conclusions must be reasonable. It did not seem to occur to those who used that argument that those former Secretaries of State for War might have other reasons, besides an ardent desire to support the Government, for wishing to avert a too profound scrutiny into the administration of the War Office. But such apprehensions would be groundless. Nobody, as far as he knew, wanted to rake up the past; all they wanted was to fix a standard for the future. If he still ventured to submit that to the attention of the Government, it was from a conviction that it would be for the best interest of the Government to comply. He did not presume to offer the Government advice; he only offered his own view with deference as a military Member and a supporter who wished to see the Government as strong as possible in all ways. In venturing to urge that, and also in representing that more expenditure was still needed for the defence of the country, he was only pointing to a course which would be in unison with the popular desire. Why, it was not so long ago that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) came down to the House and, for reasons far less cogent than existed now, demanded £11,000,000, and got it for the asking. He believed, therefore, that the notion that the people of this country were unwilling to provide funds for a due purpose had been allowed exaggerated influence. Certainly, if any Government were to demand large sums, and to keep the country in the dark as to the disposal of them, it would run a risk which it could not be expected to face. But it would be a very different thing to convince the country that certain measures were necessary to its safety, and ask its sanction of them. He believed that the action of the Government, in taking a hearty lead in the present movement, would be widely approved. He should like to see its plan so completely carried out that little would be left to add; so completely that the people might repose in confidence that all had been done that could be done for the public safety. And if this would be good for the people, it would be good also for the Government that fulfilled the wish of the people.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."

On that tide the Conservative Government now floated, and with it floated the destinies of England. Many popular waves were bearing it onward in its course; some raised by itself at home; the great Irish wave, setting in the new direction so bravely given to it; and now that flood of popular feeling daily swelling and surging; and if our navigators did but continue to take due advantage of those, the ship of the State would be borne into that haven where alone it could rest in security—in the heart of the country.

Mr. R. W. DUFF (Banffshire) said, he would not follow the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Birkenhead (Sir Edward Hamley) into the many and interesting subjects he had raised. He desired to refer to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope). To that speech he had listened with a great deal of satisfaction, and was glad indeed to hear the plans for putting our forces in an efficient condition; but there were one or two questions he desired to ask in reference to guns. He did not for a moment question the good faith of the right hon. Gentleman; but what he did question was, the possibility of carrying out his programme in regard to the large guns. He had heard something about Supplementary Estimates, and, certainly, in regard to a large part of the naval guns, the Estimates before the House would be insufficient to supply the Navy.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: None of the naval guns are among these at all.

MR. R. W. DUFF said, the right hon. Gentleman told the House that in future no ships would have to wait for guns.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he was dealing generally with guns when he said the recurrence of delay would be prevented.

MR. R. W. DUFF said, the right hon. Gentleman spoke generally, but he wanted to speak specifically. The weak point in the Navy and in the national defence was the scandalous time ships were kept waiting for their guns. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), when the Naval Estimates were introduced, was questioned whether a sufficient sum was set down for guns, and the answer at once was—"If we take more money we cannot spend it," and it was said more than £450,000 could not be spent on naval guns. But the noble Lord had had to admit that ships had to wait a long time for their guns, and obviously this was a great source of national weakness. If the Fleet were to be equipped as it ought to be equipped, at least 30 more heavy guns would be required. He would not have touched upon this had it not been for the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War that, in future, no ships would have to wait for their guns, that they were all ordered. Could the right hon. Gentleman give an assurance that, with the Estimates taken, he could provide an efficient armament for the Fleet? Why, half the Mediterranean Fleet was armed with obsolete guns. At least 30 more guns above nine inches diameter would be required. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had expressed a decided opinion as to the arming of the Fleet, and said we ought not to rely on one or two firms, but ought to go into the open market. But, at the present moment, where could we get guns? Woolwich was utilized, and there were only the two firms of Whitworth and Armstrong; but those two firms would not be able to complete the orders as they were required. Would it not be wiser, instead of relying on these sources, to utilize the whole resources of the country? We had in the country great manufacturing power, plenty of material and great mechanical science, and there should be no difficulty in producing heavy guns. And yet we continued to rely entirely on two firms, though it took two years to produce a 110-ton gun, 18 months for a 60-ton, 15 months for a 12-ton gun, and for a 10-inch gun 13 months. It was quite impossible to rely on Woolwich, the Armstrong and the Whitworth Companies, to make up the deficiency in our naval ordnance. Considering the number of ships waiting for guns and the large additions required for fortifications, would it not be a wise policy to give large orders to other private firms? It could not be expected that firms would go to the expense of setting up a costly plant if they only received small orders. Seeing our large deficiencies in naval ordnance, and the requirements for land fortifications, there ought to be some assurance that the Government programme had some prospect of being carried out. The right hon. Gentleman, when in Opposition, said he had a strong desire to see competition in gun manufacture carried on between the Royal Factory and anyone capable of producing guns. Those words were used by the First Lord of the Treasury in 1882, and now he was in Office and had the opportunity of carrying out the view he then entertained. He (Mr. Duff) was satisfied that, unless some energetic effort was made, we should continue to be in no better position than we were in regard to the *Collingwood*, which vessel was still waiting for her guns ordered two years ago. Other vessels were in the same condition, and there could be no more reckless waste than to have ships lying useless for want of guns. This was the weakest spot in regard to our national defence, of which the Navy was the first line. He called on the Government, while appointing all these Committees, to take some energetic steps at once, and, if necessary, bring in a Supplementary Estimate to provide for the deficiency in our naval ordnance.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, as the hon. Member had referred to the scandalous fact that some ships were waiting for their guns, he should like to make the position clear to the Committee. For every ship now building or laid down, the required number of guns had been ordered.

MR. R. W. DUFF: Ordered!

MR. E. STANHOPE: Yes; ordered for every ship building or laid down, and some in addition had been ordered for reserve. But this had not always been the case. He should be sorry to pursue the historical inquiry, but he thought he would be able to show that one of the main reasons for delay in providing guns was that during one Administration ships were ordered, but guns were not ordered at the same time. He had no desire to press that inquiry at the present moment further. When the hon. Gentleman went on to say that reliance should be placed on the resources of the country, and the Government should get anybody to supply guns, of course the Government would welcome any competition in that direction, and it should be remembered that his right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury was the first to give full encouragement to the trade to supply the requirements of the Service. But it must be recognized that there were very few firms in the country who could undertake to supply guns; a costly plant had to be laid down.

Mr. R. W. DUFF: Yes. I said so.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: But the hon. Gentleman spoke of supplying present need of ships now waiting. But what was the use of relying upon private traders, when no private firms—with the exception of the Armstrong and Whitworth Companies—had the necessary plant to execute orders? As a means of supplying present deficiencies there were no other resources. As a matter of fact, the Government were determined that every step should be taken to procure a supply of guns as quickly as they could be made, and any assistance the trade could offer would be welcomed.

Mr. R. W. DUFF said, if the reference of the right hon. Gentleman was to the Administration with which he was connected, he might explain that they found so many ships in course of construction, that Lord Ripon's Board of Admiralty determined to meet their liabilities, and to lay down no more vessels requiring heavy ordnance—on the other hand, they ordered 22 guns, over nine inches, for vessels in course of construction, and reserve guns.

Mr. C. H. WILSON (Hull, W.) said, it was with the greatest diffidence he interposed in a discussion mainly carried on by naval and military authorities. He had noticed that whenever questions of expenditure of this kind came before the House they were very liable to receive assent from both Front Benches, whether in Opposition or in the Cabinet. But he wished to make a protest on behalf of the mercantile community and the taxpayers of the country. There was an expenditure of over £32,000,000 a-year on Naval and Military Services, and hon. Members who had sat in the House for some time, as he had, were accustomed almost annually to hearing naval and military Members tell very much the same story. He had also lived long enough to form some judgment as to the result of the wars in which the country had been engaged. Beginning with the Crimean War, and going on through the long list of those which had occurred during his own memory, he, as a civilian, wished to ask what benefit the country had derived from any one of them? His own feeling—and he believed it was the feeling of a large majority of his countrymen—was that every one of those wars was unnecessary. They had been, he might almost say, crimes, so far as this country was concerned. In the Russian War we bombarded defenceless towns; in the Baltic we burnt a large amount of produce belonging to English merchants, and we produced a bitterness of feeling that existed at the present day.

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress.

Resolutions to be reported upon *Thursday.*

Committee to sit again upon *Thursday.*

INDIA—IMMORAL PRACTICES.

OBSERVATIONS.

Sir JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton) said, the subject to which the Motion of which he had given Notice referred was brought forward in "another place" last Session by the Bishop of Lichfield in regard to certain practices which were said to prevail in India with the sanction of the Military Authorities there. Those practices were very justly obnoxious to the moral sense of this country, and when brought to the knowledge of the public at home no Government of any sort could defend them. But the full facts were not arrived at; and as time was going on, and believing that Her Majesty's Government were thoroughly honest in their intention to deal with the matter, he determined to put the Motion down a few weeks ago with a view of assisting the Government, and because he thought the matter should not be left indefinitely in abeyance. He did so with great reluctance, for the subject was a painful one for discussion, and to be avoided if possible. He had always been unwilling to bring it forward, and now was happy to say that after the answer given by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) on the previous night it was no longer necessary for him to do so. It was a frank and straightforward statement that the regimental system would be absolutely stopped, and that he had been directed by the noble Viscount the Secretary of State for India (Viscount Cross)—who, he Sir John Kennaway) felt sure, was quite earnest in the matter—to state that he had prohibited women from accompanying regiments on the march and from residing in the regimental cantonments, and that orders were on the way to stop anything like licensed prostitution. Under these circumstances, a debt of gratitude was due to the Government for the way in which they had dealt with the matter, a difficult one to deal with in the circumstances under which a large Army was kept together in India. After the satisfactory answer given it was no longer necessary to bring his Motion before the House.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (SPECIAL REPORT).

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY accordingly *reported* from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure: Mr. Dillwyn and Mr. Ernest Spencer; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Macartney and Mr. Thomas Price.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY further *reported* from the Committee of Selection; That they had added the following Member to the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: Mr. Peter M'Donald.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY further *reported*; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: Colonel Saunderson; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Ernest Spencer.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY further *reported*; That they had added the following Fifteen Members to the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in respect of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill [*Lords*] and the Railway and Canal Companies' Charges Bill: Mr. Charles Acland, Sir Joseph Bailey, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Gray, Mr. Harris, Marquess of Hartington, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Norton, Mr. Francis Powell, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. Harrop Sidebottom, Mr. Philip Stanhope, and Mr. James Stevenson.

Report to lie upon the Table.

House adjourned at a quarter
after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 16*th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Royal Assent*—Customs and Inland Revenue [51 *Vict.* c. 8]; Customs (Isle of Man) [51 *Vict.* c. 7]; Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment [51 *Vict.* c. 9]; Local Government (England and Wales) Electors [51 *Vict.* c. 10].

Their Lordships met;—and having gone through the Business on the Paper without debate,

House adjourned at a quarter past Two
o'clock, to Monday the 4th day
of June next, a quarter
past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 16*th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Municipal Boundaries (Dublin) * [268].

Second Reading—Small Holdings [9], *debate adjourned;* Habitual Drunkards Act (1879) Amendment (No. 2) * [203].

Provisional Order Bills — *Ordered — First Reading*—Local Government (No. 5) * [265]; Local Government (No. 6) * [266]; Local Government (No. 7) * [267].

Second Reading—Local Government (No. 4) * [250].

Considered as amended—Metropolitan Commons (Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray) * [193].

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SMALL HOLDINGS BILL.—[Bill 9.]

(*Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Burt, Mr. Winterbotham, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Newnes, Mr. Flowers, Mr. Pitt Lewis.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley), in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said: I think that all hon. Members of this House will admit the importance of the subject with which it deals. It will not, therefore, be necessary for me to delay the House for any lengthened period in order to put forward the case for the Bill; and it is further unnecessary because this question, either in the form of a Bill or of a Resolution, has been before the House every year since I had the honour of a seat in Parliament. For the last three or four years the Bill has been before the House under the head of Allotments and Small Holdings Bill; this year it is brought forward as a Small Holdings Bill with the allotments portion dropped in consequence of the Act which was passed last year by Her Majesty's Government. That Act, I am happy to know, in spite of its defects, is producing a considerable effect in supplying allotments in various parts of England. Now, Sir, small holdings differ from allotments in this respect—that allotments are for labourers and others who have regular occupations, and are intended to supplement the earnings of the labourer and to occupy his spare time; whereas small holdings have for their object, according to their size, either the full occupation of the labourer or whoever holds them, or the partial occupation of any person who has another business to attend to which occupies only a portion of his time. The question I desire to bring before the House is very important, both in its social and economic aspects; and I hope, looking at the aim of the Bill, to hear no extravagant talk about cutting up the country into small lots, destroying all the large farms, and causing the country to be covered over with small patches. I trust that I may hear no arguments of that kind against this proposal. The fact is that the number of men who would be in the position to avail themselves of the facilities contemplated by this Bill will be limited. Besides the pick of our agricultural labourers who would be in a position to avail themselves of it, there is a certain class in our village population who have business of another character, but whose time is not fully occupied, and to them such facilities as the Bill proposes to afford would be a great boon. Some of these small tradesmen in the villages have little or nothing to do except on market days—I refer to persons in the position of hucksters, dealers, masons, cattle dealers, hay-tyers, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, pig dealers, and others whom I need not enumerate to hon. Members who are acquainted with rural life. All these men would make a very good class of cultivators, and would be able to get possession of a plot of land or a small holding of such a size as he might require for the purpose of cultivating it in connection with the business with which his time would be otherwise occupied. I think I cannot illustrate my argument better than by referring to the estate of Lord Tollemache, who has 40 small farms averaging 32 acres each, 50 averaging nine acres each, and 32 holdings averaging three acres each. There are more than 300 labourers holding about 300 acres of land, and, of course, the occupiers of these small holdings have other occupations such as I have enumerated.

They do exceedingly well with their small holdings and are able to pay their rents. Besides this, we have to deal with the labourers in the rural districts who have no prospect before them for the future, except it be to keep a shop, to go into the towns, or to keep a public-house. The consequence is that social condition is much deteriorated. If, however, the agricultural labourer were assured by the Legislature of the facilities which this Bill proposes to give to him, and with examples before him could see that if he were to save a little money he would be able to obtain a plot of land for cultivation, every inducement would be given to him to remain in the district to which he belonged. Moreover, he would be induced to defer his marriage, and, instead of taking a wife at the early age of 20 or 21, which he does now, because he knows that he is as well off at that age as he is likely to be when he reaches 30 or 31, he would wait until a better prospect was opened out to him in the course of a few years. That is invariably the case on the continent. The labourers there, in the first few years of adult life, spend their time in saving money for an object which is always present to them, and affords them the greatest encouragement to practice thrift. Unfortunately in this country at the present moment the agricultural labourer has as good a prospect at 20 years of age as he has at 40. Then, again, there is a great deal of talk at the present moment upon the question with regard to which the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council gave a notice just now—namely, technical education. That question is closely connected with the provisions of this Bill. In the towns there is a direct profit attached to the acquisition of technical education, because it enables a workman to earn larger wages and get on in the world. But there is no use in giving this kind of instruction to the labourer, because, however skilled he might be, he has no prospect of getting more than 14*s.* or 15*s.* a-week, and even less. Therefore, if this technical education is to be of any use, it is necessary to have some supplementary provision in shape of the means by which the education is to be applied and rendered useful. The consequence of this state of things is that the children and young men in the rural districts are now taught that their great object in life is to get away from the country, and we see that the oldest, largest, and the most honourable industry in the world —an industry for which all have a natural liking—is becoming a mark of degradation in the eyes of our village youths, who are taught that it is a thing to get away from as soon as they can. Only yesterday morning I received a letter from a man which I will quote to the House, because I know him to be a man from the rural districts who is now a workman in a town. He writes—

> "I, as a poor boy, from the earliest time I remember, was always led to believe that my only hope was in going away. I feel that everyone who has left the country in the past has felt the same. I, for myself, may say that although I am doing fairly well as a workman, I would gladly return if there was any prospect of living. I have no doubt there are many others in the same position."

It is a fact, as everyone knows, that the education given in the country schools favours the idea that the land is nothing to these children in the future. Therefore, we want two things which, in my opinion, would change gradually but surely the entire condition of the country—namely, to give an industrial training to the rural labourers, and, secondly, to give legislative facilities for obtaining land, so that they may turn their knowledge to account. In advocating this I am advocating no new thing. We see it done on the continent, in almost every country in Europe. In some form or other the same principle is always involved for which I am now contending, and if it could be brought about here there would be an open career for our rural population. What is the social result of our present position? To understand the question thoroughly it is necessary for the man to have spent his life in close connection with the rural districts, and also to have a clear knowledge of the present condition of the large towns. Any man who has had these two experiences will, if he be a sincere politician, regard the social condition, which is the result of our position, as one of the gravest questions which can occupy the mind of our statesmen. If we look at the census returns of 1881, we shall find the total increase of the population, for the decade from 1871 to 1881, was 14½ per cent in

England and Wales, being larger than any other decade since 1831-1841, when it was 14½ per cent. But if we turn to the rural districts, we find an absolute decrease of 15·9 per cent, instead of an increase of 14½ per cent. If we take the 20 years from 1861 to 1881, there has been a decrease among the agricultural classes of no less than 31·2 per cent, or nearly one third of the entire agricultural population. If we go further, and take particulars, we shall find that there is not a single county in which there has not been a decrease, except in those parts of the country which happen to possess a large town. Take Wiltshire for instance. Out of 17 registrars' districts, all have decreased considerably with the exception of three. In Dorsetshire, every district has decreased except two, those two being Poole and Weymouth, the decrease having been up to 11 per cent. In Devonshire, out of 20 registrars' districts, everyone has decreased with the exception of eight, those eight being large towns such as Torquay, Exeter, and Plymouth, or the neighbourhood of large towns. The decrease there has been up to 11 per cent. The sub-district of Honiton decreased nine per cent, and one in 11½ per cent were paupers. In Cornwall the decrease was as high as 14 per cent, but it arose from other causes besides agricultural depression. Every district declined with the exception of Falmouth. In Somersetshire, every district declined except in five, including Taunton, Bath and neighbourhood, and Bedminster. In Herefordshire, every district with the exception of Hereford itself. In Buckinghamshire every district decreased with the exception of Eton and Wycombe. In Huntingdonshire every district decreased. In Bedfordshire every district decreased, with the exception of Bedford and Luton. In Brecknockshire and in Radnorshire, in Wales, every district decreased, and in Suffolk every district decreased except five; some as much as 12½ per cent. It is only a question of physique, of keeping up the power of animal endurance, of health; in other words, of the actual fibre of the human being. This is a most important measure that such a state of things should incite such a feeling of alarm, and when these men go away, according to the census returns, they do not emigrate. The emigration is so small that it is not worth taking into account. They go into the larger towns, the centre of manufacturing industry. Years ago, when the manufacturing industry was advancing by leaps and bounds, all these men were absorbed, but the powers of absorption of the large towns have reached their limits, if, indeed, they have not overstepped dangerously the limit to which they can go with safety. What we have to consider is where this is to stop. Every 10 years shows an enormous increase in our large towns. To take London, for instance. Every few years there is an addition to London of a town with a population as large as that of Birmingham, and it is dangerous to put a population the size of Birmingham into London every few years, nearly all of them coming from the country, unless we can find the means of subsistence for them. We all know that there is a social question being raised that will tax the ingenuity of the cleverest statesman. It is said that these men do better in the towns—that each individual goes from 9*s.* or 10*s.* into the towns where he earns 15*s.* or 20*s.*, but in his turn he displaces another, and at the bottom of the list we shall find a broken man or a pauper. As to the condition of our streets, it is distinctly connected with the influx of rural paupers into the towns. I think, therefore, it will be granted that there is a great social question connected with the subject. Coming next to the economical question, I maintain that it is one which affects the working classes of our towns, and factories and mines and quarries more than any other. The workmen may have their rules and regulations, their strikes and Trade Unions, but as long as there is a steady influx of competing labourers, so long will employment be comparatively secured, and wages kept down. The operation is two-fold—the labourer who leaves the land ceases to produce wealth to be spread over the industrial centres, and he transfers himself to those industrial centres, increasing the supply, while, at the same time, he is lessening the demand. Every scheme for finding work for the unemployed—such as the laying out of pleasure gardens, and so forth—although deserving of the highest praise, are a mere scratch on the surface, so long as we have ready to our hands a great field of employment upon the land itself, where three men could be profitably employed, instead of the one man who is employed at the present time. We are, however, met with the argument of prices—that prices have gone down, and that they are such as make employment on the land unprofitable—[*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Hon. Members say "Hear, hear!" It is said that corn cannot be grown at a profit. I have here evidence which I have received from some of the small owners of land, whose testimony I know to be good; and if I weary the House with some of that evidence from that class of men, I do so because I think it will somewhat startle hon. Members. I put aside the evidence in regard to the corn and cereals, and I will confine my observations to articles upon which the price has not gone down. Take the article of butter. In 1886, 77,000,000 lbs. of butter were imported, of the value of £8,000,000; cheese, 87,000,000 lbs., at a cost of £4,000,000; while the produce at home was double that amount. Eggs, 1,000,000,000, at a cost of £2,750,000. Thus every day that we live we import 2,750,000 eggs of the aggregate value annually of nearly £3,000,000. We import poultry at the cost of £250,000; and of potatoes £750,000; onions, £500,000; apples, £1,000,000; bacon and hams, £8,000,000. The articles thus imported, without enumerating anything further, amount to £25,000,000. And no one can say that in regard to those articles, the prices have not gone up enormously during the last 20 years. An hon. Member opposite shakes his head; but in my early days butter was sold for 6½*d.* a-pound, a chicken for 1*s.* 2*d.*, and eggs at 30 and 40 for 1*s.* Cheese was equally low; and, if my memory serves me rightly, barley was under 20*s.* a-quarter. Those prices were not complained of then. However, I leave out grain, and only take the articles I have already enumerated, for the importation of which we paid in 1886 £25,000,000. If it were necessary, I could enumerate other articles, which would increase the cost of importation to £50,000,000, without touching meal or grain. I want to see why we did not produce many of the things which, as a country, we are pre-eminently fitted to produce. The fact of low prices, which hon. Gentlemen urge as a reason, seems to me to be really a positive advantage in producing these things. The cottager can feed his pig much better during the time of low prices than he can when the price of feeding is higher. In fact, there is no sufficient answer to be given as a reason when we have a good class of cultivators, and a proper method of cultivation, why we did not produce such articles ourselves, instead of importing them. Then, in favour of trade, the cry of the depression is raised. But, in my judgment, the agricultural industry is the only one in the country which has plenty of orders on hand at paying prices. They are all in a position of manufacturers doing a large trade, I grant, but who have orders in excess of what they can execute. There is plenty of material lying idle; there are labourers wanting work, and yet by some foolish arrangement connected with our system of agricultural plant, the orders which ought to be executed by us are allowed to pass by. I want to know what the reason is. We are ourselves paying £50,000,000 for the importation of certain articles of food. We are anxious about foreign markets, and are desirous of opening out new ones; but we seem to be careless about the best and largest market of all—namely, the Home market. Our newspapers and Chambers of Commerce go into fits of alarm if a few thousand pounds worth of steam-engines are brought over from Belgium; but they have nothing to say about the large quantity of food which we annually import. What is the remedy for all this? It is, to my mind, a silly waste of time to talk about Protection, or of putting a tax on articles in order that we may produce them better ourselves. I do not think it is necessary that I should waste the time of the House in discussing that question. What we want is so to arrange our system of agriculture which deals with these small industries so as to allow the small cultivators facilities to compete in price and also in quality with the small cultivators abroad. No doubt, it will take time to do; but if we set about the work now, there is just time to do it. If we go on as we are doing for many years longer, I am afraid our agricultural population will disappear, and that we shall look for our good old agriculturists in vain. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Yes; but there is time to stop it, if we set about the work now. We know that the large farmers are in a bad way; but men with a few acres of land, who are growing wheat and cereals, and tilling their holdings in the fashion of large farmers, find they, also, do not succeed. The fact is that the peasant proprietors of England are—as was described not long ago by Lavelaye, one of the Belgian economists—pursuing a lost art in England. In fact, close personal care and labour are rarely bestowed upon the cultivation of the land by anybody unless he has a piece of land which he can call his own. The great Mr. Jenkins, in his valuable Reports, was generally opposed to small holdings; but there was enough in the information contained in the Reports of that Gentleman to show that he was obliged to give unwilling testimony to the character of the small holders abroad. I remember that he startled the large farmers of England by telling them that in Denmark, which is competing so strongly with us in regard to butter, the most successful dairy farms were without a single acre of permanent pasture around them. The later evidence of the Royal Commission goes in strongly for education in the smaller branches of industry. Remarks have been made as to the poverty of the small proprietors abroad. No doubt, they appear to be wretchedly poor when labouring in the fields; but follow them into their own homes, and a very different state of things will be found. They have good furniture, ornaments, and clothes; and altogether there is an indescribable sense of property, position, and comfort about them which must be witnessed in order to be appreciated. Probably there may be among them, as there are among every other class, failures; but it may be taken that, as a rule, the state of things I have described exists. We are told that the remedy is to be found alone in free trade in land. My opinion is hardly in favour of reforms which are likely to aggravate in some cases the existing state of things and prevent the bringing about of a new and better state of things. There is no use in creating more land-holders. What we want is to create new cultivators. If we are to have landlords I would rather that they should be rich than impecunious persons who would wring all the rent out of a man they could. We must raise a new class of cultivators from the class of people I have been describing. We have the finest material any nation could wish for this purpose. We have industrious and law-abiding men, who under fair circumstances would be enterprizing and successful, but they have no money. That is the great drawback, and one that it is of national and certainly of great social interest for us to overcome. We should not be doing anything remarkable in setting about that task. As I said before, there is not a nation in Europe that has not been obliged to help this class of its population on some principle or other, although it may be different in form from that for which I am contending. We have ourselves done it in Ireland, perhaps to an extent beyond that of any other country. We have the material, and the whole question is whether we will turn it to account. It is useless to preach to a farmer about wearing a black coat. He must go into minute cultivation personally. We have heard a great deal of noise on this subject, and many theories have been put forward. Platforms have rung again about the pick of the land, but the pick of the land means men who are ready to undergo hard work and privation to persevere. It also means home interests, something to the good and the pleasure and satisfaction which attends the cultivation of the soil, and which does not belong to any other industry. Now, in order to remedy this state of things I venture to bring forward again the present measure. Its object is, and I have no doubt whatever its effect may be, that it will raise the question I have referred to, and seeing that the Unionist Government have made one right step last year in this direction, and have shown that in this and other matters they are capable of appreciating the importance of the subject, I hope they will support the Bill.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford) was understood to say that the Government had already dealt with one branch of the subject.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: The subject with which this Bill deals is another subject altogether.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE: We classify the two subjects.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I do not accept the classification. What I say is that they are two distinct branches of absolutely the same question. The object of this Bill is to enable the Local Authorities to acquire land for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the Bill, and the method of acquiring it is to be practically the same as that for which provision was made in the Bill of last year. Having acquired the land, the disposition of it becomes an important matter. The Local Authority may sell to any one person a small holding on certain conditions, and may advance three-fourths of the purchase money. The purchaser is to provide one-fourth of the purchase money on the completion of the purchase, and the remainder is always to remain unpaid, and is to be a first charge upon the small holding. The interest on this unpaid balance, or quit rent, or rent charge, or mortgage, is 1 per cent, or such other percentage as may be agreed upon, over and above that which the Local Authority paid to the Treasury at the date of advance. By that means the *boná fides* of the holder will be tested, and he would have a personal stake in the matter. This interest, if put aside as a sinking fund, after having paid expenses, would, in a limited number of years, cancel the debt to the Treasury, and the Local Authority would henceforth be the perpetual receiver of well secured ground rents to the extent of about one-third of the percentage of the balance remaining unpaid. There is also a margin of further security in the 25 per cent of the purchase money provided by the purchaser, and added to this there is the yearly increase in the value of the holding which cultivating ownership almost invariably produces. The security is sufficiently good to take away any suggestion of ultimate loss. But Local Authorities, after the purchase is concluded, will have no trouble or responsibility as to the details of management, but will simply be collectors, and will secure their rents in precisely the same manner as the rates are collected; and, seeing that the claim of the Local Authority will be a first charge, no fear as to loss need be entertained. By conferring the *quasi*-ownership only on the small owner, subletting, sub-division, excessive mortgage, and other drawbacks connected with the small cultivators' system on the continent would be avoided. Therefore, I claim for the Bill that by means of its provisions there would be a large increase in the amount of labour employed on the land, and indirectly the manufacturing interests of the country would receive benefit also. Certainly, it would provide and open out a career for the rural population who had now nothing to do but to migrate to the large towns. There is one clause contained in the Bill by which any Local Authority may, subject to certain conditions, make loans to the owners of small holdings for buildings, or for improvements, such loans and all interest upon them to be repaid within a certain period, in no case extending over 35 years from the making of the loan. These advances are to be under different conditions from those made for the acquisition of the holding, seeing that the whole sum would have to be paid back in annual payments. What greater facilities could be given to a young man just starting in life than to see his way to the acquisition of a holding and a dwelling-house of his own? It would supply that which does not exist at the present moment, and that is the element of hope at the commencement of a man's life. I would ask the House not to discard too hastily the suggestion that three-fourths of the purchase could always remain as a permanent charge upon the holding. I want the House to look carefully into the matter, because, in my view, this is a most valuable provision. My object in making the suggestion is to enable the owner to put as much capital as he possibly can upon the land. If he were to buy the holding out altogether the little capital he possessed would be gone, and the same would be the case if he were to pay the whole sum of instalments. He would himself be crippled, and all his capital taken up in repaying the advance, and he would be unable to pay the amount which was necessary upon the land in the way of stock, work, and manure, or, in other words, he would have parted with the capital required for cultivating the farm in addition to a man's labour, which, after all, is the most valuable portion of his capital. It would be paid to the landlord instead of being distributed on the farm. Besides this, where you could find one man who could have any hope of raising sufficient money to buy a holding out and out, and stock it, you would be able to find three or four or half-a-dozen able to pay one-fourth, and still retain sufficient to enable them to stock and work it. Besides this, there is a greater reason than all. The inquiries I made in France and on the Continent generally with respect of peasant proprietors, resulted in this—that there is one great cause of failure, and that is the excessive mortgages on plot divisions of the land. In bad times, when there may be a temporary pinch, it is easy to be tempted to borrow on the security of the land, and these poor peasants having commenced the practice at once place themselves under the tyranny compared with which the practices of the harshest landlord are simply mercy. I therefore take it for granted that means will be taken to prevent the money-lender, who will be lying in wait to take advantage of these peasant proprietors on the first opportunity, in order to advance money to the small holder, from taking advantage of the necessity of these poor men. Unless something of that kind were done, we might as well give up at once all idea of benefiting the agricultural labourer, because he would simply have to go through a slow and painful process of extinction. Under the provisions of the Bill the proprietor would offer no temptation to the money-lender, inasmuch as he would not have the power to part with the land. He is to advance one-fourth of the purchase money. Suppose the value of the holding is £100, he advances £25, and the Local Authority advances the remaining £75, on which, say, he pays 4 per cent. In that case, he is of no use to the money-lender, and offers no temptation to him. He could only lend up to the value of the £25, and in no case could he fall in any way on the man to whom he lent it, and he would have no legal means of recovering the money. I received evidence in support of my proposals from persons with whom I am acquainted which shows clearly that a large number of people would remain on the land, and that others would go back to it if facilities of this kind were offered. I would ask hon. Members to look at the Consular Reports which have been lately issued, and which contain most interesting information on this subject. I quite grant that agricultural depression has been general; but in every one of these Reports there is sufficient evidence to show the comparatively prosperous condition of the cultivators of the kind I am speaking of. If I am not wearying the House, I should like to read a passage or two from these Consular Reports. I will take, first, Consular Report No. 220, 1887, for the year 1886, on the trade and agriculture of Wurtemburg—

> "As matters now stand, the normal, natural, and equal development of agriculture is at a standstill. Abundant harvests have been unable to effect any appreciable improvement. Tenants and encumbered proprietors find the situation even more distressing. The condition of the small farmer, on the other hand, is proportionately better. He tills his fields with the aid of his family, and is but little affected by the depreciation of the price of the crops, as he supplies the wants of his household from his own hand, and makes good his need in cash by the sale of a pig or a beast. On estates of larger dimensions, both the sale-value and rental of land has fallen; in the case of the latter, in many instances, as much as 25 per cent. In the matter of small allotments, on the other hand, with the exception of those situated at an inconvenient distance, or otherwise hampered, the fall in value has not been experienced, many such small lots fetching extraordinary prices."

Our Consular Agent in Sweden says—

> "The butter import trade has been steadily on the decline for several years. This has been caused by the marked progress made in Swedish dairy farming, which has increased the home supply and opened up a considerable and rising export with foreign countries."

A Report from the Consular General of Havre, in France, for 1886, says—

> "The crops, on the whole, throughout the district were not good, and farmers are complaining, like our own, of the hardness of the times; but I would again, as I did last year, draw attention to the fact that Mr. Vice Consul Lethbridge shows in his Report that from the port of Honfleur, eggs, butter, poultry, fruit, and cheese were exported to England last year to a total value of £1,152,140. This astonishing fact induces two reflections—first, wonder that our own agriculturists do not supply much of this themselves; and, secondly, what would become of the farming interests in a district of which Honfleur is the outlet were this trade, by any circumstances, put a stop to?"

Thus, according to this Report, we are keeping the people of these districts instead of keeping our people at home. I will not detain the House much longer. I have been contending for a principle—that is, that we should give facilities to persons who without facilities cannot get upon the land, and that we should give them facilities for acquiring holdings by means of which they might produce these articles. There would then be more capital, recognizing labour as capital, expended upon the land. It must be remembered that labour is the most valuable part of capital; that the small holder and his family, by their work, put what is probably equivalent to £2 per week upon the land, and that, though there may be failure if the labour has been employed and paid for by the farmer, it makes all the difference if it is supplied without payment by the man and his family, who will be content with small results when those results are brought about by the efforts of himself and his family. I maintain, further, that there would be more people employed on the land, for, although next to Belgium, we are the most thickly-populated country in Europe, yet, if we take the rural districts alone, we shall find that they are very thinly-populated. In the next case, the larger the amount of cultivation and of production, the greater the increase in the demand for our manufactures; and not only so, but the consequential saving in the amount of poor rates, charities, and so forth. The time is very favourable for trying an experiment in the direction I have indicated. The social and political value of land in this country has largely diminished; and, what is more important still, the profits upon it have largely disappeared, and its marketable value greatly deteriorated. There is a large quantity of vacant land in the country. Almost in every district there is a good deal in the hands of the landowner, who is cultivating the land at a loss, as he finds out to his cost at the end of the year. I am, therefore, surprised that the landlords, and everybody else, did not see the advantage of increasing the usefulness of the class in whose interests I have brought forward this Bill. Have hon. Members—knowing that the marketable value of land has much deteriorated in this country—seen the prices at which land is selling in France and Belgium, notwithstanding the depressed times in which we are living? The price in the countries I have mentioned is enormous compared with what landed property goes begging for here. It is absurd to cry out for Fair Trade, and all such nonsense, when we are, by our simple neglect, allowing from £25,000,000 to £30,000,000 of produce to be sent over here by foreigners which we could easily produce for ourselves. If we made greater use of the land, prices would go up legitimately; and if we can do that by legislative action, no one will be more thankful than myself. I thank the House for the patient manner in which it has listened to me. I know that the work of the Session is very heavy, and that the time of the Government is so fully occupied that it would be almost impossible for them to get through Parliament a Bill of this national importance—for I am not going to minimize its importance—during the present Session. But what I ask them to do is that they should take the matter into their own hands. It is too large a question to be undertaken by any private Member, and I have no desire that it should be made merely the subject of platform speeches. I want something done by anybody—I do not care who it may be—in this direction. I hold that it is sound political economy, and will tend to secure the safety of the nation, to make proper provision for the welfare of the country population. We have a duty to discharge to that population, setting aside altogether any question of political economy, or the realization of wealth. Above all, I trust that Her Majesty's Government will not meet this proposal with a mere *non possumus*, but that they will state that they recognize its importance, and that, as soon as possible, it will receive at their hands a fair and serious consideration. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, he desired to say a few words on this Bill, having been associated with his hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) in the consideration of the subject from the very inception of the Bill. He must say he was disappointed with the concluding part of the remarks of the hon. Member, as the hon. Member had seemed to make some apology for his measure, offering an invitation to the Government to say generally that they agreed with the principle of the proposal without pledging themselves to a period of time or course of action to give effect to it. His hon. Friend had declared that that was the most urgent question that existed in connection with agriculture. Surely then, when agriculture—when labour and industry—was so depressed in our great towns and rural districts, this of all times was the time which should be chosen for pressing the matter home, and for declaring that it was absolutely urgent, and for demanding of the Government that they should, if necessary, suspend proceedings with regard to some of their measures not of such national importance as that now before the House, in order to give place to the consideration of this subject. He (Mr. Broadhurst) rose to second the proposal for the second reading of the Bill, and to recommend that it should be proceeded with at once and passed this Session, and should not be postponed to some time more convenient to the Government—that it should not be put off to suit any political exigency of the time. He should like to point out to the House that for the first time in its history, the Bill to-day appeared upon the Order Paper without a single Notice of opposition to it. He must congratulate his hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham on having so speedily converted hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House. Time was, and not very long back, when the Notice Paper was almost crowded with Notices from hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House to the effect that the Bill be read a second time that day six months. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) used to know something about the position of the Bill. He was a leader in the denunciation of what he used to call the fallacies of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham, who, he (Mr. Chaplin) declared, proposed a measure upon a subject of which he was entirely ignorant. He (Mr. Broadhurst) was glad that a closer association between the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division and his hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham had taught the right hon. Gentleman that the hon. Member was not so ignorant on these subjects, but that he knew some little about them.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Will the hon. Member permit me to say that I never made any such assertion as that the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham was ignorant upon this question. On the contrary, I should think he knows as much or more about it than anyone in the House.

Mr. BROADHURST: Yes; but the right hon. Gentleman, as they all knew, was a master in the art of phrases. The scathing the right hon. Gentleman used to employ against the hon. Member was even stronger and much more effective in the direction indicated than the words he (Mr. Broadhurst) had actually made use of, and meant the same thing. He thought the Government might very well shorten the debate on this subject this evening, if some one representing them would rise early and give the House their opinion upon the measure under discussion. He thought he might say, if he was not taking too great a liberty with hon. and right hon. Gentlemen near him, that they on that (the Opposition) side of the House, accepted the Bill unanimously. Of course, they did not pledge themselves to any of the details of the measure. His hon. Friend would never expect that. But they pledged themselves to the main principle of the Bill, and were prepared to vote it an urgent measure, and one which should be proceeded with at once. He apprehended that there was no hon. Member on the opposite side prepared to give strong opposition to the measure.

Mr. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow): Certainly there is.

Mr. BROADHURST: The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, one would think, would almost come within the category in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire regarded his hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham as having a place—that is, as hardly renowned for his knowledge of this subject. [" Oh, oh ! "] Well, he was not aware that the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Ambrose) was renowned for his knowledge of the subject of small holdings and the condition of the agricultural labourers of the country.

Mr. AMBROSE: I did not profess to have any practical knowledge on the subject. I simply answered the challenge of the hon. Member as to there being no one on this side of the House prepared to offer a strenuous opposition to the Bill. It may be that I have no practical knowledge of the subject, and yet I may be quite capable of giving a strenuous opposition to the measure.

MR. BROADHURST said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman had always suffered more from ignorance than want of knowledge. Now, he apprehended that the Government was prepared, like the Opposition, to accept the principles of the Bill without pledging themselves to all the details of it. If that were so, he saw no reason why the debate should not be very short, and that they might proceed with one or two measures of great importance that immediately followed this on the Order Paper. Might he, for one moment, say that one of the details—or rather, as it was not in the Bill now, he would put it in this way—one of the omissions from the Bill this year was a very striking one. The hon. Member had omitted the allotments part of the original scheme, and he (Mr. Broadhurst) thought his hon. Friend was scarcely well advised in making that omission. The allotment question was one which was as important and necessary to deal with to-day as it was almost before the Act of last Session. The Act of last Session did not meet the requirements of the rural population with regard to allotments, and he had been rather surprised to hear the hon. Member, in moving the second reading of the present Bill, say that he had evidence that the Act of last year was a great success.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: Abundant evidence.

MR. BROADHURST: Yes, the hon. Member said "abundant evidence"; but he (Mr. Broadhurst) thought they could, on the other side, produce abundant evidence to show that the Act had very essentially failed in attaining the object which the allotments scheme originally had in view. The hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham, he knew, had passed through a time of great excitement this last year or two, and had been pressed most severely in political matters with political difficulties and problems. ["No, no!"] Yes; that was so, unquestionably. The hon. Member who interrupted him was very energetic in his spirit of criticism; but might he (Mr. Broadhurst) remind him of the fact that the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor had spent a great deal of time on the consideration of this very subject. That Commission, at the instance of his hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham, had stated that what was necessary in regard to allotments was that allotments up to half an acre should be attached to each cottage. It was perfectly well known that an allotment of a quarter of an acre in area so situated was of more value to a labourer than half an acre a mile away from his cottage.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that he is very much enlarging on the subject of the Small Holdings Bill by entering upon the subject he is now discussing.

MR. BROADHURST said, he was obliged to Mr. Deputy Speaker for reminding him of the fact; but he had been led into this, very unwisely no doubt, by the omission of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham to include allotments in his proposal. That was one of the misfortunes of the present Bill; but under the kind reminder of Mr. Deputy Speaker, he would not further pursue that part of the subject. On the subject of small holdings, however, he was not quite in accord with his hon. Friend. If he had understood the hon. Member correctly, he had declared that he was not looking forward to the complete ownership of these small holdings by the occupiers as much as to the cultivator having a constant and perpetual tendency——

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: To absolute ownership.

MR. BROADHURST: Yes, to absolute ownership. He was bound to say that he thought if they went to the root of the evil of the present system, they would find the best remedy in making the cultivator the absolute owner of the allotment which he cultivated.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: The Bill would do so.

MR. BROADHURST said, the best means of obtaining satisfactory results from the cultivation of the soil was by the soil being in the absolute possession of the cultivator. The cultivator should have the whole interest in the property, and there was no reason why the occupiers of small holdings should not become owners of the fee simple. He thought they must direct their attention when they got into Committee upon this Bill—if they got into Committee on it this Session—to that part of the subject. Many hon. Members thought that means might be found to help small cultivators to secure the ownership of their land on the same principle that labourers and artizans were enabled to obtain the ownership of their cottages—that was to say, through the assistance of Building Societies. That was the system proposed by the late Mr. Fergus O'Connor, and though there were great faults and errors of judgment in the scheme of Mr. Fergus O'Connor 50 years back, yet it had in it the elements of a successful and desirable scheme. There were not wanting to-day evidences—and the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham knew that very well—that good fruit had resulted from the effort of Mr. Fergus O'Connor 50 years ago. They had it in evidence, and his hon. Friend would remember that evidence perfectly well, that in one or two cases the small owners of to-day had been helped to their property under the system proposed and partly carried through by Mr. Fergus O'Connor; and where they saw the ownership going with the cultivation there they saw the very best results in agriculture. ["No, no!"] Yes; where the small holders owned their land, there they saw the most it was possible to obtain got from the land. Well, he had a letter which he had received from one of the great agricultural branches, a letter sent to him to refresh his memory as to a case of a very small holder indeed. The case was that of a man in possession as owner of one acre of land; out of that one acre of land this man and his family extracted a profit of £30 a-year.

An hon. MEMBER: Where is that?

MR. BROADHURST said, it was within 18 miles of the nearest market town, and within five miles of the nearest railway station.

An hon. MEMBER: Where?

MR. BROADHURST: In Norfolk. He knew the labourer perfectly well. He was a Norfolk man who had migrated North, and worked in the mines with the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) and another hon. Member.

An hon. MEMBER: Might I ask the hon. Member what this man cultivates?

MR. BROADHURST said, the man cultivated fruit and vegetables. He also grew pigs and a few poultry. It was perfectly well known, and hon. Members would admit it in the House as they did out of it, that the growth of pigs was one of the most fruitful sources of profit to agriculturists. There was an evidence of some little want of information on these subjects on the part of the hon. Member opposite. Here was a man the absolute owner of a piece of land an acre in extent, 18 miles from a town, and four or five miles away from any railway station, earning £30 a-year out of his land, and performing skilful work for the farmers in the neighbourhood which added, perhaps, another £30 a-year to his earnings. There was this man, a most desirable citizen, maintaining himself in independence and respectability, bringing up his family independent of all parish relief, he and his being considerable customers, indeed, the best class of customers which manufacturers could have at their doors. This man had told him (Mr. Broadhurst) that if he could obtain an additional acre—that was to say, to make his holding two acres in extent, he could make the land bring him in from £65 to £70 a-year, but that he could not obtain that additional acre except at such a ruinous rent that it was impossible for him to enter into the contract, and here came in the secret of the want of success in some quarters of the whole system of small holdings. The holders were considerably handicapped, because the rent, rates, and other charges imposed upon them were in such enormous disproportion to the charges imposed upon owners of 300, 400, or 500 acres of land. If the friends of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire were as wise as it was sometimes thought they were, they would long since have made such arrangements as would have rendered a Bill of the kind unnecessary. If the landowners of this country were only wise enough to foresee what must be the inevitable outcome of the present system, it would not be necessary for his hon. Friend to plead as eloquently as he had done that evening that Parliament should do by compulsion that which people ought voluntarily to have done from self interest and for self protection, to say nothing of the patriotic motive of a desire to see the people increase in prosperity all round the large estates of the country. Those sentiments, and these reasons, one would have thought, should have led the large landed proprietors of the country to have endeavoured to cultivate in the minds of the rural population a desire to become the possessors of small holdings, and should have led them to give facilities for the acquisition by the peasantry of such holdings. The system of large holdings had failed to some extent. At any rate, it had almost brought ruin upon many of the great houses and many of the great positions in the country. If large holdings had failed, instances had been pointed out, and could be pointed out in still greater numbers, where small holdings had succeeded. They had an evidence of it at their doors. There was not one of them, in whatever direction he might live, who would let his land in allotments at the same price as he would let it in larger quantities to large farmers.

Colonel HAMBRO (Dorset, South): No, no!

Mr. BROADHURST: The whole of the evidence, the whole of our experience show it.

Colonel HAMBRO: What evidence?

Mr. BROADHURST said, the evidence that Mr. Deputy Speaker had very properly intimated to him (Mr. Broadhurst) he must not refer to again. They would find evidence enough, if they would go to the Report of the Royal Commission, to bear out what he was saying. And he could speak furthermore from his own personal experience of this matter, because he happened to know something of this matter, having, as his hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham had pointed out, been early associated with the land, and he trusted he might live to see the day when he might again have an opportunity of spending much of his time in a pleasurable and intellectual and in one of the most healthy avocations that anyone could undertake [*Laughter.*] Yes, he knew that many hon. Members laughed at anything intellectual. [*Renewed laughter.*] These gentlemen treated their labourers as though there were no intellect required in their work.

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Long) (Wilts, Devizes): No, no!

Mr. BROADHURST said, he did not for a moment accuse the hon. Member opposite of being neglectful of his labourers, or of being wanting in thought for them; but his point was that they were treated, in far too many instances, as though no intellect were required in the work they had to do, whereas there was no industry so susceptible of intellectual treatment as that of agriculture. In every advance that was made, in every move that was attempted, in every hour's work that they did in connection with agriculture, the work was always the better for the application of the man's whole intellect to it. He was glad that, seemingly, the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Long), who knew something about these matters, approved of what he was saying, whilst some hon. Members took delight in laughing. He hoped that the Bill would not only be read a second time that day, but that the Committee stage would be fixed for an early period. He also trusted that the Government would not listen to his hon. Friend who moved the second reading, and believe that the subject was not so pressing as to require to be taken up during the present Session. He trusted that even at a moment's notice the House would be ready to read the Bill a second time, and that they would apply themselves with all their energy to carrying it successfully through Parliament during the present Session, subject, of course, to some Amendments in matters of detail in Committee. He had very great pleasure in seconding the Motion for the second reading of this most important Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Jesse Collings.*)

Mr. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, he thought there had been a marked difference noticeable between the two speeches which had so interested the House. The one speech had been without a shadow of Party spirit, whereas the other had evidenced a great deal of that spirit. He greatly preferred the speech of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham. [*Ironical Cheers from the Opposition Benches.*] Yes, and he not only preferred that speech, but he could give his reasons for doing so. He believed that there was thorough earnestness and conviction from the beginning to the end of that speech, and he hoped that whenever they talked about subjects of such interest to the rural population as the question before the House, they would as much as possible always drop Party feeling, and try to thrash the question out in a business-like way. But although he (Mr. Gray) was as much interested in this question as the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham, he did not altogether agree with some of the views which the hon. Member had given expression to this afternoon. He was afraid the hon. Member would find if his Bill were passed into law, that there would not be the supply of labourers willing to take 10 or 20 acres of land which he seemed to imagine. It must be remembered that in order to enable a labourer to cultivate successfully 10 or 20 acres of land—in the Bill the limit was fixed at 40 acres; he would therefore take the mean and apply his argument to the case of a man desiring to cultivate 20 acres—he must have something like £200 of capital in hand for the purpose. Now, had they in this country labourers walking about in their thousands, each with £200 in his pocket to invest in that way? He was sorry to say that labourers of that kind were not to be found in Essex; but, supposing in other counties labourers were more fortunate than in Essex, his experience was that they would much rather, under existing circumstances, and in view of the present condition of agriculture, spend their money in taking small businesses, a small shop, and so on, than they would risk their capital on small holdings. The hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) had said something which he evidently seemed to think would be quite crushing to them on that (the Ministerial) side of the House as to what a certain Mr. Fergus O'Connor had done in connection with small holdings. Now, 20 years ago, he (Mr. Gray) happened to know the small holdings in the neighbourhood of Red Marley and Staunton, in Worcestershire, which Mr. Fergus O'Connor started, and though, 20 years ago, the present great agricultural depression had not set in, these small holdings to which he referred were failures, and the hon. Member for the Evesham Division of Worcestershire (Sir Richard Temple) informed him that they were very much the same now as they were 20 years ago. He was afraid that when prices were as bad as they were to-day, they would always find these small holdings getting into as bad a condition as these small farms at Red Marley and Staunton. Nearly everybody seemed to think that they knew something about agriculture—with the exception, perhaps, of his hon. and learned Friend on his right (Mr. Ambrose). Travelling in a railway train, for instance, they invariably saw people looking out of the window, regarding the condition of the country, and heard them advise the agriculturists as to what should be done with the land. They heard people say—"Oh, the wheat should be carted," or "The wheat should not be carted;" and not infrequently did it happen that the wheat referred to was barley. They, the agriculturists, were told that the reason they did not get on in agricultural business was that they had no enterprize—that they had not the same amount of enterprize as manufacturers. They were told that they should get rid of their old Conservative ideas of doing as their forefathers had done before them, and that if they adopted that spirit, they would get on, as the great woollen spinners and iron-masters had got on. Then, again, they were told that the possibility of succeeding in agriculture, whatever enterprize might actuate their movements, had gone. They were told that they must break up their machinery, stop their engines, and sell off, and let small capitalists and agricultural labourers cultivate the land. Well, before he could believe in the expediency of following that course, he thought they ought to have some practical experience as to the likelihood of the new system proving successful. The allotments question was a very different one to that of the small holdings. An allotment might be worked most successfully by a man who had a few spare hours in the evening; and no better employment could be found for the British villager than an hour or two per day spent in that way, or in the contemplation of his pigs, if the hon. Member opposite liked, but to ask a man to spend a few hours on an allotment in the evening was one thing, and to ask him to invest a capital of £200 upon a holding, and to endeavour to cultivate it with profit, at the present prices of agricultural produce, was another and a totally different thing. He had but little experience in the drawing of Bills; but, in his humble opinion, there were several weak points in the drafting of the present measure, and the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham, he believed, himself admitted that perhaps some points in his Bill could be improved by alterations. Well, it appeared to him (Mr. Gray) that one of the weak points was this. He thought there was something unfair in it—and he was very much inclined to think that the hon. Member opposite would agree with him that unfairness, wherever they found it, was weakness. The Bill said that the Local Authorities should purchase land, if they thought proper, at such a price as would be taken if the owners were willing sellers. Now, he did not think that was fair. He wished everything to be tried which was reasonable and just on behalf of the agricultural labourer; but he certainly did not think it would be fair to pounce down upon the landlord and to say to him, "You shall part with a portion of your property, whether you like it or not, at such price as you would take if you were a willing seller." Supposing one of our manufacturers were told that he must dispose of his great business, however he liked it and wished to go on with it—that he must sell up in the interest of those whom he had been in the habit of employing, at such a price as he would have asked if he had been anxious to part with his business. What an outcry would there be if such a proposal as that were made, and yet there was not much difference between the two cases. He was sure the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham did not wish to be unfair. At the present time, if the Bill had become an Act of Parliament and it had been possible to find any authority willing to take upon itself the powers and responsibilities of the provisions of this measure—and he did not think such Local Authorities would be plentiful, at any rate during the next few years to come—and supposing that authority went to the landlord and said that he should sell his land at the price he would receive for it if he were a willing seller, he would get about £12 an acre for that which some few years ago was probably worth £40 an acre; and in saying that he had in his mind land in the locality with which he was best acquainted. Was this common justice to the landlord? The door would be open to a great deal of jobbery. In the Bill it was provided that nothing should be set up in small holdings which should depreciate the value of property adjoining, but he was not quite sure whether in some cases it would not be the other way round. [An hon. Member: How?] He was not sure that in case where there was only a very limited quantity of land of a certain description, the fact of its being taken up in small holdings would not increase the price of that which was left. The Bill in these respects would not work well, and it might lead to jobbery. The hon. Member who moved the second reading of the Bill said he would not take up the time of the House about the prices of agricultural produce. Well, he (Mr. Gray) was rather inclined to think that the prices of produce was the gist of the whole question.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: I am sure the hon. Member does not wish to misrepresent me. What I said was, that I would not take up the time of the House by quoting the prices of grain and cereals, but I went fully into the prices of other produce.

Mr. GRAY said, that undoubtedly was the case. He, however, was not afraid to go into the prices of cereals, because, after all, it was the price of corn which had been, and still would be a check upon agricultural operations over a great part of the country. When England ceased to grow her own corn, England would be in a state of great danger. They might talk about their——

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and being returned;—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER *reported* the *Royal Assent to* several Bills.

SMALL HOLDINGS BILL.

Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. GRAY said, he had been speaking of a question relating to corn growing, which seemed to him to be one of the most important questions of the day. He did not think it would be well for this country to change its system of agriculture in such a way as to make us more dependent on the foreigner for the necessities of life than we were at the present time. The hon. Member for West Nottingham seemed to think that it was entirely the fault of the British farmer that he was not able to compete with the foreigner in the production of cheese, eggs, and butter. Perhaps, if they followed up that question very closely, they might find sufficient reasons for that being the case; but it would necessitate his trespassing for too long a time upon the patience of the House that afternoon to go closely into that part of the subject. He would merely say that it was quite possible that foreigners who send that class of agricultural production were able to get a certain amount of profit out of their other agricultural productions. If he could make a profit out of wheat growing or out of barley, he could afford to sell cheese, butter, and eggs at a cheaper price than he could if he were not getting a profit out of these articles. A great deal of wheat growing land in England was entirely unsuitable to the production of either cheese or butter. Here was an error in which people who knew very little about the practical work of agriculture very often fell into. Many hon. Members thought that all agriculturists had to do—if wheat growing did not pay—was to just lay down the barren land in grass. Now, it would not always be possible to do anything of that kind. There were tracts of land under the plough which would do very well under grass no doubt; but, speaking generally, much of the wheat growing land of England would only produce—farm it how they might—a poor description of grass. Therefore, in a large portion of the grain-growing parts of England it was not practicable for labourers to undertake the cultivation of the soil in the expectation of making a profit out of cheese and butter. Again, everyone who knew anything about the matter knew very well that grass land hardly employed one labourer per acre, where arable land used to employ three. He would put it roughly in that proportion that arable land well farmed would employ at least three times as many labourers as grass land. Some hon. Members complained—and he thought, complained with very good grounds indeed—of the immense number of the inhabitants of our rural districts who were invading our large towns, and competing with our artizans and operatives there. Well, but if we laid down the land in grass, and followed out the recommendations of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham—whom he was sorry to see was not in his place just now, for he did not wish to refer to anything he had said unfairly—he was certain that a far less number of labourers would be employed in agricultural work than was at present the case. A large number of labourers would be displaced, and they would come up to London and to other large towns, and the grievance which had been complained of, of having too many labourers competing with the operatives of the towns, would be exaggerated in the future until it became much more serious than it was that day. To go back for a moment to the Bill, he had said that the provisions which forced a landlord to part with his land at a price which he would take, providing he were a willing seller, was unfair, and he would contrast that provision with the provision which pointed out the way in which the small holder was to be treated if he wished to get rid of his land, or if the Local Authority wished to dispossess him of it. The small holder was to be treated in this way. The price he would get would be the value of the land held as a small holding, together with all unexhausted improvements made thereon, 10 per cent for compulsory repurchase and a proper allowance for disturbance, cost of removal, loss of fixtures, and so on. That appeared to him to be a very different way of treating one man to the way in which it was proposed to treat the other, and he could not but fancy that the proverb that what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander was applicable in connection with this clause. Then, as to the idea of not allowing a man ever to become the actual possessor of the property. He could not see that it was advisable to leave such a millstone always around the neck of a holder, as that three-fourths of the value of his holding should remain for ever on mortgage. His own experience taught him that there was no class of agriculturists who had suffered more during the last 8 or 10 years of agricultural depression, than those men who had bought their own land years ago and mortgaged it. He hoped there were no hon. Members of the class to which he was about to allude now present, but some hon. Members opposite seemed to think that a landlord was a man who ought to be jumped on whenever there was an opportunity of performing that process. ["No, no!"] He was glad to hear the hon. Member opposite dissent, but his statement was that not infrequently some of the Benches opposite were occupied by Gentlemen who seemed to hold that view. In answer to those hon. Members, he would say, as he had frequently said before, that there were landlords who were good and landlords who were bad. There were such landlords all the world over, and until the Millenium that would perhaps continue to be the case. But it was hardly just that because a man happened to be a landlord they should take up the position of saying—"Never mind what you do with him—he is only a landlord, shy a stone at him whenever you can." He could assure hon. Members that many landlords during the last 8 or 10 years of agricultural ruin, had tried all they could to keep their tenants on the farms, and not altogether for generosity. Generosity, no doubt, had been one motive, but that motive had also been mixed up with another—namely, that of self-interest. Still, the fact remained, that the tenant farmers of England during the past 8 or 10 years, speaking generally, had been in a better position than the men who had bought their farms 8 or 10 years ago, and had considerably mortgaged them on purchase. Supposing a man had land under the provisions of this Bill. If things went on well, he would be able to pay the interest on his mortgage, but as soon as agricultural prosperity waned, the position of the man who owned his own small holding would be most miserable, and whatever they did to get these small purchasers to occupy land, and no one was more anxious than he was that the land should be occupied and cultivated, they must bear in mind that the point he had been dealing with was a most serious one. By all means let them work together in the solution of this problem, and let them work free from all Party bias. The thing to be done was to endeavour to get the land occupied. He would willingly work with those who wished, where the land was suitable for it, to get it cut into smaller portions, rather than have it continued in farms of 200 or 300 acres; but whatever they did, do let them try to put men on these small plots of land with a reasonable prospect of their being able to hold on. They might take his opinion for what it was worth, and he offered it very humbly and with great diffidence; but he was convinced of this, that the men whom they would put in possession of small holdings, by the machinery of the Bill, the men whom they would induce to invest their £200 and their labour and their time in agriculture, instead of many another business—would have a very small chance indeed of prospering. So long as a man had a chance of investing his £200 outside a farm and outside the offer made to him in this Bill, he (Mr. Gray) was sure he would go in for a shop, for a higgler's cart, or for a public-house, or something of that kind. He was very much obliged to the House for the attention it had given to him while he had been speaking at such length, but he was extremely anxious that the question of the condition of the rural labourer should be thoroughly looked into. He did not feel that he could give any hearty support to the Bill; but he heartily supported the endeavour which the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham was making to remedy the condition of the agricultural labourer throughout the country. Within 50 miles of the spot he (Mr. Gray) was standing upon that day, within 50 miles of that great City and centre of the industry of all the world, he could point to a place where agricultural labourers were only getting nominally 9*s.* per week. He did not see the hon. Gentleman the Member for Saffron Walden (Mr. Gardner) in his place; but on more than one occasion that hon. Member had told them that he represented the agricultural labourer. The hon. Member certainly represented the agricultural labourers in his own Division, and it was to that Division that he (Mr. Gray) was now alluding. Well it was a very sad state of things that 9*s.* a week should be all the money earned by an agricultural labourer within such a short distance of a great City like that. Something must be done to meet these cases, and he was delighted that the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham had alluded to the question. He was delighted that the hon. Member was working upon it. He wished the Association of which the hon. Member had been the other day made President —an association called, he thought, The Rural Labourers' League—every success, and he believed that when that Rural Labourers' League had gained experience, and had been in working order for a year or so, the hon. Member would be able to bring before the House some proposition to remedy the condition which so many unfortunate villagers of this country found themselves in—some proposition which would be more likely to work well than the provisions of the present Bill. Looking forward rather to the information and experience which would be gained by that League of which the hon. Member was the worthy President, and similar associations, and looking forward rather to the experience they would have from these associations than to the provisions of this Bill, thanking the House for having heard him at such length, he must decline to vote for the second reading of the Bill.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield) said, he was sure every Member of the House, on whichever side he sat, would agree with the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down in his estimation of the importance of the question. His hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) had dealt with great ability on the national importance of the question; and the hon. Member's judgment had been endorsed by the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), and though there were one or two portions of the speech of the latter hon. Member, as well as of the speech of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham to which he (Viscount Wolmer) thought it his duty to take a little exception, yet he thought that those who had spoken on the subject were so far united that they could bear testimony to the importance of the question and in desiring to see it dealt with as quickly as possible on true lines. He thought the hon. Member who had last spoken (Mr. Gray) could not, in his concluding remarks, have intended to imply that the hon. Member for the Saffron Walden Division of Essex (Mr. Gardner) would not join with him in deploring the fact that 9*s.* per week was the average wages of agricultural labourers in his part of the country. He (Viscount Wolmer) felt certain that the hon. Member for Saffron Walden would deplore that as much as the hon. Member (Mr. Gray) himself; and he thought that the hon. Gentleman would not find fault with him for having cleared up that point. It seemed to him to have rather escaped the attention of some hon. Members who had spoken in this debate, and especially of the hon. Member for West Nottingham and of the hon. Member who had just sat down, that it was not a subject upon which they could lay down general principles as if all land could be dealt with in small holdings, or that no land was suitable for small holdings. The hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham took particular pains to point out, and he (Viscount Wolmer) believed with absolute accuracy, the kinds of cultivation that were suitable for peasant proprietorship in this country, and it had been too much the habit of hon. Gentlemen sitting on the other side of the House in the past to endeavour to ride off on the question of cultivation, and to ignore those points upon which the small farmer could undoubtedly make the cultivation of land pay. The other night the hon. Member for West Nottingham spoke in a strain which would lead one to suppose that small holdings might be suitably introduced in almost every part of this country. Now, from that view he—with, he might venture to say, really some personal experience on the matter —certainly dissented. As things stood at this moment bad land, or land in out-of-the-way places, was, and must remain, the luxury of the rich; but good land, or land near a convenient situation, near a railway and good markets, could be brought into cultivation for the purposes contemplated by the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham. Now, he should like to give an instance which had come to his knowledge from his own experience. About 20 years ago, there was some land lying about eight miles from Gosport of a blue clay, mixed here and there with a light sandy peat. The land was let at a very low rent, and grew very bad crops of cereals.

One enterprizing man, however, near the neighbourhood, exactly of the class which the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham had in view, tried the growing of strawberries. The land proved peculiarly suitable for the cultivation of strawberries, and the consequence was that there had grown up within the last generation a new industry, strawberries being grown over the whole district, immense quantities being sent to London and other large cities of consumption by small men—none of them farmers in the ordinary acceptation of the term. Now, if he might take a point which the hon. Member for West Nottingham intended to raise—namely, that the holdings could really be introduced under almost all circumstances by willing landlords, he ventured strongly to differ from that hon. Member, and he would take as an example the case of Sweden and Norway, which had already been alluded to by the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham. He (Viscount Wolmer) had had the advantage of living for some time in a very remote valley of Norway, where exactly that method of the cultivation of cereals was carried on, and he had no hesitation in saying that, although that valley was cultivated, and although the result was very creditable to the inhabitants, yet the conditions under which the cultivation was carried on were not such as an English labourer would submit to for a moment. For instance, it involved the expatriation of all the children of every family except one. Every year, from that valley, the surplus population went off to certain States in America. That was the recognized effect without which that cultivation could not be carried on; and, beyond that, the cultivation involved such hard labour and such bad fare that every English labourer in England would find himself much better off with a wage of 10*s*. or 12*s*. a-week, which, unfortunately, was what prevailed in some of our Southern counties. But he wished to be understood as drawing a line between the kinds of cultivation that could be profitably introduced and the kinds of cultivation that were unsuitable for small holdings. Now, when they came to the Bill which was under discussion, the point that struck his mind first was the machinery by which this excellent intention was proposed to be carried into effect. The hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham had explained the reasons of his not allowing the full purchase money to be paid, and for insisting that a small holder should always remain indebted to the extent of three-fourths of the purchase money. There was no doubt that the object he had in view was a very important one. No doubt, the money-lender and the money-lender's debt had always been the curse of the small farmers and proprietors in every country; therefore, every effort to deal with that must receive most careful consideration from the House. But in flying from one difficulty, at the same time the hon. Member fell into another, which was serious, and with the permission of the House he (Viscount Wolmer) would like to point it out. It amounted to this — that instead of making the Local Bodies really the means of conveyance, the instruments by which the peasant proprietor was created, the Local Body was turned into a general and perpetual land agency, and it was the total unfitness of any such Body, according to his experience, for any such duties which made him quite unable to endorse this part of the Bill. Now, anyone who had any practical experience in the management of property in land, or of farming, knew that practically at that moment no such operations could be made to pay except with the closest personal attention. It was also a notorious fact that all Corporations, whether charitable or elected, were the worst Bodies to manage land which this country ever knew, and when they came to consider the endless details which such management involved at this moment, he did not think that anyone could wonder that the result had not been better. With the permission of the House, he would mention two cases which had come within his own experience where exactly such holdings as were now under consideration had been built by a private owner, who could give the whole of his personal attention to the business, and the House could judge how far the same results would probably be brought about if the management of small holdings was in the hands of District Councils, whoever the men were, and however zealous they might be in the performance of their duties. He would take first the case of a small farm which was purchased some years ago. [An hon. MEMBER: Of how many acres?] A small holding of 152 acres. It was purchased when times were better—and it was obvious that in dealing with measures of this nature the House must contemplate changes taking place in the value of land one way or the other. Supposing this Bill had passed 20 years ago, and the land he was referring to had been purchased at that time, those 152 acres would have brought £30 an acre. The land was fair grass land, not of the best, but still of a very useful quality. No doubt, it ought to fetch more, but it was not easily accessible to railways. Now, £30 per acre for 152 acres would, roughly, make the purchase money £4,560. Well, on the holding, the cottages and other necessary buildings had cost not less than £1,000, and besides that there had been considerable drainage, and considerable fencing, and matters of that kind—of which he had not got the particulars — carried out. He wished the House to remember, although he had not got the particulars of all these expenses, that they were things that would have to be taken into account in making a proper balance-sheet—and this only went to make his point stronger. Now, this farm was part of a larger farm, and two years ago was turned into small holdings, and if any hon. Member should imagine that the original expenditure of £1,000 was larger than was necessary for such a holding, he would explain that that was not the case; because before the tenant could be found for the holding, extra expenditure on the building—whether in the shape of repairs, or of re-adaptation and enlargement—was £104. Therefore, with the drainage, with the fencing, and with the clearing in certain places, the total value, with expenditure, was £5,664. The rent paid for the farm at that moment was £114, which, upon the total of £5,664, was almost exactly 2 per cent. Now, when they considered the rate at which District Councils would be able to borrow money, they would agree, he thought, that they would not be able to get it at 2 or 2½ per cent. At the outside, the best price they would be able to obtain would be 3 per cent, and to that it would be necessary to add the expenses of management, and the loss which might be occasioned by the farm being vacant for a short time now and then. Then, again, the tenant would require some repairs occasionally and some additional accommodation. Taking all those things into account, it was obvious that such a farm could not be otherwise than a burden on the rates. And now he would take the case of another farm bought at the present moment. This was a farm of 50 acres, having extremely convenient buildings upon it, and which, considering the state of the markets, with buildings, could be bought for £20 per acre. That would make £1,000. The repairs required when the small holder first took possession amounted to £45, making a total of £1,045. The rent of that 50 acres was £40 a-year, coming almost exactly to 4 per cent on the purchase money. Now, that was buying land under the most favourable conditions, and yet that left for the District Council, or whatever the Body might be called which would have the management of the land, absolutely no margin with which to protect the rates from loss.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: Three-fourths of the value would remain.

VISCOUNT WOLMER: That would not be paid by the person for whom the money was borrowed. The District Council would have to find the interest, as well as to provide the sinking fund. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, he did not see how District Councils could possibly have done what landowners had been obliged to do. Now, he did not wish the House to understand this as an argument attempting to deal with this question. The argument was only against making a Body like a District Council, which, at the best, would not be more than an improved Board of Guardians, a perpetual land agency for carrying on one of the most difficult businesses it was possible to conceive—that was the management of farm and landed property. Therefore, without desiring to ride that horse too far, or to be understood as endeavouring to prove that this question could not be dealt with in any shape by Public Bodies, yet he wished to provide against a Body like a District Council being converted into a land agency. In the general treatment of the subject, he sincerely hoped that they would hear no more of what was contained in one portion of the speech of the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), to which he, with a great many Members of the House, must take exception; because, while making a very useful contribution to the discussion, the hon. Member could not resist, when he was acting like a revolving signboard, from stopping from time to time, at the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham, giving him a dig in the ribs which he utterly and entirely undeserved; because, whatever might be that hon. Gentleman's political opinions on other subjects, he was perfectly certain that he, more than any other man, had brought this matter to the front, and that he, more than any other man, was responsible for the fact that it had now been taken up by almost every man on the Opposition side of the House, and by a large number of Members on the other side of the House, and that public attention had been directed towards it, having previously regarded the question of the provision of allotments and small holdings as an impossible proposal. It used to be the custom of hon. Gentlemen opposite to snap up those who moved in this matter with the question — When large farmers could not make the land pay, how was it to be expected the small farmers could make it pay? The hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham had proved beyond all denial that there were in this country those farms which not only the small farmer could make pay where the big farmer could not, but for which the small farmer was fitted, as was illustrated by the industries which were carried on in foreign nations. When small farmers would be able profitably to exercise those facilities for dealing with land, he thought it was the duty of Parliament to give them such facilities.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.) said, that the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) appealed to Members upon the Ministerial side of the House, and especially to those sitting upon the Front Bench, to state what their views were with regard to this Bill. He (Mr. Llewellyn) did not know at all what course the Government were going to take; but he knew that there were a very large number of Gentlemen sitting on those Benches who were in thorough sympathy with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jesse Collings) in moving the second reading of the measure. But, while they all, he thought, heartily sympathized with the object the hon. Gentleman had in view as shown by this Bill, and also with the object he had had in view in doing the great and useful work he had for some time done in the country, it was a matter of serious regret to many of them that the Bill, as it stood, was one which could not be supported. There was no doubt about it that the object of the Bill was to assist labourers —and not only labourers, but those a little above the position of labourers— to become the possessors of small holdings or farms. With the principle of that they heartily agreed; but the question was, whether the Bill before the House would effect such an object, whether it would be a boon to small agriculturists or small people in the country, or be the reverse. Personally, he was inclined to think there were two provisions in the Bill which would turn out to be anything but a boon to the people. In the first place, the chief objection to the Bill was the great responsibility which it entailed upon the ratepayers by the purchase powers. If any Bill could be introduced, or any scheme put forward, or any present Act enlarged or amended by which the small holders could become possessors of small plots of land, he, for one, would heartily support it, and he need hardly say that he would not consider for a moment who it was that introduced it or supported it in the House. He was afraid that in that matter they must not lose sight not only of those who would be benefited by the Bill, but of those who would be injured by the Bill. His first objection to the Bill was founded on the ground of the expense which would be entailed to the ratepayers. His next objection was, that the Bill would offer a direct encouragement to a great number of these people to get into debt. He was afraid they could not do any more unkind act than to encourage small holders to embark upon undertakings which they would be unable to fulfil. There was not only the difficulty as to finding the money to start with, but he was inclined to doubt the ability of the people in view to make the holdings pay in many cases. Now, what were the expenses which the Local Authority must look forward to before it undertook to provide small holdings in any place. The expenses were enumerated in the Bill by one of the clauses. Roughly speaking, they were chiefly these, and he thought it must occur to anyone who had noticed the difficulties with which Local Authorities had to deal in carrying out the Allotments Act, that they would be considerable—the expenses of the valuation of land, and of the examination of titles—he said titles, and not title, because he saw the Bill provided that where possible land should be taken in small amounts from a number of owners of property in preference to being taken from one large owner—expenses with regard to conveyance and the preparation of deeds, and those they knew were great expenses, though he did not lose sight of the fact that in the Bill means were provided by which land could be registered, and so a great deal of the unnecessary expense connected with the transfer of land obviated; and then with regard to the purchase of property, there was the difficulty which had been pointed out by his hon. Friend (Mr. Gray.) His hon. Friend pointed out what was likely to be a willing seller and what was likely to be an unwilling seller. Take the case of the unwilling seller, and there would be a great number of men who would only part with their land on compulsion. A question of arbitration would arise, and anyone who had had anything to do with dealings with public Bodies when they came to arbitration knew what a very expensive method arbitration was. Arbitration proceedings had been sometimes rendered of no avail, because notice had not been served, and dates had been allowed to pass owing to a want of sufficient knowledge, and the arbitration had had to be commenced over again. He had in his mind a case of laying down pipes through a field. In that case, owing to unnecessary delay, the expenses of the arbitration were something very great indeed, something represented by about £70 or £100, when the cost ought not to have been more than about £10. Then there were the expenses attending the borrowing of money from the Public Works Loan Commissioners. He did not mean to say that was considerable, but it must be considered. Then there was the expense of getting much of this land into a fit state for the small holders; they had to provide for water courses and drainage; the matter of rates would not be inconsiderable either, and regard would also have to be had for the expenses of fencing, and so forth. He noticed that in the Bill there were powers granted to Local Authorities to erect buildings. Thus they were at once brought face to face with architects and clerks of works, and so on. `All these expenses were possibilities under the Bill, and must be provided for. In the rent the Local Authorities would have to charge the small holders for these expenses, in order to free themselves from the responsibility of incurring debt in the matter. Then there was the question of the expense of the insurance and of the repair of the buildings. All these were questions which must be considered. There was also the question of the collection of rents. The hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) spoke of the collection of rents as being nothing more than the assistant overseer could do. The assistant overseer had power in the case of rates unpaid to summon the ratepayer; but it was a very different matter to collect rent, say, from a man who had left the place, or who was ill, or incapacitated from paying the rent, or had nothing on the place to distrain upon. The difficulties were very different in the case of the collection of rent and in that of the collection of rates in arrear. Then, again, in addition to all this, there was the power pointed out by his hon. Friend (Mr. Gray) with regard to the money to be refunded to a small holder when he was deprived of his holding. A small holder might be deprived of his holding after he had improved it, after he had got his buildings up, and got the land in good condition. The Local Authorities under such circumstances were to pay him 10 per cent for the compulsory repurchase of the land. That, in addition to the amount which would have to be paid for the land, would represent a considerable sum in addition to what he had already mentioned. Again, if the Bill was to be carried out to any extent, and it might be in the neighbourhood of towns, the Local Authorities would have to increase their clerical staff, and have to employ professional assistants—solicitors, and others. All these were expenses which would mount up to a very large sum indeed. Having got together all these possible or probable charges, it would be the duty of the District Council to see at what rent they could afford to let the land. They would have to borrow the money in the first place, and they would not borrow it much below 3 per cent; and in the Bill they had to let the land at 1 per cent more than 3 per cent, that was 4 per cent. In addition to that, they had to put down all the expenses he had spoken of; and he doubted whether they would not add considerably more than 1 per cent, and that would bring the charge up to 5 per cent—5 per cent before they could let the land. The rates and taxes must fall on someone. Take the case of a piece of ground outside a town or village valued, say, at £100 an acre. He had heard it said that land could be purchased at from £15 to £30 an acre; but, still, there was land outside many towns the selling price of which would be as high as £100 an acre. The Local Authorities must let that land at £5 an acre to the small holder, and that would represent a sum which he thought very few of the agricultural labourers would agree to pay for their holdings. He would like to point out, too, the position in which a holder would be under this Bill as compared with the position he would be in if he rented under a landlord. They had heard a great deal of late about bad landlords; but he thought that the worst landlord to be found was the landlord who did not know his own business. The landlord who did not know the value of his land, but who was entirely in the hands of his agent, was the worst of all landlords. In his (Mr. Llewellyn's) opinion, it would be an inestimable boon if men who were born to inherit large incomes would in their early days attend a little more to the business of farming and to the management of their own estates instead of leaving it to agents. They would be on better terms with their tenants, and their tenants would be able, instead of having to approach their landlord through an agent, to go direct to a man who knew something about what they asked, and whether their demands were reasonable or not. He maintained that Local Authorities must of necessity be hard landlords. The rent must be paid to the day; the money was borrowed, the interest had to be paid, and there was no question in such a case of a man being able to ask the landlord to wait until the coming fair next month, when he would be able to sell his beasts. A man would not be able to plead to his landlord that he had had bad luck in one way or another, and he would have no opportunity of working out his rent. If a man rented under a landlord, the produce of his farm, his hay, or grass, or whatever it might be, was often sold to the landlord; his poultry and fruit might be bought by the landlord, or he could give labour to the landlord. In many cases small holders worked out the whole of their rent by their labour. Men acquiring holdings under this Bill would have no opportunities of this kind; their rents must be paid in full to the day, and the consequences would be that at times they would be sorely pressed. It would be very often found that these men had no one to help them. At present, in the part of the country in which he lived there were a great number of small holders of land, holders of from 20 to 30 and 40 acres of land. He did not know how long they held them for; but some of them had held their land for a great many years; but he knew that during times of depression, during the last seven years, for instance, no one had been worse off than these small farmers. They had no landlord to go to to ask for a remission of rent, no landlord to go to to make their position easier in any possible way. They were their own landlords, and their own tenants, and they were the men who suffered most cruelly, because when the money was to be forthcoming the men who had lent them money proved to be harder than landlords, and required their money to the very day. He believed that the tenants under this Bill would be very much in the position of the small holders he had referred to, and he should very much regret that anybody whom he knew at all should embark in this line of farming. With regard to failure again. Suppose a man had a holding of 10 acres, he was very little more than a labourer; he had been a labourer; he had got some money by some means or other, and he was led on by the prospect of getting a little more. Well, he failed from no cause of his own; possibly his failure was to be attributed to sickness, or to having had to pay debts on behalf of someone else, or to a variety of causes. He failed, and perhaps he ran away. It was the commonest thing when a man in such a position got into trouble to go to America for good, or to disappear for a time. What would be the position of the family of such a man? That family would be called upon to meet the payments upon the farm. How was the assistant overseer to get the money? It would be absolutely impossible for him to do so; and as a result of the impossibility of getting the rent, the Local Authorities would have to suffer, and more money would have to be taken up, or else the position of the Local Authority would be a very unfortunate one indeed. The consequence of it all would be that the great number of those who had been successful, and who had managed their farms well, and who had, perhaps, been paying for others, would have to pay over again through the rates, because of the failure of this one man, which might have been brought about by his own mistakes or not. There was another point to be taken into account; how was the Local Authority to interfere in the case of a man who was clearly damaging his property? There was nothing commoner than for an allotment holder to injure his allotment. The allotment might be an acre, or half an acre, or a quarter of an acre in extent, but if it was let to go on badly looked after, and robbed of its goodness, not manured and so on, it would be no longer of the value it was originally; then came a year when such an allotment would have to be taken by some one simply for the sake of getting it into condition again. This was another expense against the Local Authority which must be provided for—they had no power whatever to interfere with bad farming. He did not intend to allude to another Bill now before the House; but, in his opinion, the greatest objection to that Bill was the facilities it afforded to Local Authorities for the borrowing of money. If, in addition to that, there was direct encouragement to Local Authorities to borrow money, they would be placed in a much more serious position than ever. There was another point worthy of consideration in regard to the Bill now under discussion, and that was that direct encouragement was given to people to get into debt. He believed that of all classes in the community there was no class which felt the curse of being in debt more than the agricultural labourer or the cottager. He knew very well that if a doctor's bill or some other bill was owing, it made many of these men thoroughly miserable. There was nothing a cottager disliked so much as being in debt. Now, the Bill spoke of these small holders as owners; but they could in no instance be owners. These men were encouraged to become possessors of the land and were called owners; but this weight of debt was not only put round their necks, but it was made impossible for them to clear themselves of it. However willing a man was to obtain the freehold, he would not be able to do it, but to the end of his days he would be burdened with debt. That in itself to his (Mr. Llewellyn's) mind was a great objection to the Bill, because many a young man, say, of the age of 20 or 25, would work hard and exert himself in every way to clear himself of debt, and to acquire a little property, but no matter how hard he worked, he would not be able to rid himself of debt. He (Mr. Llewellyn) saw also that in the Bill borrowing powers were provided in regard to building. It was provided that the repayment might be spread over a period of 31 years; but that in itself was most objectionable; because if a man who might have put up good buildings met with misfortune, there was the additional charge for buildings laid upon his family for 31 years—his family would be answerable, on account of the payment year after year of the interest upon the money spent upon buildings. If a man lived and made the repayments regularly, he would be upwards of 50 years of age before he found himself clear of debt upon the head of buildings alone. Therefore, he thought he was right in pointing out that in this Bill there was direct encouragement to small holders to get into debt, and the result of that was that the position of those holders would be by no means a rosy one, and in many cases the men would be made unfit for work owing to the weight of debt. The hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) said that under this Bill there would be no possibility of the occupier incurring any responsibility as to the borrowing of money. He (Mr. Llewellyn) did not think that was at all impossible, but that it was very probable. As sure as fate, as long as there were in all country districts men ready and willing to lend money to these poor people, so long would there be people foolish enough to borrow. If a small farmer once got into the hands of the village attorney or money lender, he was worse off than any of the Irish farmers of whom they had heard so much.

Mr. BROADHURST said, he never referred to the borrowing powers of the holders themselves.

Mr. LLEWELLYN begged the hon. Gentleman's pardon. He thought that many of these small holders would be ready to get into debt in respect to the stocking of their farms. Many of them would ask money lenders to advance them, say, £100 for the purpose of purchasing cows and ploughs and farming implements generally, and the money lenders were the men of all others who would be the first to get everything they could out of the tenants; they would be at the farm doors almost before the collector of taxes. If a man farmed land with his own money, he might make farming pay; but, if he had money to pay to the money lender, and rent to pay to the landlord, and had in addition to pay rates and taxes, he (Mr. Llewellyn) said, God help the tenant under such circumstances. Now, he had stated his objection to the Bill, and had said with great regret that he could not vote for the second reading of it as it stood. He heartily wished the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Divison of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings), or some other Member would introduce a Bill by which it would be possible to increase the number of small holdings safely; because he believed that an increase of these holdings would be beneficial to the agricultural population of the country itself; he believed it would be for the good of the land, and for the benefit of a great number of landlords. If it could be done safely, let them do it with all speed; but if they did it, as the Bill proposed, at the expense of the ratepayers, and, in addition to that, at the risk of incurring the responsibility of encouraging these people to take up land that they could not pay for, they would do no good by passing the Bill. There were others he knew who desired to speak, and he would only say that he was reminded of an authority who spoke some time ago upon this subject. Shakespeare said—

> "Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
> For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
> And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry."

He thought Shakespeare must have had this very Bill in view when he wrote those lines. He (Llewellyn) would also remind the House of one other authority, although perhaps not quite so great as the last quoted authority, an authority with whom he did not at all agree. Artemus Ward said—"Never get into debt, borrow sooner than do that."

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) said, that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Llewellyn) had taken up a very strange position. He had told them that he sympathized with the Bill, that he sympathized with the agricultural population, and then he proceeded to show his sympathy with the Bill and with the agricultural labourers by stating that he would vote against the measure. He (Mr. Gardner) would not have ventured to trouble the House at all had it not been for the, he might almost call it, ungenerous attack which was made upon him in his absence by his hon. Friend the Member for the Maldon Division of Essex (Mr. Gray). The hon. Gentleman, who was a Colleague of his own, and his neighbour in Essex, took a somewhat unworthy advantage of his (Mr. Gardner's) temporary absence on Committee business to attack him on account of his absence from the House. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] The hon. Gentleman opposite said that he (Mr. Gardner) posed as a friend of the agricultural labourer, and yet he was not present on that very important occasion. He supposed that the hon. Gentleman wished people to draw the inference that he (Mr. Gray) was a better friend of the agricultural labourer than himself (Mr. Gardner).

Mr. GRAY said, he was sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, who had taken an entirely erroneous view at second hand of his remarks. He merely referred to the hon. Member for the Saffron Walden Division (Mr. Gardner) as being able to, had he been in his place, corroborate the statement he (Mr. Gray) had made, that within 50 miles of that spot there were agricultural labourers who were unfortunately in receipt of only 9*s.* a-week, and he gave the hon. Member credit for regretting that such a state of things should be in existence, as he (Mr. Gray) regretted it.

Mr. H. GARDNER said, the hon. Gentleman certainly accused him of posing as a friend of the agricultural labourer, meaning by implication that he (Mr. Gray) was more a friend of the agricultural labourer by being present on this occasion than himself (Mr. Gardner). However, he did not wish to detain the House, but had only to say that he came down from the Committee Room as soon as he could in order to vote for the Bill of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings), and he did not think he could show himself a better friend of the agricultural labourer than by doing that. He certainly thought that his hon. Friend (Mr. Gray) would have shown his friendship to the agricultural population far better by staying away than by his presence, because he had announced his intention of voting against the Bill.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said, that everyone would acknowledge that they had had an interesting debate, and had listened to some interesting and important speeches. The second reading of the Bill was moved by the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) in a speech of much ability, and was seconded in a remarkable oration by the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst). The hon. Member for West Nottingham, after taunting him, turned on the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division, and, with that lofty and imposing air which was such a distinguishing feature of his rhetoric, said that the hon. Member always suffered from ignorance rather than from want of knowledge. What was the difference between the two? He did not altogether follow the hon. Gentleman, but in the course of his remarks he came to the conclusion that in his own person, in connection with this subject, he had been successful in proving that sometimes ignorance and want of knowledge were identical. The hon. Member for West Nottingham proceeded further; he taunted the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division with apologizing for the introduction of his own Bill. How the hon. Member could found such an observation on the speech of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division he was at a loss to imagine. Then the hon. Member for West Nottingham went on to lecture the Government as to the enormous—the overwhelming importance of this subject. He told the Government they ought to postpone their other measures for the purpose of legislating at once on this subject, so great was its urgency. Why did not the hon. Member practice a little more what he preached? Why did he not impress those views on his former Colleagues on the Front Opposition Bench? When the former Conservative Government was turned out of Office by the Motion of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division, if ever there was a Party or a Government which was called upon by Parliamentary practice and precedent to deal without delay with this question, it was the Party and the Government of which the hon. Gentleman was himself a Member. So far from following the usual precedents and practice, neither from the hon. Member nor from his Colleagues had one word been ever heard about that subject till that day, when the hon. Member found it convenient to make it a Party weapon. As regarded the Bill, it was by no means a new one. It was an old friend, as it was formerly introduced by the hon. Member for Cheshire, and he had an opportunity of making some observations upon that occasion. He did not know, as regarded the machinery of the Bill, which always appeared to be of a remarkable and peculiar character, he could express his sentiments more accurately than he did on that occasion. But there was this difference between the Bill introduced then and now. The former Bill dealt with the question of allotments as well as the question of small holdings. The Bill now before the House dealt with the question of small holdings alone, the question of allotments having been, as he hoped, successfully dealt with in the past Session. [*Cries of* "No!"] He did not say that the question of allotments had been finally disposed of. On the contrary, from large and varied sources of information, he believed it to be a fact that although that Bill had given a great stimulus to the provision of allotments by voluntary means, yet where it had been attempted to provide allotments under the operation of the Bill, there it had frequently, he believed, failed altogether. It had failed because the Local Authority constituted under the Bill, the Guardians, had been slack and backward in fulfilling their duty. He was not surprised at that, and he pointed out in the debates on the Bill that the Guardians were not the best Local Authority to whom to hand the responsibility, and he was exceedingly anxious to place the power in the hands of the magistrates instead. The course of experience had proved that he was right in one case, and at least he might be pardoned for supposing, until the contrary was proved, that he might have been right in the other. The time was approaching when that question would be solved by the passing of the Bill now introduced by the President of the Local Government Board. When that Act was passed the new District Councils, which were to be absolutely elective, were to take the place of the rural authority so far as allotments were concerned, and if they failed in the performance of their duty, the voters would have the means of finding a remedy. Assuming the passing of that Bill, the question of allotments would be disposed of, and, therefore, they had nothing but small holdings now to consider. What was the object of the promoters of the Bill? The hon. Member for Bordesley, in his able speech, drew attention to the deplorable diminution in the number of labourers in rural districts; he spoke of the great excellence of the labouring population, and he dwelt upon the necessity of keeping up what he described as the rural stock of the country. He proposed to accomplish his object by bringing about in some way a much wider diffusion of land among the people of this country. In that object he need hardly say that he sympathized. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] He was not the least afraid of expressing his sympathy in spite of the sneers indulged in by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House. He should be disposed to support any reasonable means of obtaining that end, and he could safely say that no measure could be more Conservative in its effects than one leading to a larger distribution of land. More than that, speaking as a landowner—and an owner of a great deal more land than he cared to possess, he was most sorely tempted by the proposition of the hon. Member. The references of the hon. Member to the high price that land fetched in France quite made his mouth water. His virtue was tried in the severest manner, as, for the sake of his personal interest and advantage, he could not but wish the hon. Member's proposals accepted without unnecessary delay. There was no denying the fact that land at the present moment was exceedingly difficult to let, and almost impossible to sell. For the moment, though he hoped it would only be for the moment, in thousands of cases land was an unmarketable commodity. A greater boon could not possibly be offered landowners than legislation of this kind, whatever might be said on its merits, for it provided them with a first-rate market for an article which many were most anxious to dispose of. Although that was the case, and although he was most desirous of accepting the views of hon. Members on the other side of the House, he was bound to remember that he had a duty to perform to those he represented, and he represented in a special degree the rural ratepayers of this country. He should be able to show the House that, however tempting these proposals might be, it was their bounden duty to those they represented to resist them. He did not intend to say much on the question of compulsion. It was a strong thing for any Government to propose to give power to Public Bodies to take land by compulsion; but, at the same time, the principle of taking land by compulsion had been embodied in our legislation, though subject to a condition which he maintained had not been fulfilled in this case—namely, the condition that it should be shown that the compulsory acquisition of the land would confer a great public advantage. He contended that in the propositions which had been submitted to the House an enormous change was involved. They were embarking on an entirely new and, as far as the extent of land was concerned, an unprecedented course. The clearest proof ought to be given that it was for the benefit of the community at large. He contended, moreover, that almost everything we knew of this subject pointed in a directly opposite direction. It was no matter whether we looked at home or abroad. There were masses of evidence on the subject. His hon. Friend spoke of the French peasantry, pointed out their condition, and made what for him was a remarkable admission. The hon. Member admitted that if a judgment were formed from their appearance in the fields the French peasants would be regarded as poor and miserable, but he added that he had followed them to their homes, where ample evidence as to their comfort was to be found. He had not had the advantage of following them into their homes, but he was a Member of a Commission which sat for three years, and which inquired most exhaustively into this subject. That Commission sent out two gentlemen, who also followed the French peasants into their homes, and who gave a very different description of their condition from that given by the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham that afternoon. One of the Sub-Commissioners of the Agricultural Commission, in his report on the condition of the peasants, especially in Western and Central France, said—

> "The peasant proprietor exists rather than lives. He has no pride in keeping himself or his cottage clean and presentable. His food chiefly consists of bread made from buckwheat or rye, although wheaten bread is gradually coming into more general use. He very rarely tastes meat, except in the form of pork. His drink, if in a wine country, is made from water poured over the already pressed grapes, from which the juice has been extracted and sold. . . . The peasant owners, examples of industry and thrift carried to excess, slave to get as much out of the land as it can be made to yield, starving themselves and their families to add something to their hoard; their wives becoming prematurely old from field labour, and bent from carrying heavy loads of fodder to the cow at home, content if at the year's end the tale of silver pieces be increased . . . at a sacrifice of all that makes life worth living for."

That was a description of the state of things existing among the peasantry in France which he had never heard contradicted on at all reliable authority till he heard the statement of the hon. Member that day. He was almost ashamed to refer to the condition of the freeholders in the County of Lincoln. He had himself seen a great deal of their condition. The system of peasant proprietorship had been in existence in that county for years. From his own personal knowledge he could state that it was a fact not to be disputed that during the period of agricultural depression which we had passed through, there was no class of agriculturists in the country which had suffered anything to compare with the misery and poverty of the small freeholders in Lincolnshire. If his views on that subject were doubted, he would refer hon. Members to the Reports of the Agricultural Commission, which contained the most startling evidence on the subject. Then his hon. Friend had referred to Consular Reports in vindication of his views. He had brought down with him the two latest of those Reports which had been presented to the House. One, dated in this present month, was the Report of one of our Consuls in Spain relating to the district of Corunna. That gentleman wrote—

> "To give an idea of the great misery that the inhabitants of this province are passing through, it must be understood in the first place that throughout the whole of this province, since the feudal system and Mayorazgo, or entailed estate system, became extinct, the whole of the large properties became subdivided into small farms; this has been going on for years, and, with few exceptions, Galicia now possesses a peasant proprietorship, and the land is subdivided into small tenements more on the style of the market gardens system than anything else I can liken it to. This system is all very well when it is brought to bear on a small tract of land—but when the same embraces a vast province like Galicia, that consists of about 1,032 square miles, with a population of some 1,200,000 inhabitants—it tells its own tale."

He would now call the attention of the House to a Consular Report from France, which bore directly also upon this question. It dealt with the La Rochelle district, and the Consul's name was Mr. Warburton. He said—

> "The year 1887 has been a disastrous one to farmers here, who, notwithstanding the higher protective duties on corn and meat, are in a far worse position than they have ever been before. They have made no money on anything, and have lost heavily in almost everything. . . . Their losses have been enormous, and, however much we may have suffered in Great Britain, I hear of nothing there to compare with the depth of the depression which exists here at present. It is well that this should be clearly stated, because though it is now generally admitted at home that other countries are suffering as well as ourselves, many persons appear to think that it is in a less degree, and that we ought to be better off here inasmuch as we enjoy a certain amount of the 'Fair Trade' and 'peasant proprietary,' which people were told would bring everything right again. It is not so as far as this district is concerned. No advantage

> has yet been felt from the moderate protective duties which exist ; all are far worse off than before they were put on, and none are suffering so much as those who own their holdings."

He did not think anyone could imagine there was anything in any part of the evidence he had quoted to induce them to believe that a plan such as that which was favoured by hon. Gentlemen opposite had any reasonable prospect of success in this country. If there was any such prospect, he would be glad to recognize it, for he wished to deal with the plan as honestly as he could in the interests of the people. But how was it possible for him to give his support in the face of this kind of evidence ? Hon. Gentlemen opposite might laugh at the mention of Protection ; yet there was no doubt it must have conferred some kind of advantage on the agricultural classes. It was impossible to believe it could do the agricultural producer harm to put an import duty on the goods which competed with those that he produced in his own country. He had no objection to offer to Protection, and he should view its adoption with great complacency himself, although he confessed that, in view of the small effect that Protection had had in increasing prices, he had been much less keen about Protection than he had been in former days. Still, he was quite certain that, sooner or later, if the proposls made were adopted, they would inevitably lead to Protection. He was confirmed in this impression by something further in this Report. It gave the reasons for the strong feeling in favour of Protection in these terms—

> "The circumstances are very favourable to agricultural protection in this country just now. The principle has been fully admitted. It has been tried with corn and meat, and, while bread is no dearer than before, meat is much cheaper. At La Rochelle the loaf of 2 kilos (4lb. 6oz.) cost, in December, 1886, 6*d.*, and in 1887, 5¾*d.* Meat was as follows :—In December, 1886, beef, live, 2⅝*d.* per pound ; dead, 5⅝*d.* ; mutton, the same ; veal, 3⅛*d.*, live ; 6⅛*d.*, dead. In 1887 the prices were ½*d.* per lb. lower in every case."

And further on the Consul said—

> "Those who might be supposed to be most against it (Protection) are the shopkeepers and working classes in the towns, the working men engaged in public works, factory hands, and people depending on coal and iron industries, &c. All of them have reasons for not objecting. The shopkeepers are doing badly because the farmers have no more money to spend with them, and believe that if they became prosperous they would be good customers again. The working people in the towns are suffering from competition, owing to the crowding in of farm labourers out of employment, who, they say, would go back to the country if the farm work was better paid and there was more of it."

And again the Consul said—

> "Many of the working people think that even if larger duties on corn made bread dearer, they will be more than compensated by the increase in wages which would take place if they are relieved from all this competition. All these classes consider that agricultural protection would benefit them directly and indirectly, but above and beyond them there is a numerous class, who have no apparent interest in getting it, who would suffer from it by paying dearer for everything, and still who would vote for a tax on foreign food imports for no other reason than to prevent the extinction of the small peasant farmers."

If this was the view of the absolute necessity for Protection among the working classes themselves in France, how was it possible for him to hold any other opinion than that if you establish the same system in this country one of the inevitable results will be to lead to Protection ? That, however, was an argument for hon. Members opposite much more than for himself to consider. It was impossible to believe from the evidence that the system which prevailed in France had any advantage over the system which prevailed in this country. Was there any reason for believing that a different system in England would result in greater production ? Major Craigie, in his paper on *Agricultural Holdings in England and Abroad*, read before the Royal Statistical Society, showed from four different sources, one confirming the other, that in every respect the produce per acre in England is greater than it is abroad. He said—

> "England holds the first place as a stock-rearing and grain-growing community. Her flocks of sheep represent just ten times those of Belgium on the same area, three times those of France on the same area, and nearer four times than three times those of Germany. As regards cattle, Holland, Belgium, and Germany have more cows than we have, but then our cows hold a different rank from the poor beasts of burden which they often are abroad. We have in England more than Austria for each square mile, more than France, and many more than Hungary or Sweden; while as regards oxen generally we head the list with ease."

Nor was our superiority in crops limited to corn alone. In England the yield of potatoes was 252 bushels to the acre; in Austria 109, in France 113, in Holland 172, and in

Sweden 123. Indeed, full examination would show that in respect of the amount of produce per acre the system pursued in England beat all other systems. As to the £25,000,000 worth of butter, eggs, poultry, &c., which we imported, other countries produced them under a double advantage; the people cultivated their lands with the benefit of the duties imposed upon the same kind of articles imported into those countries; and they exported their produce to this country under the influence of what was practically a very heavy bounty upon the articles exported. An average acre of land would produce seven tons of potatoes, and the foreign producer had an advantage as against the English producer of 14*s.* a-ton in sending potatoes to the Birmingham market. This was equivalent to a bounty of £4 18*s.* per acre which the English farmer had to pay to a Railway Company before he could compete with foreign produce in the same market in this country. This was only one instance of the unfairness and injustice with which the agricultural interest in this country had been treated, and to which it was determined to submit no longer. As to the machinery of the Bill, he dwelt at length on that two years ago. To illustrate the risks and liabilities it might entail, he had made a calculation with regard to Dorchester, the account of which he happened to find in the Municipal Corporation Directory, which had a population of 6,000, with 1,000 ratepayers and a rateable value of £20,000. Suppose 20 ratepayers wanted small holdings of say 20 acres each, that would be 400 acres altogether. What would be the price that would have to be paid for the land? It must be remembered that people who wanted small holdings would never be content with the worst land. He did not wish to put an extravagant price on the land; but he did not think he would be exaggerating in putting it at £30 an acre. That would give a total cost of £12,000. Three-fourths of that, or £9,000, was under the Bill to remain unpaid, and the interest on that at 3½ per cent, together with a sinking fund at 2½ per cent, would amount to £540. Then something must be allowed for registration expenses, and he had put them at £100. Then loans were to be made to the individuals who acquired small holdings as capital for working the land, and that could not be put at less than £10 an acre, or £4,000. The interest and sinking fund at 3½ and 2½ per cent respectively upon that sum would amount to £240. Under Clause 38 of the Bill powers were given to the Local Body to borrow money for improvements; and, putting the sum borrowed at £2,000, the interest and sinking fund with respect to that would amount to £120. Then there were the expenses of management, repairs, law charges, and a variety of other things which he estimated to come to about £145 a-year. These items in all made up an annual expenditure of £1,145. Even taking out all the items except interest and sinking fund in respect of the purchase-money and the loans to individuals, the annual outgoings would be £780. Under the Bill those who acquired holdings were to pay 1 per cent more than was paid by the Local Body for the money borrowed for the purchase of the land. Charging them, therefore, 4½ per cent on the three-fourths of the purchase-money remaining unpaid, and 6 per cent on the individual loans, the total receipts would be only £645, against an absolutely necessary expenditure of £780 and a probable expenditure of £1,145, leaving a deficit as regards the latter sum of £500. To produce £500 from a rateable value of £20,000 would require a rate of 6*d.* in the pound. He had omitted from this any payment for damages on account of guarantee of titles, and he had assumed that the Local Authority sold as dear as it bought, had no land idle, and no arrears of any sort and no reductions. The House might take this calculation for what it was worth. He did not think any hon. Member, if he examined the figures closely, could say that he had exaggerated anything. He was quite sure that, generally speaking, these matters were conducted much more economically by individuals than by Corporations. However much he sympathized with the object of the hon. Gentleman, he was of the strongest possible opinion that the Bill was not at all calculated to give effect to it. If the Bill passed, it would throw enormous possible risks on the ratepayer, and on that ground alone, if on no other, he found it quite impossible to support it. No one could be more anxious than he was to see a wider distribution of the land among the people of the country, and he was strongly tempted by his own personal interest as a landowner to go in the direction the hon. Gentleman asked him to follow. He would be very glad if some means could be devised by which, on a small scale, some tenements of this sort could be founded; but he could not conceal from himself that it would be absolutely impossible, at all events until the Local Government Bill was carried into law. No one could deny that this was a question of the largest and most supreme importance, involving some of the greatest changes ever witnessed in this country, and it was not a question to be hastily settled and decided after a four hours' debate on a Wednesday afternoon. He hoped, therefore, that no attempt to close the mouths of hon. Members upon it would be made. If it were, he should certainly oppose it, as he should oppose the Bill in its present form itself, if it reached a Division to-night.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG) (Wilts, Devizes): I think it will be for the convenience of the House if I now state the point of view from which Her Majesty's Government regard this Bill. It is hardly necessary for me to express the sympathy which we in common with everyone who has spoken to-day feel in the establishment, by legitimate and wise means, of peasant proprietorship in this country; but, Sir, while that sympathy is shared by us, I am not prepared to go as far as the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), who at an earlier period of the evening seemed to infer that if we changed altogether the system of land occupation in the country, and were to terminate large and create small farms, the agricultural distress under which we have so long suffered would be entirely removed. I cannot endorse a sentiment of that nature, nor can I believe that the view of the hon. Gentleman would be endorsed by the opinion of practical agriculturists. I do not think he is right in laying so much blame on the system as he does, when he tells us that it is to the existence of large holdings throughout the country that so much distress is due, and that ruin had overtaken so many of the landed classes. I venture to point out to the House and to the hon. Member himself, that whatever may be the fault of the present system of land owning and land occupation, it is hardly in accordance with facts that his statement is made, because a great many of the holdings which are, at the present moment, large, have become so by the failure of the smaller holdings which preceded them. Not only have the large holdings been created by the absorption of the smaller holdings, but in many parts of the country, and I speak particularly of the district in which I live, there are many small holdings, and I regret to say also a long record of small holders that failed very seriously four years ago, and whose places from necessity, not from choice, have been absorbed into the larger holdings. Therefore, it is incorrect to say that the large holdings are the cause of the existing agricultural depression. I regret that the hon. Gentleman has referred to the action of the landlords in the terms he thought fit to use. Have we not heard enough abuse of landlords generally? [An hon. MEMBER: No!] I desire to introduce no Party feeling into this discussion; but those who say "No!" I trust constitute a very small minority. If there is one reason more than another why small holdings have not been set up where they might with advantage be set up, and where the owners of the soil would be as glad to see them established as those who may desire to occupy them, it is the expense of erecting the necessary buildings. That has been the reason, and I cannot help contemplating with serious apprehension an attempt on the part of some hon. Members of the House to suggest that what landlords have been unable to do owing to the great expense attendant upon it, Local Authorities should do. But while I regard a proposal of that sort with some apprehension I do feel that there is no subject to which the attention of the House in debate can be with greater purpose addressed once or twice in a Session, than a subject similar to that which we are now considering—namely, whether it is possible for Parliament, with safety and fair security, to facilitate the establishment of a system of peasant proprietaryship in this country. But I do not think that any measure which embodied the wishes of those who desire to see that system established, would be facilitated in its progress through this House by such a speech as the one delivered by the hon. Member for West Nottingham earlier in the afternoon. It was my misfortune not to hear the speech of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings), who moved the second reading of the Bill, but I have heard many of his speeches, and have no hesitation in joining in the chorus which from all quarters of the House has acknowledged how my hon. Friend has identified himself with the cause of the agricultural labourers throughout the country. I am not making that admission for the first time; last Session, when it was my duty to offer some remarks to the House in connection with another portion of the small holdings question, I made what I considered to be but a fair and proper admission—namely, that the question had been brought to its then acute and prominent form in consequence, to a large extent, of the labours of the hon. Member for Bordesley. Sir, I regret that this Bill is one which it is impossible for the Government, or those who agree with the Government, to accept, because it is a Bill which, as has already been pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), proposes to throw upon the Local Authorities a very large and heavy responsibility. As I stated, it was my misfortune not to be present when my hon. Friend spoke; but I have not been able to hear from those who were present, that he gave to the House any evidence of there being any large or general demand for these small holdings, which, I think, he suggests should be limited to 40 acres. Now, I think that when we are asked to agree to the second reading of a Bill containing such important proposals, the House ought, first of all, to be satisfied that there is a real demand for 40-acre holdings in the country; and, in the second place, that there are no means of getting such holdings. When we were last year discussing the Allotments Bill hon. Members on both sides of the House produced evidence from all parts of the country where demands were made for land which had never been satisfied. I very much regret that the references to that Act were made in a tone which, of course, we, on this side of the House, cannot appreciate; and it does seem to us a little hard that our Act having been attacked, we are precluded from saying one word in its defence. But I have no doubt an occasion will arise when we shall be able to discuss the working of that Act, and I shall then be able to acquit the Government of the charges which hon. Members opposite have brought against us, and give our reasons for the delay which has occurred in connection with the Act in different parts of the country. If the demand for small holdings has not been proved, how is the second reading of a Bill to be justified, which puts upon Local Authorities the heavy responsibilities which have been described. The Bill would throw upon them a real risk at this time, inasmuch as it would make them practically the owners of considerable portions of land, because it is possible that when these powers are conferred on Local Authorities the first result would be a demand in certain neighbourhoods that the powers of the Bill should be enforced, and that these small holdings should be created. Supposing that a demand should grow up, and supposing that the Local Authorities, in the discharge of the duties laid upon them in the Bill, should acquire the necessary land for distribution as proposed here, is it an exaggeration to say that there would be a very heavy risk entailed on the ratepayers who would have to provide the Local Authorities with funds, that in three or four years the operation might turn out to be a failure, that the occupation of the land by those for whom it was intended might come to an end, and that the consequence would be that the Local Authorities would be charged with the maintenance of the land, which would lay upon the rates a very heavy burden? Under these circumstances, we cannot help feeling that there does exist in the Bill a principle which would involve a very great risk for the ratepayers in future. The hon. Member for West Nottingham, in the appeal which he made at the conclusion of his speech, expressed his desire that the landowners should do their duty. He said that they had not done their duty in the past, and he referred also to the burdens already borne by the rates. I cannot see that, by agreeing to the Motion for the second reading of the Bill, we should have any prospect of the burdens on the rates becoming in future less than they are now. On the contrary, I am of opinion, as I have shown, that those burdens are likely to be increased. I do not want to go into detailed criticism of the Bill of my hon. Friend, the second reading of which I understand he moved in a speech of a very moderate character. I understand also that he would be willing to consider Amendments to the Bill in Committee. But, Sir, there is in the Bill that which we cannot possibly accept—namely, the duty cast upon Local Authorities of providing holdings which cannot be acquired without the expenditure of a very large sum of money; and, further, that there are facilities for spending large sums of money which we believe would, in some cases, result in very heavy and grievous burdens being placed on the ratepayers. These are not times when risks of that kind ought unnecessarily to be undertaken. I do not think the hon. Member for West Nottingham, or the hon. Member for Bordesley himself, would for one moment contend that there would be the demand for the small holdings provided for in the Bill that there has been for small holdings in the form of gardens or allotments. The hon. Gentleman will, I believe, admit that these two questions are absolutely distinct. It may be urged that every man in the country is entitled to have sufficient land to cultivate for his wife and children in form of garden allotments, and that is a proposal I never have and never will oppose. But it is quite different here, where the principle is to invite Local Authorities to become owners of land in order that *quasi*-ownership should be conferred on people who it is alleged are unable to get any land. The hon. Member for West Nottingham said that building societies were doing a great deal of good in the country, and that he thought it time that agricultural labourers should have the opportunity of obtaining land just as there are now afforded to artizans opportunities of becoming owners of their houses. By all means let societies be started, and let hon. Members who believe there is a demand for these holdings, and that land can be acquired and sublet or partially sold to individuals without loss accruing to themselves, band themselves together, and I can undertake to say that landowners will be very ready to sell them land. I do not think there will be any difficulty in the way of buying land in any part of the country, except where perhaps land may have a special value from particular circumstances, and that is not of the class which my hon. Friend would wish to deal with under this Bill. Of ordinary land productive and fit for cultivation, there is abundance to be had, and if, as I have said, hon. Members believe there is a real demand for these small holdings, and if they have real confidence in the prudence of their proposals, I invite them to form themselves into a society, such as the hon. Member for West Nottingham has indicated, for the purpose of acquiring and distributing land in the manner suggested. I have read with some amazement that there is a curious difference made in the Bill with regard to the treatment of the original owner from whom the land is to be bought, and the small owner to be created by the Bill. The original owner from whom the land may be taken compulsorily is to part with it at the price which a willing buyer would give to a willing seller without any compensation for compulsory sale; but, if for some purpose the Local Authority desire to re-acquire the land they are to be compelled to give the small owner the market value, and have to pay 10 per cent for compulsory purchase. But, Sir, if it be fair that 10 per cent should be paid to the new owner whom it is proposed by the Bill to create, it is surely fair that it should be given to the original owner who has obtained his land without assistance from Parliament. It only remains for me to say that we very much regret that we should appear in any way unsympathetic with a proposal which, divested of its political associations and partizan characteristics, is one in which, in and out of the House, we, as much as hon. Gentlemen opposite, sympathize from the bottom of our hearts. We desire to advance in every way possible, either by individual or collective efforts, or by the efforts of Parliament, the position of the labouring classes of the country. We sympathize as much with a proposal of that kind as anybody on the other side of the House; we do not wish to maintain any monopoly of this sympathy, and we only ask that the same fairness shall be extended to us as we extend to others. We desire that the question of the amelioration of the condition of the working classes of the country should be approached with an open mind, and with the desire to meet and support proposals tending in that direction when they are practical and when they are safe, but we feel that we cannot, for the reasons which have been given, assent to the measure now proposed. As my right hon. Friend the Member for the Sleaford Division has said, there is now before the House a very large measure of Local Government to confer upon Local Authorities increased powers for dealing with local affairs, and, if it were proved to be our duty, we should only be too willing to consider whether any further facilities should be given under the Local Government Bill to County Authorities to assist in the establishment of this system of peasant proprietorship, but further than that it would be impossible for the Government to go, and it is with regret that we feel ourselves unable to accept the measure of the hon. Member for Bordesley.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, he did not wish to import any personal feeling into this discussion; but there had been a fair issue raised on the Bill, whether it was desirable to give additional powers for creating small holdings in this country. That was a fair issue, and upon it difference of opinion might exist. He should support the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings), as he supported a Bill exactly similar when he occupied a seat on the other side of the Table in 1886. At that time the hon. Member for Bordesley, unfortunately, was not present in the House, and the Bill was brought forward by another hon. Member. And the reasons for and against it were identical with those which had been advanced on the present occasion. At that time the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) appeared, as he had done to-day, as the opponent of the measure, and in that respect he had been entirely consistent; and there was an hon. and learned Gentleman behind him who succeeded in talking out the measure, but who, in view of the fact that the House of Commons was now considered a reformed institution, he hoped would not follow the same course to-day. He thought they had had an instructive and interesting debate, and that they might now very well take the opinion of the House upon the Bill. He did not quite understand the argument which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division had urged against the Bill when he said that if you create too many proprietors you might have Protection brought back into the country, and that argument was received with loud cheers from hon. Gentlemen who sat behind him. Now, if the right hon. Gentleman was convinced by his own argument, he would be one of the most strenuous supporters of the Bill. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long), who spoke for the Government, had dealt with the subject of small and large holdings. He (Sir William Harcourt) was not going to say anything against the landowners of the country. He believed they had made a large expenditure for improving the land, and he did not believe that there was any class who had expended so much upon the land in which they lived as the English landlords. He believed the system of large holdings was adopted some 30 or 40 years ago under the idea that it was best for the interest of agriculture; but he thought it had been shown that this investment of capital was not wise, and that it had been found that the smaller holdings had been better able to stand the pressure of bad times than the large holdings. He knew of parts of the country where the holdings were small, and where they had stood that pressure better than the larger holdings. [Mr. Chaplin: Occupiers or holders?] Both occupiers and holders. He had lived in the same county as the hon. Member for Devizes (Mr. Long), and he was acquainted with a number of small holdings that were properous in that county. It was the same in Hampshire, where the occupiers had begun in a very small way. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford did not know the habits of those very small holders; he had a knowledge of the great holdings of Lincolnshire, but if he would come down into Hampshire he would find men who had, from 30*s.* a-week, been able to farm and stock with advantage small holdings.

Mr. CHAPLIN: When the right hon. Gentleman says I have no knowledge of small holdings, because there are none in my county, let me remind him that in Lincolnshire there are ten times as many small holdings as there are in any other county in England, and that it is entirely from the wretched condition of those holdings that I have formed my opinion.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he accepted the right hon. Gentleman's statement, and would only say that the holders of small holdings in his county had mostly begun with less than £200 in pocket, and that the system which obtained there he should be very glad to see extended. Then he said it was not at all necessary to have those expensive buildings which had been referred to; of course, the small holders required buildings for a pig and a cow; but those calculations of Gentlemen opposite running to thousands of pounds were entirely contrary to the facts of every-day life as regarded small holdings. That, he thought, was a conclusive answer to the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board. The Bill did not put any compulsion on the Local Authorities, who would only have to do what was required by the community electing them, and they would be men who would know the value of the holdings; they would be elected by the community who would make the demands upon them, and if no demand were made then the work would not be done. For these reasons he thought that the proposals of the Bill might fairly be left to them to carry out. The language of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board almost led the House to believe that the Bill compelled the Local Authority to lay out this money. But they would lay out no money which they did not desire to lay out; and, that being so, he thought the power might very reasonably be given to them which was asked for in the Bill. And here he would like to mention that the Government had some responsibility in refusing the second reading of the Bill, because in dealing with the Glebe Lands Bill they had held it out as a method of supplying additional small holdings, and it was said that the landlords throughout the country had failed altogether to provide the means for acquiring land which were necessary to effect transfers. Having stated the reasons why he should vote for the second reading of the Bill, he hoped that the House would now go to a Division on the Motion of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 135; Noes 194: Majority 59.—(Div. List, No. 113.)

Original Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. MUNTZ (Warwickshire, Tamworth) said, that, unlike some hon. Members opposite, Gentlemen on that side of the House had been waiting all day with the desire of speaking on this subject; and he thought it was somewhat hard that when a few minutes were left in which he might have expressed his views, the hon. Member for the Ilkeston Division of Derby (Sir Walter Foster) should move "That the Question be now put." He sympathized heartily with the desire and the action of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) on behalf of the agricultural labourer; but, while he did so, he did not sympathize with the Bill before the House. He thought that Bill contained innumerable errors, and that it was calculated to do incalculable mischief to the class intended to be benefited. For that reason he should give the Bill his most strenuous opposition. He had addressed large gatherings of agricultural labourers in various parts of the country on the subject, and should, no doubt, do so in the future; and he believed he should have no difficulty in securing their sympathy with the view he entertained on this particular question. His view was that the agricultural labourers could be benefited by allotments, but could not be benefited by small holdings such as the hon. Member for Bordesley proposed. An allotment was beneficial to the agricultural labourer because he could devote his leisure hours to its cultivation, and do so in conjunction with his ordinary labour for which he was paid wages. But a small holding was a totally different matter.

It being half-an-hour after Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 5) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Boroughs of Devonport, Okehampton, Ramsgate, and Sandwich, the Local Government Districts of Crumpsall and Royton, and the Richmond Main Sewerage District, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 265.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 6) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Borough of Brighton and Town of Hove, the Darenth Valley Main Sewerage District, and the Local Government Districts of East Barnet Valley, Friern Barnet, and Herne Bay, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 266.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 7) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Boroughs of Blackpool and Wigan, the Rural Sanitary District of the Chesterfield Union, and the Local Government District of Tredegar, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 267.]

MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES (DUBLIN) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Murphy, Bill to provide for the extension of the Municipal Boundaries of Dublin, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Murphy, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Timothy Harrington, and Mr. Chance.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 268.]

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 17th May, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Select Committees—*First Report*—East India (Hyderabad Deccan Mining Company) [No 177].

Special Report—Committee of Selection (Standing Committees).

Supply—*considered in Committee*—Civil Service Estimates; Class I.—Public Works and Buildings; Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments; Class III.—Law and Justice; Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art; Class V.—Foreign and Colonial Services; Class VI.—Non-Effective and Charitable Services; Class VII.—Miscellaneous; Revenue Departments, Vote on Account, No. 2.

Private Bill (*by Order*)—*Third Reading*—Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways, and *passed.*

Public Bills—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Court of Session and Bill Chamber (Scotland) (Clerks) * [269]; Technical Instruction * [270].

Second Reading—Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen [145], *debate adjourned;* National Debt (Supplemental) [264], *debate adjourned.*

Provisional Order Bill—*Third Reading*—Metropolitan Commons (Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray) * [193].

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

EAST INDIA (HYDERABAD DECCAN MINING COMPANY) (FIRST REPORT).

Sir HENRY JAMES reported from the Select Committee on East India (Hyderabad Deccan Mining Company), That they had made progress in the matter to them referred, and had come to a Resolution, which they had directed him to report to the House, and the Resolution of the Committee is as followeth:—

That the Committee having received applications from the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Hyderabad Deccan Mining Company, the Sirdar Diler Jung, Mr. Witham Clarence Watson, Mr. Henry Parkinson Sharp, and Mr. James Graham Stewart to be represented by Counsel before the Committee, the Committee are of opinion that it will be advisable to allow Counsel to represent the said Applicants for the purpose of assisting the Committee to such extent and purposes as the Committee may from time to time direct.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be *printed.* [No. 177.]

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Select Committee on East India (Hyderabad Deccan Mining Company) have leave to hear Counsel (to such extent as they shall think fit) upon the matters referred to them."—(*Sir Henry James.*)

SIR EDWARD WATKIN (Hythe) asked, whether it was intended by the Resolution which had been moved by the right hon. and learned Gentleman to impose any restriction upon the most searching inquiry?

SIR HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, there was no intention of putting any limitation upon the inquiry. It was, however, intended to impose a limit upon the action of Counsel in matters which the Committee did not think it necessary to inquire into. They thought it was necessary to assert their right to control Counsel.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That the Select Committee on East India (Hyderabad Deccan Mining Company) have leave to hear Counsel (to such extent as they shall think fit) upon the matters referred to them.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—IRISH SUNDAY CLOSING ACT—A. E. FLEURY, DISTRICT INSPECTOR OF LISBURN.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether A. E. Fleury, reported in *The Lisburn Standard,* of April 14 last, as having been appointed incumbent's churchwarden, at a meeting of the annual Easter Vestry of the parish of Christ Church, Lisburn, held on the 4th of April last, the Rev. Arthur J. Moore, M.A., in the chair, is the Constabulary District Inspector of Lisburn; and, whether Mr. Fleury was present at said meeting, when a Resolution in favour of the continuance of the Irish Sunday Closing Act and its extension to the five cities now exempted was passed unanimously; and, if so, whether it is in conformity with the Regulations of the Service for a member of the Constabulary Force to accept or hold any such appointment, or to support, or to assist in the passing of a Resolution at any meeting condemnatory of any Act of Parliament which it is his duty to enforce?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Inspector General of Constabulary reports that it is the case that District Inspector Fleury was appointed incumbent's churchwarden at Lisburn. A meeting was held at which a Resolution in favour of the Irish Sunday Closing Act was passed. As a matter of fact, Mr. Fleury took no part in the discussion, nor was he, as far as I am aware, present. There is no Rule providing that men in the position of District Inspector should not occupy such a position as that of churchwarden; but the Inspector General recommends the Force not to join Local Bodies.

MR. P. M'DONALD: Do I understand that Mr. Fleury was not present when the Resolution was passed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: He was not present, as I understand.

VENEZUELA—INSULTING NEWSPAPER ARTICLES.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to recent articles published in *The Port of Spain Gazette,* with reference to the articles which appeared in a Spanish paper called *El Venezolano,* published in Trinidad, and containing language insulting to Great Britain; whether he is aware if the paper in question is the property of General Guzman Blanco; and, whether the Government is prepared to take any steps to prevent the publication in one of Her Majesty's neighbouring Possessions of articles openly inciting the Venezuelans to attack Her Majesty's Colony of British Guiana?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) (who replied) said: The attention of the Secretary of State has been called by a letter from the hon. Member to an article of the nature referred to. The Secretary of State has no information as to the ownership of *El Venezolano;* and, as this newspaper is stated to circulate in Trinidad only among a few Venezuelans, Her Majesty's Government do not think it necessary to take steps to prevent the publication in it of such articles.

SCOTLAND—ORDNANCE SURVEY.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether the most highly cultivated counties of Scotland, Fife and the Lothians, are to have no better Ordnance Survey than the old 6-inch scale, since the last Report says nothing of any new survey on the larger scale?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University), in reply, said, it was intended to take up the revision of the Ordnance Survey of Scotland as soon as the re-survey of Lancashire and Yorkshire had been completed. That would be in about four years. It could not be done sooner.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked, if it could be done on a larger scale than the present?

Mr. PLUNKET: Yes; when the re-survey is made.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1887—THE BANK HALL AND OTHER COLLIERIES.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that no attempt has yet been made to comply with Section 12 of "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887," at the Bank Hall Colliery, Burnley, the Townley Collieries, or the Cliviger Colliery, respectively; on what date, or dates, since the 1st of January last, the said collieries were respectively inspected by the District Inspector of Mines; and, whether he reported the total absence of weighing machines at each of the above-named collieries; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take in the matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The reason that no attempt has been made at these collieries to comply with Section 12 of the Act of 1887 is that they have been working in accordance with exemptions granted under the Act of 1872. It is a legal question whether these exemptions are now in force; and I informed the House some days ago that steps are being taken to have this question settled by a prosecution in a Court of Law. The Bank Hall Colliery was visited on January 25 and 26; the Townley Collieries on February 11 and April 23 and 24; and the Cliviger Colliery on January 28 and March 24. The absence of weighing machines was brought to my notice shortly afterwards.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—CLERK OF PETTY SESSIONS, BALLYMENA.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) (for Mr. Pinkerton) (Galway) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. James Giffin, merchant, Ballymena, on the 7th of May last, ordered a summons from the Clerk of Petty Sessions against Constable Haughny, for abusive language; whether the Clerk filled the summons, and handed it to Alexander Bell, summons server, to have it signed by a magistrate; whether Bell went to the Hon. John Young, J.P., D.L., and requested him to sign the summons; whether Mr. Young, after refusing to sign it, tore the summons into pieces, threw them at his feet, and said to the process server —"You can report me, if you like;" and, whether, under these circumstances, the attention of the Lord Chancellor will be called to the matter?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): It is the case that the magistrate referred to refused to sign the document presented to him, requiring that the case should be proceeded with by civil summons. An application for a civil summons was a few days afterwards made at the Court of Petty Sessions, at the suggestion of Mr. Young, before the magistrates, who were unanimous in refusing it, thus showing that the magistrate had exercised a proper discretion. I do not think that, under these circumstances, it was necessary that the attention of the Lord Chancellor should be called to it.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON asked that he might be allowed to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to what appeared to him to be the gravamen of the matter—namely, that Mr. Young, J.P., D.L., tore up the information and threw it at his feet and said—"You can report me if you like."

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, Mr. Young was not at home, and he could not answer the Question contained in the last paragraph but one.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DEFALCATIONS IN BALLYMENA UNION.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) (for Mr. PINKERTON) (Galway) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware of defalcations in connection with Ballymena Union, through the acts of the late clerk, F. A. Mathews, to the amount of £1,700; whether, before his appointment as clerk of the Union, he had been found guilty of dishonesty in his previous clerkships; whether the auditor (Major Studdart) always certified the accounts as being correct, and bonds of relieving officers as being produced, when, in point of fact, some of the sureties were dead; whether he is aware that a section of the Board are opposed to any inquiry, while other Guardians are in favour of an inquiry being held; whether the Local Government Board have been memorialized to grant a sworn investigation, and if he can state their reason for refusing to grant it; whether he is also aware that Mr. F. A. Mathews was High Constable, and that the office has since been filled by another nominee of the Grand Jury, without due notice, and without competition; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will order the Local Government Board to grant a sworn inquiry?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. Mr. Mathews held the office of clerk of Ballymena Union for a period of 42 years, having been elected in 1846. I have no information as to the alleged dishonesty on his part before his election. The accounts of the Union have been certified by Colonel Studdart, auditor, as correct down to the time he discovered the defalcations. At each audit of the accounts the bonds of the relieving officers were produced. Colonel Studdart is not aware that any of the sureties are dead. I have no knowledge as to a section of the Board of Guardians being opposed to any inquiry. The Guardians did adopt a Resolution asking for the holding of a sworn inquiry as to the entire business of the Union. The Local Government Board replied that if specific charges were preferred against any responsible officers they would consider the propriety of instituting an inquiry. Mr. Mathews's defalcations are under investigation by a committee of the Guardians, assisted by the Local Government Board Inspector. If charges affecting any of the remaining officers of the Union are submitted to the Local Government Board the propriety of ordering a sworn inquiry will be considered.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON asked the Chief Secretary, how it was that the Local Government Board were so reluctant to take action in a case of this kind; whereas in the case of the Listowel Union they had of their own initiative taken action and held an inquiry? He asked, whether the difference in politics made any difference in the action of the Local Government Board?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the difference in politics made no difference in the action of the Board. He saw no sign of reluctance on the part of the Board to take necessary action.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND)—THOMAS SWEENEY.

MR. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) (for Mr. LEAHY) (Kildare, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether Thomas Sweeney, the National School teacher, of Ballyroe Leinster Lodge, County Kildare, whose health has broken down with chronic bronchitis and asthma, has been ordered by the doctors to go to a warm climate, and to enable him to do so he has applied to the Commissioners of Education for a retiring gratuity instead of a pension, which application has been backed by the Reverend James Doyle, P.P., who knows the peculiar state of the case; whether, he being over 55 years of age, a Treasury Rule operates against this course; and, if he will take into consideration the necessity of relaxing this Rule, so as to grant him a sum sufficient to enable him to follow the doctor's advice, and the only way they think of saving his life?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I am sorry that nothing can be done by the Treasury to meet this distressing case; but the Teachers Pension Act of 1879 does not allow the grant of gratuities to male teachers retiring at 55 years of age and upwards; and the Treasury has no power to alter the Rules laid down by that Act in favour of a particular teacher.

LAW AND JUSTICE—CONFESSION OF MURDER—THE KIDBROOKE LANE MURDER (1871).

Mr. BOORD (Greenwich) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a report published in the Sydney newspapers of 13th and 14th of March, to the effect that a labourer named Michael Carroll had on the previous Sunday (11th March) confessed to the murder of Jane Maria Clousen in Kidbrooke Lane on the 25th of April, 1871, giving at the same time particulars sufficient to show that he was well acquainted with the locality and the circumstances connected with the commission of the crime, and stating that he had served in the British Army, from whence he had twice deserted; whether it is true that Carroll was discharged from custody on receipt of a telegraphic message from the Police Authorities in London that there was "not the slightest ground for his confession," and that he was "not the murderer;" and, if so, whether he can say by what means the London police were enabled to arrive at so prompt and definite a conclusion without having seen the prisoner, or having received fuller particulars than could be given in a telegraphic communication; and, whether he will inquire into the circumstances of the case, considering that the late Lord Chief Justice Bovill rebuked the police for withholding important evidence which conflicted with their theory of the murder?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have seen a newspaper report of the confession of Carroll on March 11. In reply to telegram from the Sydney police, asking whether the man should be detained, the Scotland Yard Authorities replied that they did not consider this man to be Clousen's murderer, and that he might be liberated after his statement had been recorded, and they asked that the statement might be forwarded. This statement has been since received, and in the opinion of the police is not reliable. The police were not aware of any evidence or suspicion which would have warranted the detention of Carroll. With regard to the strictures passed on the police concerned in the case by the late Lord Chief Justice Bovill, I must refer my hon. Friend to a statement made in this House by Mr. Secretary Bruce on July 31, 1871.

RIOTS AND DISTURBANCES (IRELAND) —TENT SERVICES OF THE IRISH EVANGELIZATION SOCIETY.

Mr. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If tent services held at Gortnessy, County Londonderry, under the auspices of the Irish Evangelization Society, have been disturbed by Nationalists for several nights, the tent wrecked and the services stopped; whether the population in the district is chiefly Presbyterian, and if they have suffered from attacks of stone throwing by parties of Roman Catholics on their way to or from the services; and, if he will take steps to protect this community in the exercise of their religious privileges?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The local Constabulary Authorities report that it is the case that the tent services in question have been on several evenings disturbed by the lower class Roman Catholics of the district, and that attempts have been made to wreck the tent. The better class Roman Catholics, however, have expressed their intention to use their influence to prevent these proceedings. The population in the district is mainly Presbyterian. It is alleged that on one evening stones were thrown at the congregation when returning home. The police have adopted full precautions to prevent a recurrence of this disgraceful behaviour.

TORQUAY IMPROVEMENT ACT—STREET PROCESSIONS.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What is the number of persons who have been imprisoned for violation of the provisions of the Torquay Improvement Act with respect to street processions?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Thirty-three persons have been committed to prison in default of sufficient distress and payment of the penalties imposed for offences under the 38th section of the Torquay Improvement Act.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER asked whether, having regard to the fact that 33 persons had been sent to prison for violation of a clause inserted in a Private Bill, against the views of the Government of the day, and without the knowledge of the House being called to it, he would introduce a Bill to repeal the clause?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he was afraid he must take time to consider that matter.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER gave Notice that if the Home Secretary did not bring in such a Bill he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), at the earliest opportunity after Whitsuntide would ask leave to bring in a Bill with that object.

Mr. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) asked the Home Secretary, whether the Government would be prepared to bring in a short Bill to repeal the clause interpolated into the Torquay Harbour Act of last year, and so put an end to this question?

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester) asked whether, in view of the pledge given to the hon. Member for East Wolverhampton to bring in a Bill to the effect stated, the Home Secretary had the power, and would use it, to represent to the Torquay magistrates his intention to do so, and thus induce them to postpone any further action under the clause of the Torquay Act?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I have no intention of the kind stated by hon. Members opposite, nor could I properly interfere with any further action of the magistrates under the law they administer.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, whether he would consider the possibility of introducing into a Provisional Order Bill now before the House, by which the Local Authorities of Torquay sought fresh powers, a clause repealing the clause of the existing Act dealing with street processions?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, it was obvious he could come under no such obligation without full consideration and full notice of the desire of the House.

Mr. CONYBEARE gave Notice that he would move the rejection of the Provisional Order Bill.

INLAND REVENUE—LAND COMMISSION OFFICE—STAMP DISTRIBUTOR.

Mr. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) (for Mr. M'Cartan) (Down, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he is aware that there is no stamp distributor attached to the Land Commission Office at Dublin, and that persons requiring copies of orders or other documents there are obliged to pay the fees in stamps, and cannot obtain any stamps at the Land Commission Office; and, whether, considering the inconvenience and delay involved thereby, he will take into consideration the appointment of a stamp distributor at that Office?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): It is the fact that there is no stamp distributor at the Land Commission Office; but the necessary stamps can be obtained at the post office about 100 yards distant. This being so, I cannot believe that any serious inconvenience can arise; and as there are serious objections to the appointment of a stamp distributor within the office, I can hold out no hope that the suggestion of the hon. Member will be adopted.

IRISH BOARD OF WORKS—ADVANCES TO THE MACGILLYCUDDY OF THE REEKS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) (for Mr. Kilbride) (Kerry, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, How much money has been advanced to The MacGillycuddy of the Reeks by the Board of Works since the year 1879; what is the Poor Law valuation of the property on which this money is chargeable; how much, if any, of this loan has been paid back into the Treasury; who inspected the works for which this money was advanced; and, what provision is made to satisfy the Board of Works that money advanced for drainage purposes is so expended?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): A total amount of £7,625 has been advanced for the improvement of land since 1879 on this estate, the annual valuation of which is £1,353. Of this amount £150 has at present been repaid. The works were inspected by two of the Inspectors appointed for such purposes. Issues on account of such loans are only made upon certificates of the Board of Works Inspectors as to the amount expended on the works.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, if the hon. Gentleman could state the character of the inspection in cases of this kind; and, whether the Treasury had any assurance as to the nature of the improvement effected by means of the loans?

Mr. JACKSON said, he did not know whether the Treasury had any direct concern with the inspections while they were being made; but when he himself had been in Dublin at the end of last year he made some inquiry into this question, and he understood that the first inspection which was made before the loan was sanctioned was an inspection as to the value which would accrue to the property supposing the works to be carried out. He was informed also that as the works progressed, and before each instalment was paid, there was an inspection of the works which had been done up to the time. Therefore, it was clear that there was an inspection for the purpose of satisfying the requirements that the loan should be made, and also that the instalments were only paid after other inspections.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Does the Inspector see the receipt for the money expended?

Mr. JACKSON said, he was afraid he could not say that. Besides, he was not sure whether the Inspector would rely upon the receipts; because he (Mr. Jackson) could conceive cases where a receipt might be produced for an amount in excess of what the Inspector deemed to be the value of the work. Therefore, he took it that the Inspector judged by his expert knowledge as to the actual value of the work performed.

SCOTLAND—CROWN LANDS OR BISHOPRIC REVENUES OF ORKNEY

Mr. MACDONALD CAMERON (Wick, &c.) asked the Lord Advocate, What amount of money was received by the Government for the sale of the Crown Lands or Bishopric Revenues of Orkney; and, to what purpose was the money so received devoted?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The amount of money received for the sale of Crown Lands or Bishopric Revenues of Orkney is £50,465 17*s*. 9*d*. It was not received by the Government, but by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, as part of the capital of the Land Revenues of the Crown, and applied in accordance with the Land Revenue Acts of Parliament to the purchase of real estate for the Crown, or to extinguish charges on other property of the Crown Land Revenues.

Mr. MACDONALD CAMERON asked, whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman could state what portion of this money was devoted to the extension of public parks in London?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I am quite unable to answer that Question.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS—FATAL ACCIDENT AT NEW MILFORD STATION.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the statement of Colonel Rich, one of the Inspectors of the Board, after an inquiry held in July, 1887, as to a fatal accident to a boy named Reeves while working at the fish stage at New Milford Station, that the railway and station yard were most dangerous, and had been so for many years, and to the recommendation—

> "That the Company be required to fence their property at once, and the Company should be urged to build a foot-bridge across their railway for the safety of their own servants and of the numerous labourers that are employed;"

whether about 600 men and boys are employed in and about the fish traffic and similar duties at New Milford Station; whether the Board of Trade has made any subsequent representations to the Railway Company; whether the Railway Company have as yet done anything to carry out Colonel Rich's recommendations; and, whether he will include cases of this nature of defective traffic accommodation among the matters for which he will ask for extended powers for the Board of Trade in the Bill recently foreshadowed?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): Yes, Sir; Colonel Rich's Report on the accident in question has been before me, and the circumstances are practically as stated in the Question. A copy of the Report was sent to the Railway Company; but the Board of Trade have no power to compel the erection of a bridge. Negotiations, however, are pending, which the Board of Trade hope will result in the erection of a bridge; but I may add that had a bridge been in existence at the time the accident would not have been prevented. The case seems to be one of those as to which I indicated that, in my opinion, further legislation would be possible.

LOTTERIES — THE CASTLETON-BY-ROCHDALE LIBERAL ASSOCIATION.

Mr. KNOWLES (Salford, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a lottery, promoted by the Castleton-by-Rochdale Liberal Association, to be drawn on the 7th of July, in which the value of the prizes is stated to be £50, application for tickets being invited by the Secretary, Draw Committee, Liberal Club, Castleton; and, whether, if this is the case, he will communicate with the local police, with the view to such proceedings being taken as, under the circumstances, may be necessary?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; my attention has been drawn to this lottery, and I am now in communication with the local police.

WAR OFFICE — TRANSPORT OF SUPPLIES TO NAVAL COAL DEPOTS ABROAD.

Captain COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for War, with reference to his reply to a Question on the 13th of September last, Whether he has found it practicable to give the House information as to the approximate total annual charges for the transport of troops, for the supply and conveyance of purely military stores, and for the maintenance of garrisons at each of the naval coal depôts abroad; and, if so, when he proposes to give that information?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. Brodrick) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: The time of the War Department has been so much over-occupied since the Question of my hon. Friend in September last that it has not been practicable to get together the information he asks for. I hope, however, to be able to furnish it at no distant date; but some very important questions affecting coaling stations are now under consideration by a small Inter-Departmental Committee, and it may be well to reserve the answer until their Report has been received.

ADMIRALTY—THE RUSSIAN SQUADRON IN THE PACIFIC.

Captain COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the statement, that the Russian Squadron in the Pacific consists of one iron-clad and five cruisers, is founded upon authoritative information; from what source such information was obtained; and, what are the names, armaments, and speed of the vessels composing that Squadron?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The statement I made with regard to the strength of the Russian Squadron in the Pacific is correct in every detail. It is not desirable to communicate the sources from which such information was received. The Squadron in question is composed of one belted frigate, two corvettes, three clippers of small tonnage, and seven gun vessels, of which four are practically condemned. I am not prepared to give, on the authority of the Admiralty, the further particulars asked for.

METROPOLITAN STREET TRAFFIC — BLOCK AT HYDE PARK CORNER.

Mr. COCHRANE-BAILLIE (St. Pancras, N.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he will consider the desirability of having another entrance made into Hyde Park between Knightsbridge Barracks and Albert Gate owing to the continually increasing block of traffic at the latter place?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University), in reply, said, he was not quite sure that, as far as the traffic inside the Gate was concerned, the change suggested would be an improvement. He had nothing to do with the outside of the Park; but if any representations were made to him by the Local Authorities in the sense of the Question of his hon. Friend it would be very carefully considered.

COMPANIES, &c. ACT, 1862—LIQUIDATION OF COMPANIES.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is now in a position to state anything as to the Return asked for in reference to the liquidation of Companies under the Act of 1862; and whether, if the production of the full Return asked for would be difficult or expensive, he would undertake to give a Return for two years, 1866 and 1867, as an example, showing the time occupied by and cost of liquidations under this Act?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): I have ascertained that a Return can be given showing the names of Companies in liquidation since 1862, and of the solicitors and liquidators, with the dates of commencement and closing of liquidation, but not including the costs of liquidation, or the amounts realized and distributed amongst the creditors. But the Lord Chancellor has directed inquiry to be made as to the reasonable practicability of giving the complete Return for two years, as suggested by the right hon. Gentleman.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE COUNTY OF LONDON—DIVISION INTO TWO COUNTIES.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, having regard to the vast population within the district of the Metropolitan Board of Works (the proposed limits of the County of London), he would object to that area being divided into two counties, one for the north side of the River Thames, and another for the south side; or whether he would consent to the business, both civil and criminal, arising on the north side of the River Thames and that on the south side of the River being transacted by separate authorities and officials?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Her Majesty's Government would not be prepared to assent to any proposal that the Metropolis should be divided into two counties, or that the business of the County Council of London arising on the north and south sides of the Thames should be transacted by separate Authorities.

EXCISE DUTIES (LOCAL PURPOSES) BILL—THE VAN AND WHEEL TAXES—MILITARY TOLL GATES.

MR. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in view of the fact that Van and Wheel Taxes are about to come into force, he will consider the justice and expediency of causing the military toll gates in the neighbourhood of Rye and elsewhere to be removed?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: The tolls received for the military road are used in aid of the maintenance of the road. If the County Board will undertake to maintain the road there will be no objection to the abolition of the tolls.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—RATES ON GOVERNMENT PROPERTY.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN (Hythe) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, under the Local Government Bill, the Treasury will continue to contribute to Local Authorities money in lieu of rates on Government property?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The arrangement under which the Treasury make contributions to Local Authorities in lieu of rates on Government property will not be affected by the provisions of the Local Government Bill.

INDIA—ESTABLISHMENT OF WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES IN BRITISH INDIA.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether Her Majesty's Government has received any information from the Government of India relating to the import of wool into British India from Thibet, and the prospect of the profitable establishment of woollen factories within British territory in India?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): No special Reports have been received; but the Trade Report shows that last year 3,464 cwt. of wool were imported into British India from Thibet. The factories established on the Baree Doab Canal and elsewhere are said to be doing fairly well.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—GRANT OF LAND IN RICHMOND PARK FOR VICARAGE.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether an application has recently been made to the Office of Works, or to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, to grant a piece of land in Richmond Park or in Petersham Park for the erection of a Vicarage; and, if so, whether any, and what, answer has been returned to such application?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University), in reply, said, a Memorial was presented through the Home Office last February to this effect, and the usual preliminary inquiry was made. Information, especially as to the position of the desired site for the vicarage, was requested by letter from the Vestry Clerk on the 16th of April, but no reply had yet been received; and, pending the receipt of this information, the consideration of the Memorial is necessarily postponed.

MR. BRYCE asked, whether the House might understand that no definite action would be taken in the matter until there had been an opportunity of ascertaining its opinion?

MR. PLUNKET said, he could not answer for the action which the Office of Woods might take.

MR. BRYCE gave Notice that he would address further Questions on the subject to the Secretary to the Treasury.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION, CO. DUBLIN.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) (for Mr. CRILLY) (Mayo, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If any date has been as yet fixed for the next sitting of the Land Sub-Commission Court in the County Dublin; and, if so, would he name the date fixed upon?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that no date has yet been fixed.

PRISON REGULATIONS (IRELAND)—DERRY GAOL—FATHER M'FADDEN.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a book, containing a copy of the Prison Rules, was excluded from a selection allowed in to Father M'Fadden, in Derry Gaol; and, if so, can he explain for what reason?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The General Board inform me that the Governor of the gaol declined to give the book referred to to the rev. gentleman, inasmuch as it was not one of those sanctioned by the Visiting Justices. The Visiting Justices had previously pointed out that all the Rules were hung up in his cell.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON asked, was the right hon. Gentleman aware that there was any other matter objectionable in the book except the Prison Rules; and, whether there would be any objection in the case of a first-class misdemeanant obtaining these Rules?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that was a question which lay with the Visiting Justices, and not with himself.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE CORK POLICE COURT—MR. J. C. GARDINER, R.M.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any, and if so what, steps will be taken to insure the attendance of a paid magistrate at the Cork Police Court in the event of Mr. J. C. Gardiner, R.M., at present Stipendiary Magistrate in Cork, being employed out of the City of Cork to assist in forming a Court under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Mr. Gardiner, while engaged in his other duties, experiences no difficulty in securing the attendance of local magistrates at the police court; and, if necessary, the attendance of another Resident Magistrate is arranged for.

DR. TANNER asked how it happened, then, that the Court had had to be adjourned altogether on last Thursday week, in consequence of the absence of Mr. Gardiner, and of any of the other friends and *employés* of the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked for Notice of the Question.

DR. TANNER asked if he had not last year addressed a Question to the right hon. Gentleman on the subject; and if the right hon. Gentleman was not then obliged to acknowledge that, owing to the absence of the Resident Magistrate and the inaptitude of the local magistrates, the business of the Court was completely and absolutely stopped?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was afraid that this and many other Questions addressed to him by the hon. Gentleman had escaped his memory.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—CHAPLAIN TO THE SKIBBEREEN UNION.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the Protestant chaplain to the Skibbereen Union receives a yearly salary of £20; and, if it is true that there are at present, and have been for a considerable time, only two Protestant inmates of the Union?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am not able to answer the Question fully at present; I will give fuller particulars later. This salary of £20 has been given to the Protestant chaplain since his appointment in 1868. I believe there are at present three Protestant inmates in Skibbereen Workhouse; that does not, of course, include casuals.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—SENTENCE AT THE NEWMARKET PETTY SESSIONS.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to a sentence imposed at Newmarket Petty Sessions on last Friday, by Mr. O'Neill Segrave, R.M., and W. Monan, Esquire, upon a man named Daniel Pigott, of six months' imprisonment with hard labour; and, whether the statement made by Sergeant Walton, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, that the man was said to be of unsound mind, and was some time previously to have been sent to a lunatic asylum, will procure a medical investigation of the man's mental condition prior to the carrying out of the sentence?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. A. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Member any information on the subject at the present moment.

Dr. TANNER: When will it be convenient to the right hon. Gentleman to answer?

[No reply.]

Dr. TANNER (appealing to the Deputy Speaker): Mr. Courtney, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman to be courteous enough to give me an answer?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member is the last person in the House I should desire to be discourteous to. I cannot give any answer at present, as I have not got the requisite materials by me.

Subsequently, Dr. Tanner repeated the Question.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: This case was heard before Captain Segrave, R.M., and a local Justice of the Peace, Mr. Langford. Pigott was charged with having committed a most dangerous assault on his wife with a spade, causing serious injuries to her head. Sergeant Walton stated that the man had once been examined by a medical man, who refused to certify that he was not of sound mind, but that he (the sergeant) thought he was not always in his right senses. There does not appear to have been any evidence that he had been in a lunatic asylum. The sentence was as stated in the Question. Should the Prison Authorities have any reason to doubt the man's sanity, they will, of course, take such steps as they may deem necessary in his case.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (IRELAND) ACT—SERVICE OF REQUISITION FORMS.

Mr. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) (for Mr. H. Campbell) (Fermanagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can now state the result of his inquiries as to the practice adopted by the Poor Law Unions in Ireland, with regard to the service of the requisition forms under the Representation of the People Act?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I find by the Report of the Union clerks that the general practice is to deliver the requisition forms by hand to the persons rated, or leave them at the rated premises. In about 50 Unions, however, some of the forms were sent by post, chiefly in cases where the persons taxed lived at a distance.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—SERVICE OF MAILS, NEWPORT, CO. TIPPERARY.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he received a Memorial from the inhabitants of Newport, County Tipperary, praying to have a mid-day arrival and morning despatch of mails in connection with that town; and, what steps, if any, he has taken to meet the wishes of the Memorialists?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): A Memorial such as the hon. Member describes was received from Newport, County Tipperary, in October last; but as it was found that the existing service in connection with the night mail was carried on at a loss, I was unable to sanction the additional expenditure for the establishment of a second post.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION AT CARLOW.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Land Sub-Commissioners are likely to sit next at Carlow for the purpose of hearing the large number of cases of which notice has been given?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me a Sub-Commission will commence its sitting in the County Carlow on the 4th of June.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. J. J. THERRY, J.P.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) (for Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR) (Tipperary, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. John J. Therry, J.P., of Springvale, Kildorrery, County Cork, has been adjudicated a bankrupt; and, if so, whether he will be retained on the Commission of the Peace?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) hesitated to rise.

DR. TANNER: Is this Question convenient to the right hon. Gentleman to answer?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed by the Lord Chancellor that Mr. Therry has been adjudicated a bankrupt, and has ceased to hold the Commission of the Peace.

POST OFFICE—PROVINCIAL POSTMASTERSHIPS.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Postmaster General, On what principle vacant Postmasterships in the Provinces are filled up; whether, in the case of several recent appointments to important offices in Provincial towns, officers of the Registered Letter and Money Order Departments have been appointed; and, whether, as the filling of such vacancies by a process other than that of selection from the general body of Postmasters retards promotion in this class of public servants, he will explain the grounds of these appointments?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The Question of the hon. Member would seem to imply that promotion to the more important post offices is by right confined to those who are Postmasters already. But such is not the case. When one of these post offices becomes vacant candidates are invited from all parts of the Post Office Service; and out of these candidates the Postmaster General selects the one whom he considers the best fitted for the duties to be discharged. Out of more than 200 such appointments which have been filled during the last 10 years, I find that one has been given to an officer of the Money Order Department; while the Registered Letter Department has received none at all.

THE CROFTERS—EMIGRATION FROM STORNOWAY.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the fact, as stated in the newspapers of Tuesday last, that 25 crofter families, or a total of 113 souls, left Stornoway on the previous day for Manitoba; and, whether he can inform the House how much land the emigration of these 25 families or 113 souls has been made available for those who remain?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Eighteen families have started from Lewis for Manitoba, numbering about 100 souls. Of these, two have left crofts, and 16 were cottars who had been squatters on crofts. I am unable at present to state the area of land thus vacated, or the relief to township common pasture, as I have not particulars of the distribution.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) wished to know whether it was the intention of the Government to continue to send cottars and crofters from Lewis during the Whitsuntide Recess, the Government having refused to lay before the House the scheme under which the crofters were sent?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, the assumption in the last part of the Question was incorrect. The scheme was in print, and had been laid before Parliament. It was not intended to send any further emigrants from Lewis; but he expected some would be going from the Island of Harris.

Mr. HUNTER asked, when the scheme would be in the hands of Members?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: To-morrow.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND asked, what arrangement had been made with regard to the tenant right of these crofters?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, a letter had been sent pointing out to the factor of the landlord that an arrangement would be made by which any land that would be vacated was to be made available for the neighbouring crofters; but he could not speak in detail.

Mr. HUNTER said, he would like the right hon. and learned Gentleman to explain to the House why these crofters had been sent away before any Parliamentary authority had been obtained?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: An opportunity will be afforded for entering into that matter?

In reply to Mr. Anderson (Elgin and Nairn),

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, that the selection of the crofters had been made by Mr. Malcolm M'Neill, who was a man with a great deal of experience of the Highlands.

Mr. HUNTER gave Notice that on the Motion for the adjournment of the House he would call attention to the policy and action of the Government in this matter.

AGRICULTURE—THE VOTE FOR DAIRY INVESTIGATION.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) asked the Lord Advocate, in regard to the sum of £5,000 to be voted for Dairy Investigation, How much of that sum it is proposed to allocate to Scotland, and also to whom it is proposed to entrust its distribution; and, under what conditions it will be granted?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The proportion of the sum for which a Vote is asked as between the different parts of the Kingdom has not been fixed. The distribution will be arranged by the Privy Council. The final adjustment of the conditions under which the grant is to be given is not yet made.

EMIGRATION—ASSISTED EMIGRATION FROM SCOTLAND.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether Her Majesty has had under consideration a Memorial from Fraserburgh in regard to assisted emigration on behalf of fishermen and others; and, whether the same assistance will be given to fishermen on the East Coast as has been offered on the West Coast of Scotland?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The Memorial referred to has received the consideration of Her Majesty's Government; but at present the colonization scheme is necessarily limited to the crofting population of the West Highlands and Islands.

LAW AND JUSTICE—SENTENCES OF FLOGGING AT LIVERPOOL ASSIZES.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether each of the prisoners who were sentenced to be flogged at Liverpool Assizes on Monday last had inflicted bodily harm upon any person; and, if so, what was the nature of the injury done in each case?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I understand that these men were found guilty of robbery with violence. According to a newspaper report of the proceedings, the Judge remarked that they might have been tried for inflicting grievous bodily harm. In one case the man attacked had two or three ribs broken; and in another the prosecutor's head was cut, and he was struck in the mouth. In each of the other three cases there was a violent assault committed, in one upon a woman, and in another cuts were inflicted with a knife.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT—CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS.

Mr. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether a Circular Letter has been recently addressed by the Civil Service Commissioners to Civil Service writers employed at the various outports, informing them that they will be shortly discharged from the Customs Department, and that, if they are prepared to come to London at their

> "own expense, employment could probably be found for them shortly after their arrival;"

whether this will have the effect of compelling their removal to London (in many cases with their families), and subject them in consequence to much expense and hardship, or in the alternative to practically enforce their retirement from the Service, contrary to the statement of the Secretary to the Treasury, made on the 15th of July, 1887—

> "That there was no desire on the part of the Government to inflict any injustice on the writers, nor to force them out of the Service;"

and, whether, having regard to the fact that most of these writers have been employed for many years in their present posts, the Board of Customs will reconsider their decision?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): A Circular Letter as described was sent by the Civil Service Commission without consultation with the Treasury. I am distinctly of opinion that if any copyists are removed for the benefit of the State from the outports to London the Treasury should allow travelling expenses; and, further, they will be ready to consider any cases which, in the opinion of the Customs, would involve hardship.

ADMIRALTY—DEVONPORT DOCKYARD—EMPLOYMENT OF SEAMEN IN PRIVATE DUTIES.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether it is the fact that some eight seamen belonging to the *Indus* are continually employed by the Admiral Superintendent of the Devonport Dockyards in his garden, and upon domestic duties in his official residence; whether the services of these men are allowed him in addition to the £200 per annum voted to him in lieu of servants; whether he can state the total cost to the country of these seamen in pay, provisions, and allowances; what was the cost of the floating bath recently constructed and equipped by Steam Reserve artificers with Government material for the use of the Admiral's family, and out of what Vote in the Estimates was the cost of such labour and material defrayed; and, what was the cost of transforming and furnishing the Dockyard Lower School into a card-room and billiard-room by the Director of Works Department for the use of the Admiral Superintendent and his friends, and under what Vote was the cost of the material and labour of such work accounted for?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing), in reply, said, the insinuation running throughout the Question that the Admiral Superintendent had made improper use of his position for his own personal convenience was wholly unfounded. The eight seamen referred to formed a boat's crew, who had been employed in their legitimate duties, and not in the house or garden of the Admiral. The floating bath was for the use, not of the Admiral's family, but of the officers generally. The alterations in regard to the billiard-room had been sanctioned by the Admiralty for the use of the Dockyard officials; and similar billiard-rooms had for some time existed both at Portsmouth and Chatham.

Mr. P. STANHOPE (Wednesbury) asked, if it was to be laid down as a general principle that sailors were to be available for domestic service?

[No reply.]

EAST INDIA (CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS)—REPEAL.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Government of India has taken, or is about to take, any step for securing the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act in that country, in addition to temporarily suspending its operation; whether Her Majesty's Government is prepared to make to the Government of India any representation with the view of securing that repeal; and, whether Her Majesty's Government is prepared to make to the Government of India any representation with the view of securing the repeal of those provisions in the Cantonment Acts which give powers to the Local Government to make Rules and Regulations for inspecting and controlling houses of ill-fame, and for licensing and compelling the examination of prostitutes?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The power of repealing Acts of the Indian Legislature is vested, by Act 24 & 25 *Vict.* c. 67, in the Council of the Governor General for making Laws and Regulations. The Government have no intention of interfering—nor have they the power to interfere—with the discretion of that Body in making, repealing, or amending laws. The directions given to the Government of India as to the Regulations to be framed under the Cantonment Act will be found in the despatch which I have laid on the Table.

MR. JAMES STUART asked, whether the House was to understand, from the hon. Gentleman's reply, that the Government, while condemning certain Regulations as immoral and ordering their removal, were unwilling to take any steps for removing that legislation which authorized them, and, in some cases, encouraged them.

SIR JOHN GORST: The Legislature having entrusted a particular Body in India with the duty of making and amending the laws, it would be highly unbecoming of Her Majesty's Government to interfere with them.

MR. STANSFELD (Halifax): Does the hon. Gentleman mean to assure the House that in the history of the relations of Her Majesty's Government with the Government of India there are no precedents of advice or counsel being given by the Secretary of State to the Government of India?

SIR JOHN GORST: That being a Question of precedent, it is only fair that I should have Notice of it.

MR. JAMES STUART: Does the hon. Gentleman know that advice was given to the Government of India by Her Majesty's Government four years ago?

SIR JOHN GORST asked for Notice of that Question also.

MR. STANSFELD: In consequence of the answer of the hon. Gentleman, I beg to give Notice that on the 5th of June, on which day my hon. Friend the Member for the Crewe Division (Mr. M'Laren) has obtained first place for a Notice of Motion, he will move a Motion in favour of the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts, or those portions of them which authorize or encourage either the compulsory examination of women or the regulation of prostitution, and on that occasion he will undoubtedly endeavour to obtain a decision from the House.

INDIA — PROTECTION OF YOUNG GIRLS.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether a numerously signed Memorial was presented, in September last, to the Governor General of India, from the Ladies' Committee of the Calcutta Missionary Conference, and from other women in India, praying that the protection afforded by "The Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1885," to young girls under 16 in this country might be extended to India; whether it is the case that the Governor General has replied to that Memorial refusing its prayer; whether such protection is afforded to girls under 16 in Russia; and, whether a Treaty has been concluded between this country and Russia, which came into force a year ago, by which provision is made for the extradition from India to Russia of persons accused of seducing girls under 16, which persons are thus liable to be delivered up from India to Russia, to be there tried for what is not a crime in India itself?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State has no knowledge of the facts stated in the first two paragraphs of the Question. Protection is afforded to girls under 16 by Section 373 of the Indian Penal Code. The answer to the last two paragraphs is in the affirmative; but the 18th section of the Russian Treaty provides that its stipulations

> "Shall be applicable to the Colonies and Foreign Possessions of Her Britannic Majesty, so far as the laws for the time being in force in such Colonies and Foreign Possessions respectively will allow."

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONERS, CO. WICKLOW—FAIR RENTS.

MR. BYRNE (Wicklow, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that a large number of originating notices have been served to have fair rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners now sitting in the County Wicklow; whether only 22 applications have been listed for hearing from the Shillelagh Union, 42 from Baltinglass Union, and 134 from Rathdrum Union; and, whether, considering that a very large number of cases will be left undisposed of in the county, he will arrange to have a supplemental list issued for the present Sub-Commission, or have another Sub-Commission granted to sit on an early day?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that the numbers stated in the Question are correct. All notices received from the County Wicklow up to and including the 27th of September last have been listed for hearing at the present sitting. The Commissioners cannot, having regard to the claim of other counties, extend the existing list of cases, or arrange at present for a further Sub-Commission sitting for the County Wicklow.

WAR OFFICE—THE INNISKILLING FUSILIERS.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he is aware of the widespread discontent among the non-commissioned officers of the Inniskilling Fusiliers at Aldershot consequent on their being passed over in promotion in favour of the junior sergeant but one, in the filling of the post of Quartermaster Sergeant; is he aware that several general complaints have been made by the men so passed over; and, whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the truth or otherwise of the allegations contained in the General Reports with a view to removing the discontent so prejudicial to discipline?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The promotion of non-commissioned officers to the Regimental Staff is effected by the selection of the man whom the Commanding Officer considers to be best fitted for the post, irrespective of seniority. In this case the action of the Commanding Officer has been fully approved by the General Officer commanding the Brigade, and I decline altogether to interfere in the matter.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—CONVICTION OF JAMES M'KEON FOR RE-ENTRY.

MR. CONWAY (Leitrim, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of James M'Keon, who was tried before Colonel Turner and Mr. Maloney, Resident Magistrates under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, at Manorhamilton, 9th May, and sentenced to 14 days in Sligo Gaol for re-entering a farm from which he had been evicted in October last; whether he is aware that the County Court Judge, in issuing a decree for possession, also made an order to the effect that in the event of M'Keon paying or tendering one year's rent within a certain time he might regain possession of his holding; whether the defence on 9th May was that such tender was made, but refused, unless costs were paid; whether the ruling of the County Court Judge was denied by Messrs. Hewson and Frazer, the complainants, who it was alleged were in Court when the ruling was given; whether there was some delay in obtaining a copy of the ruling from Mr. Harris, Clerk of the Peace, yet such copy of the ruling arrived before the Court of Petty Sessions broke up, though M'Keon had in the meantime been sentenced; and, whether, under the circumstances, the sentence on M'Keon will be set aside, and some compensation given for injury inflicted and loss of time?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): James M'Keon was tried before Mr. Turner, R.M., and Mr. Molony, R.M., on a charge of forcible entry and detainer of the house from which he had been evicted at the complaint of his landlord. M'Keon pleaded guilty to the charge, and was sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment without hard labour. He did state that the County Court Judge made an order that if he paid a year's rent within a certain time he might regain possession. He produced no evidence, written or otherwise, to sustain this statement, which was denied by the agent, Mr. Hewson, on oath, and by the landlord's solicitor, Mr. Fenton. The written decree of the Judge was produced to the Court; but showed no such ruling on its face as that alleged by the defendant. The charge against M'Keon had been adjourned before it was heard for two weeks, which was ample time for him to procure any proof of his innocence, if such existed. Nothing is known of the alleged arrival of any document, or copy of ruling in connection with it.

Mr. CONWAY: Has the right hon. Gentleman made any inquiry of the Clerk of Petty Sessions with regard to the document furnished by the defendant; and is it not a fact it was read by the Petty Sessions Clerk to the magistrate before M'Keon was sent to gaol.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was afraid he had given all the information in his power.

Mr. CONWAY said, he should put a further Question on the subject.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—JUDICIAL OATHS—THE PRESBYTERIANS.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether it is the custom that when a Presbyterian desires to swear by the uplifted hand, in accordance with his legal rights, he is almost invariably asked in the Irish Courts of Law, "Do you believe that form of oath is binding on your conscience?" whether such a question is asked in virtue of any statutable requirement; and, if so, can he indicate where this statutable requirement is to be found; and, whether, as this inquiry is looked upon as an insult by many of those to whom it is asked, he will consider how best to put a stop to this or similar questions being asked in future?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University): I am making inquiry as to the existence of the custom referred to in the Question; but from the information I have it does not seem to universally prevail. If the hon. Gentleman will kindly postpone the Question until after Whitsuntide, I will be able to give him a complete answer.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND)—DISCHARGE OF PRISONERS FROM BARLINNIE PRISON.

Mr. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Government have yet arranged any plan for the discharge of prisoners from Barlinnie Prison which will be free from the inconvenience to the neighbourhood, amounting to a public nuisance, caused by the present system?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities), in reply, said, that arrangements to meet the difficulty had been adjusted subject to the approval of the Treasury, in which Department the matter was at present receiving consideration.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED MAINTENANCE OF CROWN WITNESSES.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact, as sworn by Cullinane, the Crown witness in the Lisdoonvarna Moonlighting case, that he and others had been kept in the pay of the police, and housed and maintained in a certain house in or near the Ballyrough Road, Dublin; whether he can state the cost of maintaining such lodging house, and whether it is accounted for under any, and which head, of the Irish Votes; and, whether he will state the number of Crown witnesses who have been thus housed and maintained during the last three years; and whether any, and which, of them have been convicted of any, and what, offences?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have as yet received no Report in reference to this matter; and I am, therefore, unable to give an answer to the hon. Member.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, if it would suit the convenience of the right hon. Gentleman, he should repeat the Question after Whitsuntide.

ADMIRALTY—DEVONPORT DOCKYARD —THE FIREMEN.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether any, and what, means were taken to ascertain the fact, as recently stated by him, that the firemen employed in the Devonport Dockyards are satisfied with the present arrangements; whether it is the fact that two Petitions detailing their grievances had been some time previously forwarded to the Admiral Superintendent from the turn-cocks and engine-drivers and stokers; and, whether they received a reply to the effect that "the matter has been considered, and nothing can be done in it"?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The Admiral Superintendent of Devonport Dockyard informed me that the men were generally satisfied; and that, upon his informing them if they wished to give up this duty and the remuneration attached to it they could do so, they declined to take that course. The cost of the extra arrangements for dealing with fire in all the Dockyards, except Devonport, does not exceed £35 per annum. At Devonport, where different conditions exist, the cost of provisional arrangement introduced in 1886 was £960 per annum; and because the Admiral Superintendent has made some changes by which this excessive cost is reduced to £210 per annum, the hon. Gentleman has put to me nearly 30 Questions in support of the former extravagant system.

WAR OFFICE—COMPETITION FOR SUBALTERNS OF MILITIA.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Why it was that whereas 75 commissions were offered at the last competitive examination for subalterns of Militia only 63 were given; and, whether any change has recently been made in the system of marking?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle), in reply, said, that 75 commissions had been given at the last competitive examination for subalterns of Militia.

WAR OFFICE—THE "FIELD EXERCISES."

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in view of the recent changes, it is intended to issue a new edition of the field exercises; and, whether it is a fact, as stated by many booksellers, that the present edition is out of print?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle), in reply, said, that it was intended to issue a new edition of the field exercises.

WAR OFFICE—POWDER AND AMMUNITION BARGES IN THE RIVER THAMES.

COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether a new barge contractor has recently, by his neglect, placed the arsenal and town of Woolwich in great danger by leaving powder and ammunition barges unattended in the river Thames; whether about 750 tons of explosives were in the deserted barges, and that, with the adjacent powder ship and Government barges, a total of 2,000 tons of ammunition and powder was involved in risk; to whom would the people of the Metropolis look for indemnity for loss of life and property in case an accident had happened; whether his attention has been called to the statement of the contractor—

> "That he employed vagrants, whose names and addresses he did not know, and who deserted the barges;"

And, if so, will the Government offer a reward for the said vagrants to come forward and explain whether they swam ashore, or how they all made their escape unobserved, and particularly why they left work for which they were to be paid; and, whether the said contractor will be continued in the service of the Government?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I explained, in answer to my hon. and gallant Friend a few days ago, that a barge contractor had recently committed a grave offence in the manner indicated in the Question. The contractor is bound by his contract to provide a suitable watchman for each barge; and as he failed to do so, he was summoned and punished by a heavy fine. The responsibility for the characters of the watchmen must rest with the contractor. This contractor is quite new to the work; and the notice taken of this offence will, no doubt, render him more careful in future.

TRADES AND COMMERCE—THE AUSTRIAN TARIFF—DUTY ON BICYCLES, &c.

MR. ERNEST SPENCER (West Bromwich) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is aware that the Austrian Government suddenly, without any previous warning or notice of any kind, have decided that bicycles and tricycles should be ranged in the class of carriages or personal vehicles, and that, under such regulation, the duty payable on each bicycle or tricycle imported will be florins 25 gold or £2 10*s.* (*circa*), and also that such duty should come into operation on the 10th of May instant; and, that, inasmuch as this measure will practically ruin the very considerable export business done by this country with Austria in the sale of bicycles and tricycles, whether he would communicate with the Austrian Government on the subject, with a view to securing the withdrawal of the impost?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Inquiry will be made, and such action taken as, in the circumstances, may be possible.

ISLANDS OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC—SAMOA—HARBOUR OF PAGO PAGO.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Treaty between the United States and Samoa, conceding to the former Power the conclusive control of the Harbour of Pago Pago in time of war, is still in force; and, in such case, if any period has been fixed for its termination; whether representations have been from time to time addressed to Her Majesty's Government by Australasian Ministers, directing earnest attention to the deprivation thereby to British ships of a suitable harbour and coaling station in Mid Pacific, and in the direct ocean track between Australasia and Vancouver, and Australasia and Panama; and, what steps have been taken in the matter?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): There is a Treaty between the United States and Samoa of January 17, 1878, which provides that the United States may establish a Naval Station in the Harbour of Pago Pago; but it does not give to the United States exclusive control over other parts of the harbour. So far as Her Majesty's Government are aware the Treaty is still in force. As far as I have been able to ascertain at present, no such representations as are indicated in the second Question have been made.

ISLANDS OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC—SAMOA.

MR. W. A. M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any agreement was arrived at with Germany in regard to Samoa prior to the assembling of the Washington Conference; and, if so, what was the date of the agreement; whether the United States Government has agreed that Germany should act as the mandatory Power in Samoa; whether Germany was acting within her right in landing a force of armed men at Apia, in forcibly deporting to the Cameroons a King in Treaty relations with us, and in abolishing by declaration of their Consul the joint Consular jurisdiction over the district of Apia previously exercised by England, Germany, and the United States; and, whether there exists any correspondence on this matter with either Germany, the United States, or any of the Australian Colonies; and, if so, when it will be presented to the House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): As I have already stated, the views of Her Majesty's Government were founded on the Reports of their High Commissioner in the Pacific, and were in accordance with the proposals made by Germany to the Conference at Washington. There was no "agreement" between Her Majesty's Government and that of Germany; but certainly an interchange of views and, as I have said, a concurrence of opinion as to the basis of an arrangement for the future government of Samoa. No conclusion has been arrived at upon that proposal. The landing a German force at Apia was consequent upon a declaration of war. The termination of the joint Consular jurisdiction at Apia was the consequence of the withdrawal of Germany from the Convention of 1879, upon which the separate jurisdiction of the Consuls revived. Her Majesty's Government do not think the maintenance of that Convention desirable. No doubt, there is Correspondence onthese matters; but I am unable to say, at such short Notice, whether there is any that can at present be conveniently laid upon the Table.

POOR LAW GUARDIANS—VISITING COMMITTEES.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether only Guardians who are on the Visiting Committee are permitted to visit the poorhouse of their Union; whether this Regulation is in accordance with an Order of the Local Government Board; and, if so, for what object such Order was made; whether the Regulation has led to ineffective control and supervision of workhouses by the Guardians, and whether, in consequence thereof, many complaints have been made; and whether he will consider the desirability of rescinding or modifying such Regulation?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Regulations of the Local Government Board require the Guardians to appoint one or more Visiting Committees from their own Body. The Board consider that Guardians who are not members of the Visiting Committee cannot claim as a right to visit the workhouse. The Regulations which the Board have issued contain no provision to this effect; but it appears to the Board to be the result of the statutory provision in the 4 & 5 *Will.* IV. c. 76, s. 38. It is to be observed, however, that the Board of Guardians may grant permission to visit the workhouse, if they think fit, to any Guardian or Guardians who are not members of the Visiting Committee. The fact that every member of a Board of Guardians has not the right to visit the workhouse at any time he may think fit has not, in my opinion, led to ineffective control and supervision of workhouses by the Guardians; nor am I aware that many complaints have been made on the subject. I should not be prepared to interfere with the discretion of the Guardians in this matter.

VENEZUELA—THE UNITED STATES.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) (for Mr. WATT) (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can state if it is a fact that the United States Government have decided upon taking action against the United States of Venezuela, so as to recover the long outstanding claims of certain United States subjects; and, whether Her Majesty's Government, having regard to the widespread discontent existing in British Guiana, owing to the long delay in the delimitation of the North-Western Frontier, are now prepared to state what action they propose taking, so as to determine the question of boundary?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have no such knowledge. I am not aware that there is widespread discontent in British Guiana. The state of affairs in the disputed territory is, undoubtedly, not satisfactory; but, at present, Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to state what action may be taken to determine the question of boundary.

ADMIRALTY—CASE OF G. L. GROVER, LATE MIDSHIPMAN OF H.M.S. "BACCHANTE."

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea) (for Mr. GILLIAT) (Clapham) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he has been able to re-consider his decision not to grant a pension in the case of George Lionel Grover, late Midshipman of H.M.S. *Bacchante*, discharged without pension on his return invalided from service of great hardship on the coast of Africa?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): No, Sir. I have very carefully inquired into Mr. Grover's case, and regret I am unable to reverse the decision previously come to. To place a midshipman after three years' service for the remainder of his life on the pension list is an act to which I cannot assent, when the officer does not, in my judgment come within the Regulations governing such pensions.

Mr. WHITMORE begged to give Notice that, in consequence of the answer just given, his hon. Friend would call attention to the subject on going into Committee of Supply.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—EMPLOYMENT OF COUNSEL.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the statement made at the meeting of the Metropolitan Board of Works on Friday last, that the Board was entitled, under the provisions of the Act appointing the Board of Works Inquiry Commission, to employ counsel on behalf of the Board, and to pay the cost of them out of the money of London ratepayers; and, whether, under the provisions of the said Act, it is competent for the Board to employ and to pay counsel at the expense of the ratepayers?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The Act under which a Royal Commission is sitting to inquire into the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works enables them to appear by counsel or solicitor before the Commissioners. It is silent as to the payment of the counsel. I understand the contention of the Board to be that this clause carries with it, by implication, the right to charge the expense on the rates. Whether that contention is well founded or not is a question of construction, on which I cannot give an opinion. It must be settled by a Court of Law if any contest arises.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—BOARDS OF GUARDIANS—TRANSFER OF POWERS.

Mr. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, under Section 8 of the Local Government Bill, the powers and duties of existing Boards of Guardians could by Order in Council be transferred to the County Councils?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The terms of Clause 8 of the Local Government Bill are, no doubt, very comprehensive; and when the clause is reached in Committee I shall be prepared to agree to its being made clear that it is not to extend to Boards of Guardians.

ADMIRALTY—THE DOCKS AT HAULBOWLINE.

Dr. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether it is the intention of the Government to complete the docks at Haulbowline, and to open them for the repairing and building of ships?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The dock at Haulbowline is in course of completion; and, when finished, will be utilized on any occasion when it advantageously can be.

Dr. FOX: Is it the intention to spend any of the large sums about to be voted for the improvement of the Navy——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked, if the Admiralty purposed excavating a passage from the deep sea channel to the dock, inasmuch as the dock could not be utilized before that was done? He had asked this Question three times in the course of the last seven months, but had received no answer. Had the work been commenced?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Of course, the dock would be useless unless there was access to it. Of course, the passage would be made before the dock was opened; but he could not answer the Question off hand.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — RE-APPOINTMENT OF MR. H. EGAN—TULLAMORE.

Dr. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Lord Chancellor has received a requisition from the Board of Town Commissioners of Tullamore, asking for the re-appointment of Mr. Henry Egan to the Commission of the Peace, for the purpose of the Towns Improvement Act; and, whether there is any special objection to his re-appointment?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Lord

Chancellor of Ireland has favoured me with a statement, to the effect that last December he received the requisition alluded to; but that he declined to make the appointment. In so declining he acted in the exercise of the discretion vested in him by law.

DR. FOX asked, was it not a fact that after the re-election of Mr. Egan to the Chairmanship of the Town Commissioners of Tullamore he was allowed to act as magistrate; and that it was only when acting in his capacity as Visiting Justice at Tullamore Gaol in connection with some of the right hon. Gentleman's political opponents that the Lord Chancellor struck him off the list?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that, may I ask whether Mr. Egan had any right to visit as a Visiting Justice?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, if Mr. Egan acted as a magistrate he acted on his own responsibility, and he had no title whatever to do so.

DR. FOX asked, was it not the fact that there was no magistrate in Tullamore for the purpose of the Towns Improvement Act; and, also, whether it was the intention of the Lord Chancellor to appoint Mr. Egan?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot answer that Question.

DR. FOX said, that on a future day he should put a further Question on this subject.

MARGARINE ACT, 1887—SEIZURE OF DUTCH MARGARINE.

MR. MACLURE (Lancashire, S.E., Stretford) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that since the passing of the Margarine Act thousands of packages of margarine have been shipped through the Port of Hull branded as margarine, Dutch make, but that during the last four days such consignments have been seized, the only grounds given being that it should have been marked "Dutch made," not "Dutch make?"

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: I am informed that the goods in question have been released, with a caution to the importers. It is right to state that, in addition to the words "Dutch make" the packages were labelled with English words, such as "the best."

BARNARD'S INN—SALE OF THE INN.

MR. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that Barnard's Inn, one of the Inns of Chancery, is to be offered for sale on the 20th of June next; whether it is a fact that this Inn is an ancient Corporation originally established for the training of law students; and, whether the sale, if it takes place, will divert a public property to private purposes?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): Whatever may have been the original constitution of Barnard's Inn, I believe that, in common with many other Inns of the same character, it long since passed into private hands; and therefore, to the best of my belief, under the present sale no property will be diverted from public to private purposes. As the hon. Member is probably aware, there were other Inns in a similar position, and they are believed to have been private establishments, with a view to the study of the law.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE LICENSING CLAUSES—LEGAL RIGHT TO RENEWAL.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Licensing Clauses of the Local Government Bill were framed upon the advice of the Law Officers that publicans have, in the absence of misconduct, a legal vested right to the renewal of their licences; whether there is now reason to believe that this opinion is erroneous; and, whether the Government will take advantage of the Recess to re-consider their proposed legislation on this subject?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) (who replied) said: It is quite unusual for the Government to state what advice they receive from their Law Officers; and I cannot, therefore, give the hon. Gentleman any information on the subject. I may say, however, that I have already stated in the House that in framing our proposals on the licensing question we were guided by what we consider the paramount claims of equity, and from these we cannot recede. I desire, however, to take this opportunity of saying that the Question of the hon. Gentleman seems to imply a misconception of the proposals of the Government—a misconception which I have noticed seems to be largely shared by those who have adversely criticized the clauses in the Local Government Bill dealing with this question. It seems to be the impression that we propose to take away certain powers now possessed by the Justices under which renewal of licences may be refused. The Bill does nothing of the kind. On the contrary, it is expressly provided that where a person is desirous that a licence should not be renewed on any ground on which Justices would, if the Act had not passed, have been authorized or required to refuse the renewal of such licence, such person may apply to the Justices, who may make a Report that the licence ought not to be renewed; and if, on appeal, the decision of the Justices be confirmed the Licensing Committee must refuse to renew the licence. In such a case there would be no claim for compensation. Whether the Justices do or do not possess such a power except for misconduct under the existing law is, I am aware, a matter of contention; but if they do possess such a power it will be seen we do not propose to take it away. Undoubtedly, however, such a power, if possessed, has been rarely exercised. This being so, we thought it right, with a view of facilitating the closing of public-houses where not required, to confer upon the County Councils powers, in addition to those of a judicial character possessed by the Justices, expressly enabling them to close public-houses where, in their opinion, they were not required; and in that case, and that alone, compensation can be claimed, and to provide for that compensation a special duty on licences may be imposed. The position, in the event of the Bill passing, would, therefore, be that where renewal of licences was refused in consequence of the action of the Justices under any powers at present possessed by them, no compensation could be claimed; but where renewal was refused by the County Council under the new powers created by the Bill compensation would be paid by means of a fund practically created by the Licensed Victuallers themselves.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): The right hon. Gentleman says the magistrates rarely exercise their powers of refusing licences. I desire to know whether the right hon. Gentleman is willing to give the Returns he referred to the other day in reply to the hon. Member for the Leigh Division of Lancashire (Mr. Caleb Wright)?

MR. RITCHIE: I have promised to communicate with the Home Office upon the subject, and have done so; but I have not yet ascertained whether the Return can be prepared. If it can, it shall be granted.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): Does the right hon. Gentleman still adhere to the statement made that the Bill places holders of licences in a more secure position?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir; I take it that under the provisions of this Bill it will not be possible to do that which I know some hon. Members in this House desire—namely, to close the whole of the public-houses in a neighbourhood by means of what is commonly known as local option.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked whether, according to the right hon. Gentleman's own showing, the Licensing Magistrates would not have a perfect right to close every public-house without assigning any reason; and that, if they did not assign any reason, there would be no compensation?

MR. RITCHIE: As I have stated, what the exact powers of the magistrates are in this respect is a matter of contention; but, certainly, if the hon. Member refers to a decision recently given, I understand that Justices could not, even under that decision, act as the hon. Member suggests; but must take each case into consideration, and act judicially with reference to it.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, in view of the important discussions that might be anticipated on the Licensing Clauses of the Local Government Bill, he would cause to be printed and circulated as a Parliamentary Paper a full report of the case of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield and others," and of the Judgments delivered in that case by Mr. Justice Field and Mr. Justice Wills?

MR. RITCHIE (who replied) said, although the Judgments of Mr. Justice

Field and Mr. Justice Wills are, no doubt, of considerable importance, as the hon. Member is probably aware, an appeal against the decision of those Judges is pending. This being the case, it is not proposed to issue as a Parliamentary Paper a full report of the case and Judgments, as that would be a very unusual course.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Will the right hon. Gentleman not bring forward the Licensing Clauses until that appeal is decided?

Mr. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir; we shall bring forward the Licensing Clauses as soon as the House will allow us to do so.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE FISH TRADE—THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL AND THE GREATER MUNICIPAL COUNCILS.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government see their way to any steps to remedy the excessive difference between the price of fish brought to shore cheap and sold to the consumer very dear; or whether they will propose to add to the Local Government Bill provisions giving to the London County Council and the greater Municipal Councils powers of local legislation sufficient to deal with markets and monopolies and the sources of dear fish, bad gas, insufficient water, and other evils of that kind?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Member asks me whether the Government see their way to take any steps to remedy the excessive difference between the price of fish brought to shore cheap and sold to the consumer very dear. I should have said myself that that is, undoubtedly, an opportunity for private enterprize, which the hon. Gentleman might endeavour to stimulate himself. There is evidently a vast field for those who desired to benefit themselves and to benefit their countrymen. Then the hon. Member asks the Government to add to the Local Government Bill provisions giving to the greater Municipal Councils powers of local legislation. I think that the right time to discuss that question is when we arrive at the Local Government Bill itself; and if the hon. Gentleman desires to improve that measure the Government will be very glad of his assistance.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL gave Notice that he would put on the Paper an Amendment giving power to these Councils to deal with these and other monopolies.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL—THE COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When Her Majesty's Government propose to state the names of the persons to be appointed Commissioners under the Scottish Universities Bill, which has been introduced in the House of Lords? He also wished to ask, in consequence of a rumour that the Government proposed that the Commission should consist of 15 Members, whether the right hon. Gentleman could now state the number of Commissioners?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): As the latter Question was not put upon the Paper, I have not informed myself upon the subject; and, therefore, I am unable to give the hon. Member the information he asks for. With regard to the Question on the Paper, the Government hope to be able to state the names of the Commissioners under the Scotch Universities Bill during the Committee stage in the House of Lords; but, in any case, they will be stated before the Bill leaves that House.

SCOTLAND—INSPECTION OF MINES—APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. J. W. PHILIPS (Lanark, Mid) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in the event of a vacancy occurring among the Chief Inspectors of Mines in Scotland, he will give a pledge that he will appoint a new Inspector only from among the ranks of men who are, or have been, practical working miners?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): No; I can give no such pledge. I shall on every occasion appoint the most competent person I can find.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — THE MILITIA (IRELAND)—INSUBORDINATION.

Colonel WARING (Down, N.) wished to ask the Secretary of State for War a Question of which he had given him private Notice. It was, Whether he had seen a report in *The Dublin Evening Mail*, taken from *The Cork Herald*, which states that the Clare Militia, when assembling for their annual training, saluted their commanding officer with three groans; and what steps he intended to take in case this report should be verified?

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I should like to ask him whether the commanding officer was not Colonel O'Callaghan?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I know nothing of this matter except what is contained in the paragraph referred to. It is obvious, therefore, that I can make no statement with regard to it.

AUSTRALIA—CHINESE IMMIGRANTS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he is in a position to state what progress, if any, has been made in the negotiations between the British and Chinese Governments with reference to the landing of Chinese in Australia; and, whether the Governor of New South Wales has been instructed to veto any special Act passed by the Parliament of the Colony dealing with Chinese immigration?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir John Gorst) (who replied) said: Her Majesty's Government are not in a position to make any statement on the subject, which is one requiring full and careful consideration. No instructions of the nature suggested have been sent to the Governor of New South Wales.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE WHITSUNTIDE HOLIDAYS.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.) desired to know whether it was intended to hold a Morning Sitting to-morrow?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, the Government were entirely in the hands of the House, and desired to meet the convenience of the House, with regard to the adjournment over the Whitsuntide Recess. There were, however, two steps which must be taken before the adjournment could be moved. In the first place, he must ask the House for a Vote on Account; and, secondly, he hoped that the House would read the Employers' Liability Bill a second time, so that it could be sent to the Grand Committee on Trade. If these steps were taken they would be prepared to move the adjournment that evening. But if those steps were not taken, he should have to ask the House to meet to-morrow at 2 o'clock.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he had proposed, on the Motion for Adjournment, to discuss the question of the emigration of crofters; but as he found that it would be possible to raise that question on the Vote for the salary of the Secretary for Scotland, he would deal with it then, and so avoid the necessity of delaying the adjournment.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that he would take care that all the Papers on the subject should be in the hands of Members before the end of the Recess.

In reply to Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.),

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he was not able to say precisely when the Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill would be taken; but it was possible they might be able to reach it on the 4th of June.

In reply to Mr. Illingworth (Bradford, W.),

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that if the Employers' Liability Bill was not read a second time that night he should have to ask the House to come to a decision on the measure at the Morning Sitting to-morrow.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE AFFRAY AT MITCHELSTOWN IN SEPTEMBER LAST—THE CORONER'S INQUEST.

Mr. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question of which I have given him private Notice. It is this—Whether he is correctly reported, in his speech at Battersea last night, as having described the inquest at Mitchelstown as corrupt; and, if so, whether he will state to the House the ground on which the charge of corruption was based?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am not sure that I used that word. If I did, I am glad that the hon. Member has given me the opportunity of saying that I never intended what the word "corrupt" naturally means when applied to a tribunal—namely, being bribed or influenced by corrupt pecuniary considerations. What I ought to have said—and I beg everybody concerned to take the correction—is that the tribunal was incompetent and worthless.

Subsequently,

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I have to ask the Chief Secretary a Question arising out of the answer he has given just now. In answer to my hon. Friend he said that the inquiry into the cause of death at Mitchelstown had been made before a tribunal which was incompetent and worthless; and I wish to know whether he will take steps to have an inquiry into the cause of death by some tribunal which is competent and worthy?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already answered several Questions on this subject, and I do not know that I have anything to add. I have followed exactly the precedent set by my Predecessors.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND) — THE RIVER BANN — LEGISLATION.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in the event of the House not sitting to-morrow, when he proposes to introduce the Irish Drainage Bills, and especially that relating to the drainage of the Bann?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I must be guided by the feelings of the Irish Members. If they will take it as a non-contentious Bill, and the House has no objection, my right hon. Friend is not indisposed to put it down for Thursday, the 31st, the day we re-assemble after the Recess?

WAR OFFICE—NAVAL AND MILITARY ORGANIZATION—THE ROYAL MARINE FORCE.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can give an assurance to the House that the promised inquiry into naval and military organization will include an examination into the cost of organization and employment of the Royal Marine Forces; whether at present the country reaps the full advantage from the expenditure on the scientific training and technical instruction of the officers and men of the Royal Marine Artillery; and, whether the transfer from the War Office to the Admiralty of the coaling stations abroad, and the substitution of Marine for Army garrisons, will tend to reduce expenditure and increase efficiency?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Government certainly intend that the subject to which the hon. and gallant Member refers shall be inquired into by competent persons, under their direction and with their full responsibility.

NATIONAL DEFENCE BILL.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) asked, when the adjourned debate on the National Defence Bill would be taken?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, the Resolutions relating to Imperial Defence and the National Defence Bill would be the first Orders for Monday, June 4, as the Government were desirous, owing to the importance of the question, to have the matter disposed of as rapidly as possible. After the two Bills on this subject the Irish Bills would be taken.

RULES OF DEBATE—QUESTIONS.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked—in consequence of the enormous delay and waste of the time of the House that had been involved to-day in the answering of Questions—Whether the First Lord of the Treasury would arrange that in future the Questions and Answers should be printed with the Orders of the Day?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I think the hon. Gentleman must see that that is a question which must be decided by the House itself.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES—RETURN.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked, If the Government still intended to oppose the Return moved for by his hon. Friend (Mr. Handel Cossham) with regard to Friendly Societies?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, the Government still intended to oppose the Return in question, because they did not know how to get the information desired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Vote on Account, No. 2.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a further sum, not exceeding £4,205,300, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the following Charge for Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889," viz. :—

CIVIL SERVICES.

Class I.—Public Works and Buildings.

Great Britain :—	£
Admiralty, Extension of Buildings ..	- -
Disturnpiked and Main Roads (England and Wales)	- -
Disturnpiked Roads (Scotland) ..	- -

Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments.

England :—	£
Foreign Office	15,000
Colonial Office	7,000
Privy Council Office and Subordinate Departments	7,000
Board of Trade and Subordinate Departments	15,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	- -
Charity Commission (including Endowed Schools Department) ..	6,000
Civil Service Commission	9,000
Exchequer and Audit Department ..	10,000
Friendly Societies, Registry ..	1,500
Land Commission for England ..	4,000
Local Government Board	100,000
Lunacy Commission	3,000
Mint (including Coinage)	5,000
National Debt Office	2,500
Patent Office	9,000
Paymaster General's Office.. ..	4,000
Public Works Loan Commission ..	1,500
Record Office	4,000
Registrar General's Office	5,000
Stationery Office and Printing ..	80,000
Woods, Forests, &c. Office of ..	4,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	6,000
Mercantile Marine Fund, Grant in Aid	20,000
Secret Service	6,000
Scotland :—	
Secretary for Scotland	1,000
Exchequer and other Offices ..	1,000
Fishery Board	1,000
Lunacy Commission	500
Registrar General's Office	500
Board of Supervision	- -
Ireland :—	
Lord Lieutenant's Household ..	2,000
Chief Secretary's Office	5,500
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	300
Local Government Board	5,000
Public Works Office	6,000
Record Office	800
Registrar General's Office	2,500
Valuation and Boundary Survey ..	5,500

Class III.—Law and Justice.

England :—	
Law Charges	12,000
Criminal Prosecutions	40,000
Supreme Court of Judicature ..	65,000
Wreck Commission	2,000
County Courts	20,000
Land Registry	- -
Revising Barristers, England ..	- -
Police Courts (London and Sheerness)	3,000
Metropolitan Police	125,000
Special Police	9,000
County and Borough Police, Great Britain	2,000
Prisons, England and the Colonies ..	80,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	80,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	5,000
Scotland :—	
Lord Advocate, and Criminal Proceedings	10,000
Courts of Law and Justice	10,000
Register House Departments ..	6,000
Crofters Commission	1,000
Police, Counties and Burghs (Scotland)	1,000
Prisons, Scotland	20,000
Ireland :—	
Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	15,000
Supreme Court of Judicature ..	16,000
Court of Bankruptcy	1,500
Admiralty Court Registry	200
Registry of Deeds..	3,000
Registry of Judgments	400
Land Commission..	15,000
County Court Officers, &c... ..	18,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police (including Police Courts)	20,000
Constabulary	280,000
Prisons, Ireland	20,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools..	30,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	1,000

Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art.

England :—	£
Public Education	800,000
Science and Art Department ..	80,000
British Museum	25,000
National Gallery	1,500
National Portrait Gallery	400
Learned Societies, &c.	4,500
London University	3,000
Universities and Colleges, Grants in Aid	3,000
Deep Sea Exploring Expedition (Report)	500
Scotland :—	
Public Education	140,000
Universities, &c.	2,000
National Gallery	- -
Ireland :—	
Public Education	200,000
Teachers' Pension Office	200
Endowed Schools Commissioners ..	100
National Gallery	500
Queen's Colleges	2,500
Royal Irish Academy	900

Class V.—Foreign and Colonial Services.

Diplomatic Services	70,000
Consular Services	50,000
Slave Trade Services	2,000
Suez Canal (British Directors) ..	- -
Colonies, Grants in Aid	10,000
South Africa and St. Helena ..	11,000
Subsidies to Telegraph Companies ..	14,000
Cyprus, Grant in Aid	29,000

Class VI.—Non-Effective and Charitable Services.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances	90,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, &c.	7,000
Pauper Lunatics, England	5,000
Pauper Lunatics, Scotland	25,000
Pauper Lunatics, Ireland	40,000
Hospitals and Infirmaries, Ireland ..	6,000
Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiency	50,000
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain ..	800
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Ireland	200

Class VII.—Miscellaneous.

Temporary Commissions	8,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	- -
Public Works and Industries, Ireland	6,000
Repayment of Kilrush and Kilkee Railway Deposit	- -
Total for Civil Services ..	£2,955,300

Revenue Departments.	£
Customs	100,000
Inland Revenue	100,000
Post Office	600,000
Post Office Packet Service	150,000
Post Office Telegraphs	300,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£1,250,000
Grand Total ..	£4,205,300

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, that the policy of passing Votes on Account was a very doubtful and dangerous one, and that the present Vote, although it did not affect the Army and Navy, practically covered the whole of the Civil Service Estimates, of which only Class I. and Class II. had already been obtained. On Friday last the Government put down upon the Paper a Notice of effective Supply, as if they had intended to take Supply that evening; but, nevertheless, they permitted the House to be counted out before a quarter to 8 o'clock. They, therefore, lost that opportunity, as they had done also on several previous occasions. He was of opinion that they had failed to make such a use of the time of the House for pushing forward the Estimates as they might have done without difficulty, and under those circumstances it was a somewhat strong measure for them to come down to the House in the middle of May, and ask for a second Vote of Credit for those very Estimates which, if they had desired, they might have placed in a much more advanced position than they actually occupied. There had already been one Vote on Account abused on the 16th of May, and that Vote put Her Majesty's Government in funds for two months of the financial year. He did not object to the course taken on that occasion; in fact, it was, under the arrangements which prevailed in reference to the financial Business of the country, invariable that a Vote on Account should be taken in connection with the Civil Service Estimates, in order to enable the Government to carry on the business of the country. But a second Vote on Account was justifiable only in extreme and very unusual circumstances. The whole system of Votes on Account was open to very great abuse, and of late years it had been very considerably so treated, with the result that the scrutiny and fair consideration at the hands of independent Members of the House of Commons was altogether impossible. The Vote the Committee was asked to pass now would carry on the Government until the end of July. That was to say, that if the Committee consented to the Vote, as in all probability they would—indeed he knew they would—the Government would be so much in funds that they could go on with their Administration until the very eve of the month of August, altogether independent of the criticism and supervision which it was the first duty of the House of Commons to give to that Administration. He would ask any Member of the House whether his own practical experience did not prove that the amount of supervision, criticism, and control that should be applied to the Estimates in the month of August was not of the most unreal and ineffective character. To discuss Votes of Supply in the month of August was practically to turn the proceeding of Supply into little more than a question of form. The present Government, of all others, was scarcely one which ought to bring forward a second Vote on Account with hardihood; because they were more open to suspicion in regard to their intentions than almost any other Government which had ever sat on the Treasury Bench. With one single exception, they were the first Government which had asked for a third Vote on Account, and they did that last year. With the exception of the unfortunate precedent to which he alluded, and which occurred earlier, that was the first occasion on which the Government came down to the House to ask for a third Vote on Account of the Civil Service Estimates, and that they did in the middle of July last. The result of that proceeding was that there was no practical discussion on the Civil Service Estimates in Committee of Supply last year with regard to a considerable portion of the Votes. What the Government did last year there was every reason to suppose they would do, or be strongly tempted to do, again this year. If they obtained this Vote there was absolutely nothing to prevent them repeating and establishing the precedent of last year, and, at the last moment, towards the end of July they would ask the House to consent to a third Vote on Account of the Civil Service Estimates. This system of Votes on Account was bad in itself, and was one which had been strenuously resisted in respect of the Army and Navy Estimates whenever it had been suggested. It had only been allowed in regard to the Civil Service Estimates. Some years ago, in 1882, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was Prime Minister, in the debate on the Army Estimates the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) suggested at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, that instead of persisting with Vote 1 of the Army Estimates, the Government should be satisfied with a Vote on Account for a smaller sum than was asked for. The Prime Minister at once repudiated the suggestion, and he said—

> "I believe it to be a practice totally unknown to Parliament to take a Vote on Account in regard to the Army Estimates, and the only occasions on which it has been assented to has been when there has been a Dissolution of Parliament, or a change of Government in prospect. That constitutes a state of things wholly exceptional, and the whole of the House of Commons, it may be, has not been in a position to discuss the policy, because it was not known what Government would deal with the Estimates of the year.—(3 *Hansard*, [267] 852.)

Those were the only circumstances on which Votes on Account could be permitted upon the Army or Navy Estimates. In regard to the Civil Service Estimates, the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that Votes on Account of the Civil Services were absolutely necessary; but they were never tolerated, except in cases of absolute necessity. He thought the Government would find it rather difficult to show that it was absolutely necessary that this Vote on Account should be taken that evening. The money which they had now in hand from the previous Vote on Account would carry them down to the end of the present month. They proposed to take power to obtain effective Supply on the 31st of May, when the House re-assembled; and, therefore, it was not necessary that this Vote on Account should be taken on the 17th of May. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, in the remarks which he made in 1882, went on to say that if they allowed Votes on Account to apply to the Military and Naval Services, the consequence would be that a large portion of the expenditure would be incurred by the House of Commons at the beginning of the year without discussing the scale of expenditure as fixed by the Government, and a considerable portion of it without any discussion at all. What was true of the Army and Navy Estimates was equally true with respect of the Civil Service Estimates, so far as Votes on Account were concerned. In passing a Vote on Account, they gave the sanction of the House of Commons for a certain portion of the year to the entire scale of expenses in all its parts and particulars, and the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian added, that a practice of this kind greatly tended to relax the control of the House of Commons and to encourage the Government to put forward other Business after taking as many Votes of Supply as they were able to get. Hon. Members would be aware that the Government had evinced a desire to push forward other measures — such as the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill, and what they had already done they would be prepared to do again; because their hands were quite full of measures. If the House assented to Votes on Account it would be taking an important step in the direction of establishing a most mischievous precedent—a precedent attended by all the mischief which was indicated by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian in his speech in 1882. It appeared to him (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) that the Committee was making a great mistake in relaxing its hold over the voting of public money, and allowing the Constitutional practice which had been provided for controlling the action of the Executive to slip away. At any rate, they ought to have an assurance from the Government that they would not do this year what they did last Session, and come to the House in the month of July for a third Vote on Account, so that they might be enabled, as they were last year, to evade any responsibility to the House of explaining the details of the expenditure. He altogether objected on principle to the Government being put in possession of funds for such long periods. He would refer to one or two of the items affected by the present Vote, and he thought that he should be able, in so doing, to show the Committee what the nature of his objections was. He would say nothing of Class I., but there were two or three items in Class II. which he thought would show that a Vote on Account was not at all likely to add to the efficiency of the House in criticizing the policy of the Government. The Government had already been voted a large sum for the Foreign Office, and they now came forward to ask for another sum of £15,000. That was to say, that they proposed to place themselves in possession of funds which would enable them to carry on until the end of August. Both with regard to the Foreign Office Vote, and the Colonial Vote, it was perfectly clear that the situation of affairs, not only in Europe, but in Asia, was of such a nature that some very important matters were likely to occur between this and the month of August. Was, therefore, the Government to be in such a position as to afford to dispense altogether with the assistance of the House of Commons with respect of its Foreign and Colonial policy for so long a period? Then, again, there was the Board of Trade and its subordinate Departments. Further Votes were to be taken for that Department, and yet the Government admitted that they did not know, and were not able at present to afford to the House any information in regard to the amount of money it was proposed to take from the suitors or creditors in Bankruptcy, nor what steps were proposed to be taken to enable the House to judge of the propriety of the future proceedings that were to be taken in reference to the Bankruptcy Court. They were told by the Government that the site at the west-end of the Law Courts was to be covered by a new Court of Bankruptcy, and he wanted to know whether the whole of the expenses in connection with that new building was really to be taken out of the Suitors Fund, and whether the creditors were to be despoiled in that manner. He thought the Committee were entitled to have information on matters of that kind before the Government came down and asked for a large Vote on Account, which would practically enable them to evade explanation. Then, again, there was the Exchequer and Audit Department. The Government asked for a sum of £10,000, when they had already received £9,000. The Exchequer and Audit Department was, at the present moment, in an interesting position. One of the most important posts in the whole of the Public Service was at present vacant, and it was a matter of great concern to know who was to succeed the late Controller and Auditor General, a man of exceptional ability and of great experience, who, although he had retired on account of failing health and advanced age, had done great public service. There was a Gentleman subordinate to him, Sir Charles Ryan, who had done excellent work as a public officer. It was of great importance to the public to know how servants of that kind were to be treated, or who was to occupy this particular post in future as representing the House of Commons in checking the public expenditure. They were not informed about that, nor what future means the Government were taking for the administration of the Exchequer and Audit Department. The next item in the Votes which appeared to call for challenge was that of the Patent Office. It had had £9,000 advanced for it already out of a total Vote of £54,000, and the Committee were asked to vote £9,000 more, making £18,000 in all; or one third of the annual expenditure in connection with the Office was to be advanced without any effective criticism being possible in the House of Commons, or without the Committee being informed what the Government proposed to do in connection with the Department. At present it was a notoriously mismanaged Department. Thousands of pounds had been voted for the Department, in order that they should be spent in a particular way; but year after year the work for which the money was voted had not been done, in spite of representations from Lord Chancellors, Committees, and Commissioners. Indeed, the work had not been done to that day, and then it was proposed that the Committee should vote to those who had the control of the Department a further sum of £9,000. The last item was that of the Mercantile Marine Fund. Out of a total Vote of £40,000, £15,000 had already been advanced, and the Government now asked for £20,000 more. That was to say, that they asked for £35,000 out of a total annual sum of £40,000, leaving only £5,000 to be voted hereafter. Now, what was the condition of the Mercantile Marine Fund? Everyone knew that the whole question of fees and dues for lighting in connection with our shipping would have to be revised by reason of the reckless fashion in which some time ago they were reduced. They were reduced in such a way that in one single year there was a loss of over £300,000, and it was found necessary to borrow a sum of £150,000 from Greenwich Hospital in order to allow the thing to go on. It was important, not only to the Committee, but to the whole mercantile community of this country, that some information should be given in regard to the way in which the Mercantile Marine Fund was to be dealt with. He did not object to the Votes which were proposed to be taken for most of the public offices in Ireland. So far as the Lord Lieutenant's Household, the Chief Secretary's Office, and other Departments were concerned, the demands which were made seemed to him to be reasonable and just, and it would not be fair to withhold a contribution from them when they were voting money on account. But there was one Office in Ireland—namely, the Public Office of Works—which would have important work thrown upon it in the new legislation which the House would shortly be invited to consider. Now, the Board of Works had already been subjected to much criticism in regard to their proceedings in the past. Their relations with the Treasury up to a recent period had been always anything but satisfactory, as the Treasury had itself more than once admitted. Therefore, the Committee ought to know something about the position of the Board before they were asked to vote such a large sum as £6,000 for that Department. There was another extraordinary feature in these Estimates. Many questions had lately been asked in regard to the Metropolitan Police, and he found that the total sum to be voted for that Force in the present year was £583,000, of which £125,000 had already been provided. The Committee were now asked to vote another sum of £125,000—that was to say, that it was proposed to take one-half of the necessary expenditure in the shape of two Votes on Account. Those Votes would carry the Government beyond the possible duration of the present Session; and when once the Committee passed this Vote on Account, the Government would be under no necessity of submitting another Vote to the consideration of Parliament until the very eve of the Prorogation. Another extraordinary fact with regard to this Vote for the Metropolitan Police was this—that whereas the Government required almost 50 per cent of the total Vote for the Metropolitan Police, with regard to the other police of the country it did not require anything of the kind. They wanted very little for the County and Borough Police, notwithstanding the fact that they were asking for 50 per cent of the total Vote for the Metropolitan Police. Why was that, unless the Government were anxious to obtain sufficient money in respect of the Metropolitan Police to enable them to set at naught all the criticisms which might be addressed against the Metropolitan Police from that (the Opposition) side of the House, and thus stave off any adverse vote which the House might consider it necessary to come to? Then, again, there was another Vote on Account of Ireland which it seemed to him was very much in excess of what the real requirements were. He referred to the Land Commission. The total Vote was £45,000; £20,000, or about one-half of it, had already been voted. The Government were, therefore, in funds for six months of the financial year, which would carry them up to the end of September; and yet the Committee were asked now for a further sum of £15,000, or £35,000 out of a total of £45,000. This Vote, if it were passed, would carry them on to January next. What would be the use of any comment by any Member of the Committee upon the Land Commission, if the Government were to have the money in hand so that they could go on utterly regardless of any observations from those who were concerned in criticizing their policy? This Land Commission was one of the Offices about which the Committee ought to have exceptional information; because the Government had now on the Table a Bill relating to the Office, and it was only right that hon. Members should be informed why this unusually large sum was to be taken for the Commission. He was afraid that he was wearying the House, but he would only cite one other item. Last year there was a Grant-in-Aid for Cyprus of £18,000. This year that £18,000 was to be run up to £30,000, or an addition of £12,000. What were the Committee now asked to do? £30,000 being the total Vote for the year, they were asked to vote on account a further sum of £11,000, making £29,000 in all, and there would only remain a balance of £1,000 out of the £30,000 to be discussed hereafter. Of what use would any discussion be, if the House had already voted £29,000 out of a total of £30,000 and the money had been spent? He presumed that the money was required for immediate expenditure, because the Government told them it was absolutely necessary to vote it. He respectfully submitted to the House that, whether necessary or not, it was only right and proper that the House should give some distinct information as to how it was that 29-30ths of the total Grant-in-Aid for Cyprus was required to be voted on account. There were other matters in this Vote which he might have gone into, but he had no desire to detain the Committee. He thought he had said enough to show, first of all, that the policy of these Votes on Account was a very doubtful and a very dangerous policy; and secondly, that many of the details and items of the Vote required special explanation at the hands of the Government.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Gentleman at the commencement of his observations referred to the "count out" which occurred last Friday; but when that "count out" took place, and it was moved on the other side of the House, it is right to say that there were only three Members present on the opposite Benches, while there were 24 or 25 on these Benches, the Government Bench itself being full.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: There would have been all the evening to get the Vote.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Member would be aware that there were seven Notices of Motion down on the Paper on going into Supply, and that certainly one hon. Gentleman intended to go on with his Motion if the House were kept, so that the Government had no chance of getting any Votes on that evening.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: In the case referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the hon. Member, could not have moved the Motion, because the terms of it had not been placed on the Paper.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Member must be aware that on the Motion that Mr. Speaker leave the Chair, any kind of conversation may take place, and that it may extend for any period. I think the eagerness of hon. Gentlemen opposite to keep on with the Business of the House was evinced by the fact that nearly the whole of them were absent, whereas the attendance of about 27 Members on this side fully evinced our desire to keep a House, and it would have been kept, if any Gentleman opposite had supported us. The hon. Gentleman altogether objects to this Vote on Account, owing to the early date—the 17th of May—upon which it is asked for; but he must be aware that the 31st of May, the date to which it is proposed to adjourn for the Whitsuntide Vacation, is the last day of the two months for which we obtained the previous Vote on Account. Therefore, practically, unless we obtain a further Vote on Account before the 31st of May, we cannot use the money which is absolutely needed for the service of the country until the House reassembles. It may, or may not, be obtained on Friday, the 31st of May, and, if not, it could not be obtained until Monday, the 4th of June. The Treasury are in need of the money, and if the Government do not obtain this Vote on Account to-night, they will be in the position of being unable to make payments which ought to be made. Therefore, our only course is to come down to the House of Commons and ask for a further Vote on Account. The hon. Member objects to the system of taking Votes on Account. Now, I think that we have shown that the Government have endeavoured, as far as they can, to make progress with Supply this Session; but there is a Procedure Committee now sitting, of which the hon. Gentleman is a Member, to inquire into the system under which Votes are taken in this House, and from the investigation of that Committee I hope that great benefit will be derived, not only as far as the House is concerned, but also by the country. I am quite with the hon. Member in the remarks he made as to the inconvenience and want of common sense and the arrangements which now prevail with regard to the voting of the Estimates. But the hon. Gentleman must be aware that if the service of the country is only provided for up to the 31st of March, and if there is any desire on the part of the country that legislation should proceed, it is utterly impossible for the Estimates to be voted in sufficient time to prevent the necessity arising, not only for one Vote on Account, but for two Votes in the course of the Session. As far as the Government are concerned, they have shown themselves most anxious that the Financial Votes should be considered in this House, and I think that they have followed precedent in the course they have taken in putting down Supply on every available opportunity and asking the House to consider the Estimates. The hon. Gentleman says that he objects to our taking a Vote on Account that will last till near the end of July. That does not mean that hon. Members will lose the opportunity they desire to have of discussing the Votes long before that day. With the assistance of the House the Government will use their best endeavours to enable the Committee to consider the Votes on every opportunity they can avail themselves of. The hon. Member and his Friends are aware that we have had Business before us in which both the House and the country are deeply interested, and if the House will only assist us in limiting the deliberations of such measures as we are compelled to bring forward we shall be glad to avail ourselves of the opportunity of putting down Supply whenever we think it is possible to proceed with the Estimates. The hon. Gentleman has referred to the speech of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian with reference to the Army and Navy Estimates in 1882. The hon. Member is so well acquainted with the Forms of the House and the practice of the Departments, that it is hardly necessary to point out that as regards the Army and Navy Estimates, a power exists of applying a substantive Vote for one purpose to all the services of the Army and Navy. No similar power exists with regard to the Civil Service Estimates. For instance, we cannot apply the Vote for Education or for the Post Office to any other branch of the Civil Service that is included in the Estimates presented to Parliament. If that were so, probably they might be applied with advantage;

but it is open to question whether Parliament would ever permit a Government, however strong it might be in the confidence of the House, to apply money for a specific purpose to an entirely different purpose. Until that is done, and until some great change is made in our financial system, I think the hon. Gentleman will see that no Government can, by any possibility, avoid asking Parliament from time to time for a second Vote on Account. It is altogether different with regard to the Army and Navy Estimates. The Army Estimates are substantially a Vote for men and money to carry on the service for three or four months. And so it is with the Navy, and the money once voted for one purpose can be applied to any other service included in the Army or Navy Estimates. The hon. Gentleman has criticized the Foreign Vote, the Colonial Office Vote, the Board of Trade Vote, the Vote for the Exchequer and Audit Department, and the Votes for the Patent Office, the Mercantile Marine Fund, the Irish Board of Works, and the Irish Land Commission. He is well aware that the Votes are taken in the order in which they stand, and that Supply is put down for Thursday week. The Foreign Office Vote stands first, the Colonial Office Vote next, the Board of Trade third, followed by the Vote for the Exchequer and Audit Department. Therefore, it is quite certain that with regard to those Votes the delay of a fortnight will not occasion any considerable amount of inconvenience as far as the House of Commons is concerned. The Government will be prepared to receive assistance from the House of Commons, and to give every information in their power on common questions of interest that may arise upon the Votes. As far as the Metropolitan Police are concerned, the hon. Gentleman complains that the sum asked for will carry us over a period of four months. The reason of that is that the payment to the Metropolitan Police is made in quarterly sums, and, therefore, as two months have passed, another quarterly payment has become due and has to be provided for. In regard to the Land Commission the hon. Gentleman has asked why we should take so large a portion of the entire charge for that Commission. Now the Land Commission expires by statute in August next, and, therefore, it was not in our power to put on the Estimates a provision that would carry us over August. The hon. Gentleman will, therefore, see at once that much more than one-third of the whole sum necessary for carrying on the work of the Land Commission for 12 months will have to be provided for. Under the present Estimate four-fifths of the sum necessary for the five months are provided for. I hope I have now answered the questions which have been put by the hon. Gentleman.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: The right hon. Gentleman has not alluded to the Grant-in-Aid for Cyprus.

MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government are in no sense responsible for that. The payment is made under the obligations which this country has contracted to the Turkish Government. Those obligations have to be paid by Her Majesty's Government, and the money is payable in July. Under those circumstances, we are obliged to put in the full sum required, which has been increased to £30,000, owing to the failure of the crops in Cyprus last year. I hope that the hon. Gentleman and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) who takes a great interest in these matters, and the Committee on which the hon. Member and the right hon. Gentleman sit, will be able, before the House rises, to make some suggestions to Parliament by which we may arrive at some more business-like arrangement for dealing with the estimates than that which now exists. Any assistance which the Government can give, with that object in view, they will be glad to give; and let me remind the Committee that this is not a Party question, but one that concerns the character of the House of Commons. No one can justify the system which now exists, which is not creditable to the business-like character and habits of the English Members of Parliament. I therefore trust that the labours of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and those of the Committee to which I have referred, will result in some recommendations which it will be in the power of the Government to adopt.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I think the Committee are under an obligation to the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur

O'Connor) for calling our attention to the principle of these Votes on Account. As the First Lord of the Treasury has said, they are not very creditable to our business-like mode of procedure, and I quite agree with every remark he has made as to the desirability of introducing some reform. The question is now undergoing very careful consideration in the Committee upstairs, and I am very sanguine, in the belief that we shall be able to make a proposal which will meet the approval of the House for securing more complete control over the expenditure, and also a more rational mode of discussing that expenditure. But I do not believe it will be possible—in fact, I know it will be impossible—to abolish Votes on Account. So long as Parliament does not sit until the middle of February, and so long as our financial year closes on the 31st of March, and that our financial system wisely requires that all balances should be surrendered to the Exchequer at that time, and that no payment can be made after the 31st of March, except under the direct authority of this House, it is absolutely necessary that a Vote on Account should be given for the service of the current year. I will not indicate what might be the best plan for carrying the system out, but I will say that the present plan under which we proceed is not satisfactory. There are one or two words I should like to say in reference to this Vote on Account. I cannot agree with the First Lord of the Treasury that Supply has proceeded with great rapidity this year, and that the House has devoted a great amount of time to it. I am under the impression that the Civil Service Estimates have only had two nights devoted to them during the Session if we exclude the Army and Navy Estimates and the Supplementary Votes. When the House meets after a Recess, there is a tendency to make progress on the first night. The Secretary to the Treasury is fully aware of that fact, and I congratulate him on having appropriated Thursday week, when the House re-assembles after the Whitsuntide holidays. In reference to the present Vote, I do not find any fault with it. I know it to be necessary to have a further Vote on Account, and I do not agree with the criticism of the hon. Member for East Donegal. All the exceptional amounts which the hon. Member has mentioned are capable of explanation. The Votes themselves are prepared by competent officials of the Treasury, who know what the requirements will be, and this Vote on Account does not represent more than an actual expenditure for two months. I would, however, impress upon the First Lord of the Treasury that we ought not to have a third Vote on Account this year. There are no special legislative measures which are likely to interfere with the taking of Votes in Supply, and before the 31st of July we ought to have made such satisfactory progress in discussing the Estimates that a third Vote on Account ought to be unnecessary. I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that there will be considerable discussion on the Army and Navy Votes. It will be impossible for the House this year to do what was done last year. Totally outside the great and grave question which has recently occupied our attention, there have been many cases of what I may call extravagant and unnecessary expenditure which have been ascertained by the Committee over which the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) presided, in connection with the Army and Navy Estimates, which will have to be brought before the House in Committee of Supply. I am afraid they will necessitate a good deal of discussion, and I think we may anticipate that the consideration of the Army and Navy Votes will occupy more of the time of the House than it generally does. I am certain that full opportunity must be afforded for discussing and criticizing a good deal of the evidence which has been given before the Committee presided over by the noble Lord. In addition to that, we have the ordinary Civil Service Estimates to discuss. I do not ask the First Lord of the Treasury to give any pledge, but I should ask him to consider favourably what I have now suggested—namely, the desirability, in the first place, of avoiding a third Vote on Account, and in the next, of making such arrangements for the conduct of Public Business during the next six weeks that the House of Commons may be able to afford considerable time to the discussion of the Estimates in Committee of Supply. Ample time should be allowed this year for that criticism of the Estimates which is reasonable and desirable, and the consideration of Supply ought not to be thrown over until the fag end of the Session in August. So far as this Vote is concerned I shall support it.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine) said, he cordially concurred with the observations of his hon. Friend the Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) in regard to the service of the late Comptroller and Auditor General, who had recently retired from the office. Having watched that Gentleman for a number of years, he had been much impressed with the admirable manner with which he had discharged his duties.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he quite agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) in thinking that Votes on Account had now reached such a point that the Committee ought to protest against them. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury said the Vote on Account would only carry them over until the end of July, and that the Estimates were in a very forward state. Now, the Estimates were not in a very forward state. Two days, and two days alone, had been devoted to the consideration of the Estimates, and what were those days? They were the very best days which that astute Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury could have secured for his purpose—namely, those immediately after the Easter Holidays, when hon. Members had not returned from the country. The right hon. Gentleman was about to do the same thing now. He knew that people would not rush back after the holidays, and there would be few practical persons present except the hon. Gentleman and his Friends on the Front Bench. The right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton was a Member of the Committee which had been appointed to examine into the best way of taking cognizance of the Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury said the matter was not a Party one. No doubt there was much in the Estimates that was of a purely financial character; but there were other points on which persons took different views in accordance with their political leanings. He would take one case — namely, the salaries of Ministers. Speaking as a Radical and a Democrat, he thought the salaries of Ministers were extravagant. It was perfectly absurd that Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench should have £5,000 per annum. That raised the whole scale of salaries all along the line, and for that reason he had occasionally moved the reduction of the salaries of the First Lord of the Treasury and other Ministers. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that he had no personal feeling against him, and he had taken that course equally in regard to right hon. Gentlemen on his own side of the House. He did not think they ought to indulge in nagging against 2½*d.* given to a postman, and yet give these large salaries to Ministers. He thought it would be best to reduce the large salaries first. There might be some Gentlemen who were patriots, and who did not care for large salaries, and who would be ready to accept Office without any at all. But all Gentlemen were not constituted in that way, and allowance must be made for the feebleness and weakness of right hon. Gentlemen. In his opinion, nothing would tend more to get good sound men at the head of affairs than to reduce salaries. They ought to go into the market, and get the services of men at the market price. Would any right hon. Gentleman sitting on the Treasury Bench say that he was there solely on account of the salary he received? He did not think the First Lord of the Treasury would leave the position he occupied or give up his seat in Parliament if they reduced his salary? No; he would still remain. They must look at these matters in a strictly commercial aspect, and when they had managed to reduce the salaries of right hon. Gentlemen in that House they would be able to reduce those of Admirals, Generals, Foreign Ministers, Judges, and other high officials. His opinion was that the highest salary any person ought to receive from the State was £2,000 a-year. A man could live on that, and he thought that it was possible to get good Judges, Admirals, and Generals for such a sum.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St.

Andrew's Universities) was understood to say that a General would cost more than a Minister.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he was quite aware that Generals and Admirals were just as eager after money as even the Lord Advocate. Many of the Generals they now employed were useless. Take the Generals serving in India who were in command of the different Presidencies. A Committee had reported against them, declaring that they were of no use, yet, with allowances, they received as much as £5,000 and £6,000 a-year. Many of them not only got as much as the Lord Advocate, but a great deal more. He had merely stated that as one of the instances in which something beyond a mere financial question was brought before the Committee of Supply, and which it was impossible to engage the attention of a Committee appointed simply for the purpose of investigating the Estimates. There ought to be a Committee with power to look into the Estimates, to call before them the permanent officials, and submit a Report to the House of Commons; but the House ought not to be deprived of the right it now possessed of fully discussing the Estimates. It was perfectly well known that when the Estimates were under consideration a Motion was brought forward, not for the purpose of reducing the Vote by a particular sum, but in order to raise a point which was essentially one of principle, on the ground that redress of grievances come before the voting of money. Every day private Members were losing some of their rights. The sole chance they had now was upon the Estimates, and they ought to take care not to lose that chance by the system of taking Votes on Account and postponing the discussion of the Estimates until the end of the Session. When that was done, hon. Members knew very well what occurred. If a protest was raised against it, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury said it was a duty he owed to the country. What was the duty of the right hon. Gentleman? It was the duty of shutting the mouths of hon. Members; yet they also owed a duty to the country. Vigilance was the price paid for economy, and it was their duty to be vigilant and to discuss the Estimates whenever they found it necessary. They could not do that in the month of August. If they attempted it they were bullied all round, not only by the First Lord of the Treasury, but by private Members, who said: "Surely you are not going to keep us here? Do you want to prolong the Session? It is all your fault that the sitting of the House is prolonged." There ought to be some understanding that if the Committee consented to grant this Vote on Account, the Government would use their best endeavours to have the Estimates before the 31st of July. A guarantee ought to be given that a certain number of nights should be devoted to Supply before that date. He was quite ready to make this bargain—let the Government give them one night a-week, not necessarily one in each particular week, but let the total number up to the 31st of July be the number of nights at the rate of one a-week, which would occur from the first of June to the 31st of July. Of course, Ministers were naturally inclined to get Votes on Account, and when they asked for them they talked of using their best endeavours to have the Estimates satisfactorily discussed. He thought the Committee ought to have something more clear and definite before they consented to part with the large amount of money now asked for. There was no idea of discussing this Vote on Account. He was perfectly ready to act fairly towards the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, and he hoped that in return the right hon. Gentleman would act fairly towards those who felt it their duty to discuss the Estimates.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I hope that hon. Members will not deem it necessary to prolong this discussion. I fully reciprocate the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton, that it is the duty, as it is also the object, of the Government to give every possible opportunity to the House of considering the Estimates before the end of July. I do not think, however, that any good purpose will be facilitated by continuing this discussion. The right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) know that it is impossible for the Government to enter into any specific engagement as to the appropriation of time between this and the end of July. We will, however, do our best to meet the views of the Committee; but I can give no undertaking on the subject, as the discussion at this moment must be more or less of an academic character, and, considering that there is a measure on the Paper with which we are anxious to make progress this evening—considering also that we have arrived at a comparatively late hour, and that six hours will not be too much to devote to the important question we desire to bring before the House—I make an earnest appeal to the Committee to agree to the Vote at once.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, he was sorry he was not able to agree to the speed at which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) wished to travel when voting these huge Grants on Account. His principal reason was that so few opportunities would be afforded to the House to take up those great questions of foreign policy which must come under consideration. They had already been engaged in a discussion which involved a large expenditure upon the Army and Navy, and many hon. Members must feel themselves in a peculiar position in regard to that subject. It might be that the money was necessary.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Allow me to point out that there is no item included in this Vote on Account for the Army and Navy. The Vote which is necessary for that purpose will afford ample material for a subsequent Resolution of the House.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he was quite aware that there was no Vote in the Vote on Account which dealt with the Army and Navy; but the point he was coming to was that the Vote contained a sum on account of the Foreign Office. It seemed to him that in the course taken by the Government in asking for these huge sums of money they were putting the cart before the horse. Surely, before making this grant, the country had a right to know what the policy of the Government was with reference to foreign affairs. At any rate, that ought to be made plain before Parliament sanctioned a new and extensive departure in regard to the Army and Navy expenditure. Many independent Members felt themselves placed in this respect in a very embarrassing position. How was it possible for the House or the country to appreciate the seriousness of the position, unless they were informed what the policy of the Government in regard to foreign questions was? There had been a discussion in "another place" which, perhaps, might throw some little light upon the subject; but for his own part, he thought it was of importance for the House of Commons to insist upon a great deal more light being thrown upon the question. So far as he knew, there had not been a single hour in the course of the present Session in which the question of our foreign policy had been raised or considered. The Government complained that the progress which had been made with Public Business had been slow. No Members on that side of the House had offered any factious opposition in regard tof oreign questions; he was afraid they were falling into the other extreme, and that they were neglecting their duty as vigilant servants of the public by leaving those foreign questions to take care of themselves. The position of this country was one which required the closest observance on the part of the Representatives of the people. The state of affairs on the Continent was extremely critical, and placed in the hands of the Government almost overwhelming responsibilities. For his own part, he was of opinion that no increase in our naval or military expenditure was necessary, if the foreign policy of the Government were of a sufficiently wise character as not to involve any interference on our part. He confessed that he was extremely anxious to know from some responsible Member of the Government, and he was glad to see the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in his place, whether this country was absolutely free from any engagement which was likely at the first brush of Continental difficulties to land us in any naval or military interference. Nobody could doubt that the state of the Continent was such as to inspire alarm on the part of all commercial people in this and every other country. All business undertakings were under a cloud, and the state of the Continent, its military condition, and the relations of one Power with another were such as to be a source of constant anxiety. They could not take up a foreign newspaper or the correspondence of an English journal in which that was not apparent every hour of the day. Some words were uttered by the Prime Minister, in his capacity as Foreign Secretary some time ago, which remained in the memory of all men who had business obligations in every part of the world. The noble Lord indicated that whatever might happen to be the policy of Austria must be a question of primary interest to this country. Those words must be construed to carry with them a very great danger to this country. If complications should arise in the East of Europe, he wanted to have an assurance from the Government that it was their firm intention not to make this country responsible, should an international war break out. Many of them would remember the circumstances of the Crimean War. They knew that in that case Great Britain was the first of the Great Powers to rush into conflict with Russia, and that, in reality, we left Austria and Germany with their hands absolutely free, laughing in their sleeves, while we fought the conflict in which they were much more interested than we. We might find that situation repeated, and he wished to ascertain whether the Government had learned wisdom from the experience this country had gained in the Crimean War. We had the admission of more than one foreign statesman that the policy pursued by this country on that occasion was unwise, and that the conflict, as far as we were concerned, might have been avoided for a considerable period, if not altogether. He, therefore, wished to know from the mouth of the hon. Gentleman who represented the Foreign Office, and from Her Majesty's Government generally, that there existed no obligation by which this country could become involved in any foreign complication in the event of the peace of Europe being disturbed. He did not say that this country ought to take no share, no matter what complications might arise, because something might happen which might affect us as well as other parts of the world. But assuredly it became us to be guided by a due sense of our responsibility in regard to our Colonial engagements and our relationship to our dependencies, and we should be the very last to commit ourselves and tie our hands in reference to any foreign Power. He would confess that, if there was a lingering disposition on the part of the Government to take part in any Continental broil—our Army, as had been stated by the Adjutant General and the Commander-in-Chief, was really too weak for any such purpose. If, on the other hand, the Government maintained the steady purpose not to interfere in any continental squabble which was likely to break out in the existing relations between Russia, Austria, and Germany, he thought it would be possible for this country to maintain such a position as would not render it necessary to make any large increase in the Army. Probably most of them would agree that our Navy ought to be maintained at such strength as to afford full security to our possessions at home and abroad. He thought that the present provision for the Navy was ample for that purpose, if we kept ourselves free from Continental complications. There was no reason why there should not exist between this country and France and this country and Russia such a state of feeling as would keep us apart from any Continental squabble. In that case this country would run no risk whatever, and there would be very little necessity for an increase of expenditure on the part of the Army. He hoped to have an assurance from the hon. Gentleman representing the Foreign Office or from the First Lord of the Treasury, that it was the desire of the Government and their intention to leave our hands free from any entangling engagements which would deprive us of our freedom of action if war should unhappily break out on the Continent.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he desired to call the attention of the Committee to Vote No. 29.

Mr. LABOUCHERE rose to Order, and said that he desired to discuss several Votes before the hon. Member moved the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) said, he had recently asked a Question of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs as to the Zambesi River. The Portuguese claimed all that portion of South Africa from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean. Now, upon some of the tributaries of the Zambesi River, as well as upon the Zambesi River itself, there were a considerable number of British subjects. The Portuguese, however, had deprived them of the means of navigating the river, and he wanted to know whether the Government would take steps to protect British traders and the Scotch missionaries on the Zambesi River from the encroachments and usurpations of the Portuguese Government and their subjects? If they took no such steps, they practically, by their inaction, recognized the Zambesi River and its tributaries as belonging to the Portuguese Government. We had taken over a portion of the territory of one of the Chiefs which ran down to the Zambesi River. At present, all the mouths of the river were in the hands of the Portuguese, who imposed transit duties on foreign goods or everything that went into Africa by means of that river. He was not prepared to say that they had not the right to place transit duties on all goods that entered Africa by means of the Zambesi River. That was rather a question for the consideration of the Government. But he was informed that the Portuguese Authorities were preventing our steamers from coasting there, and were demanding that British vessels trading there, and the missionaries who had settlements on Lake Nyassa, should fly the Portuguese flag or cease trading. He wished to know whether the Government intended to protect British subjects and their steamers, or to acknowledge the right of the Portuguese Government to prevent the British Government sailing on the Zambesi River, having in view the fact that by taking over territory which ran down to the river they had now become one of the Powers on the Zambesi? There was another point which he also desired to call attention to. He had put a Question to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, in regard to a Return moved for by the hon. Member for Bristol in reference to the Office of Registrar of Friendly Societies. The Secretary to the Treasury said, in reply, that he had no means of getting the information asked for. He might tell the hon. Gentleman that some of the secretaries and officials of these friendly societies were getting larger salaries than the Prime Minister himself. Two of them received £6,000 a-year each. To his knowledge, there were 9,000,000 or 10,000,000 of persons, principally belonging to the working classes, who were insured in these industrial and friendly societies.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not see how this subject comes under this Vote.

Dr. CLARK said, it came under the Vote for the Registration of Friendly Societies, which was Vote 13. He had said, last year, that he would move the rejection of the Vote, unless something was done to make the Office a reality instead of a sham. The present registration meant nothing, but it led people to believe that, because the rules were registered, there was Government security. The Government had indicated that they were willing to appoint a Select Committee to consider the whole question, and the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had brought in a Bill upon the subject. He understood, however, that the Government were opposing that Bill. The hon. Baronet said that his measure only affected collecting societies; but this was a question affecting the whole of our working population, as one of these societies consisted of from 6,000,000 to 7,000,000 members. The Secretary to the Treasury had refused to print evidence which was given on the last inquiry. He (Dr. Clark) thought the time had arrived when there ought to be a full investigation into the working of the Act. Then would come the time for the Select Committee to consider the matter. As they had received a pledge from the Treasury last Session, he thought the Government ought now to state what they intended to do in the matter. The Secretary to the Treasury had stated that they could not get the information; but if a Select Committee were appointed, it would soon be able to lay all the information that was necessary before the House and the Government.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) said, he should like to say a few words on this subject before the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) rose to reply to the observations of hon. Members who had spoken on that side of the House. There were undoubtedly many of the Scotch people who at that moment took a very strong interest in the condition of affairs in the interior of Africa, and who thought that the fact that many of the missionaries were at stations beyond the settlement of any European Power was no reason for their not receiving protection at the hands of the British Government. The first and most important point which they were inclined to urge on Her Majesty's Government was that which had been put forward by the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark)—namely, that the access to the interior—the only good and available one—by the Zambesi, should be kept open to all nations, and particularly to this country, which had made settlements in the interior of that part of Africa. He urged on Her Majesty's Government to enforce on Portugal and other Powers the necessity of keeping open the Zambesi as an international highway. Portugal had undoubtedly certain legal rights on the South African litoral, and she had of late been not only exercising those rights, but, as he thought, unduly extending them in the manner alluded to by his hon. Friend. Hon. Members, he thought, ought to insist that the Government should recognize in no way whatever any territorial Sovereignty in South Africa over the waters of the Zambesi. We had a Consul at Nyassa—of course, not accredited to any Power, because there was no Power to whom he could be accredited—whose duty it would be to look after British interests when an appeal was made to him. Such an appeal would be made to him naturally when an attack was made upon the settlement by the slave dealers, and he, in his turn, would naturally appeal to the British Government for instructions. He, therefore, urged upon the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that something should be done for the maintenance of the authority of our Consul; that there should be no recognition, under any circumstances whatever, of any claim to territorial Sovereignty in the interior; and, lastly, the maintenance in all cases of free navigation on the Zambesi.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, that the considerations laid before the Committee with regard to the position in Southern Africa were exceedingly important at the present time, and it was also necessary that they should ascertain from the Government what were their views and policy with regard to the Northern districts. At present, our territory, so far as it was represented by the Protectorate, was limited by a line drawn on a level with the Northern boundary of the Transvaal—that was to say, the 22nd parallel. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman would know the limits to which he (Mr. Conybeare) referred. In the last few weeks news had arrived that we had actually extended our Protectorate in some form or other to Bechuanaland. He asked the right hon. Gentleman what territories that Protectorate included, and whether the Government themselves had any clear idea of the limit to which the Portuguese territory was supposed to extend Westward from the Eastern seaboard; because it appeared to him, from what he had been able to gather, that the limits of the Portuguese territory were altogether of the most shadowy and uncertain character. It was worth while to recollect what took place in connection with Angra Peguena. He believed they had kept Germany waiting for two years to know our views with regard to the interior of Africa, in consequence of which Prince Bismarck became impatient, and secured a tract of territory which he believed he was correct in saying exceeded in extent anything which the people of this country believed to be in the hands of Germany. The cession of Angra Peguena included the acquisition by Germany of a huge district in which were some of the richest gold mines in South Africa. They did not want the same sort of *imbroglio* to arise in connection with Matabeleland as had arisen in that case. He did not say that it was wise for the Government to lay down a hard and fast line of demarcation. That would be impossible; but they did not want to allow matters to drift in an unbusiness-like way in connection with affairs in South Africa, and presently to find that Germany or Portugal had established a *locus standi* in the country, and acquired a vested interest which it would be impossible not to recognize. There were two courses which this country might adopt with reference to Matabeleland—one was that we should never interfere with a view to appropriating that country; and the other was to make it clear to other countries that we had interests there, and that those interests would probably extend in future, and that we intended to take such means for their protection as might be necessary. The first course appeared to him to be impossible; because, although it was well known that some parts of the Transvaal were rich in gold and precious stones, this district was richer than anything they had yet seen. It was probable, therefore, that there would be a very considerable inrush of British subjects into Matabeleland. If that were so, it would be far better to take a statesman-like view of the situation and decide, once for all, what shape our policy should assume rather than let the matter slide. They did not want the history of Stellaland and Zululand to be repeated in Matabeleland. They had a right to ask that the Government should come to some understanding with Portugal as to where its territory was to begin and where it was to end; and if the right hon. Gentleman knew how that matter stood, he should be glad if he would give the Committee some information about it. It was well known that there had been some expeditions by British officers across the Victoria Falls, and the accounts given of the country showed how interesting it was, and how rich it would become if it were developed and fully opened up. Another consideration was that British subjects were already flocking into the country. He asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was not a fact that valuable concessions had been granted, or attempted to be obtained, of mineral rights extending over huge tracts of the country? If the country was to come at all under British control, he thought they had a right to claim that concessions of mineral rights should not be made to individuals. He thought these matters should be regulated; because the difficulties which had arisen in other parts of South Africa were the consequence of the Chiefs unknowingly assigning away their rights. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman had already taken steps in that direction; and if so, he should be glad to hear what had been done. He should like to point out to the Government that there was a very strong feeling amongst those who were conversant with matters in Bechuanaland and Matabeleland generally that the proper trade route to the latter would be through Bechuanaland, and that the best thing to be done would be to extend the existing railway. This, although a difficult undertaking, would be an important step to take, and would not cost more than £3,000,000, a sum that we had thrown away on Sir Charles Warren's expedition, which was practically useless. If that money had been spent in constructing this railway, it would have been a thousand times more usefully employed than on that expedition. He was told that the Germans had an expedition in Matabeleland at the present time, or, at any rate, that there was competition between them, the Portuguese, and other nations, for a *locus standi* in the country. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman could give the Committee some information on this subject. It was very desirable that we should come to some common understanding with those countries that were taking action on the Continent, and prevent the recurrence of such a step as was taken by Germany in the case of Angra Peguena.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I do not think Her Majesty's Government will ever complain of interest being taken in foreign affairs and of demands being made for information before any step is made which would involve the interests of the country. I am glad to acknowledge the reticence and prudence of hon. Gentlemen in the midst of anxious affairs, in not unduly pressing the Government, and I hope that the assurances that I gave the House at the beginning of the Session, when challenged directly on the subject raised by the hon. Member for Bradford, were satisfactory to the House. I then assured the Committee that the Government had not entered into any engagement pledging the material action of the country which was not known to the House of Commons—that is to say, that the Government were free to deal in the interest of the country with events as they might occur. There had been no fresh engagements incurred by the Government since, and the position remained the same as when he last exexplained it. It would, indeed, be most imprudent for the Government to make any general and binding declaration of abstinence from interference in the affairs of the world. When we considered how wide and diversified were our national interests, and how great was the influence of this country in assisting in the maintenance of the peace of the world, any declaration of total abstinence from interference in European politics would be not only imprudent, but unworthy of the duty we owed to the world. I hope that will be considered by the hon. Member for West Bradford a sufficient answer to the observations he has made. I would remind the Committee that a wide discussion on foreign affairs is unnecessary at this moment, because the Foreign Office Vote stands first on the Paper for discussion on the 31st of the present month, and foreign affairs will, therefore, occupy our attention when the House re-assembles after Whitsuntide. But in answer to the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark), who has put some questions of undoubtedly great interest, I say that Her Majesty's Government distinctly do not recognize unlimited claims on the part of Portugal in the interior of Africa. The conditions by which the spheres of influence of European Powers in South Africa are bounded are perfectly well known. Those influences are not recognized, except where settlements take place, and where a Power possessed the means of maintaining order, protecting foreigners, and controlling the Natives. Where a Power, though seated on the sea coast, has made no approach to a settlement in the interior, and no step in the fulfilment of international duties, it is evident that we cannot recognize that it has any claim to deny us free commerce with the interior by a natural highway. Thus Her Majesty's Government cannot for a moment admit a right on the part of such a Power to stop the free passage of the Zambesi, which gives access to regions where the enterprize of our fellow-countrymen has already made considerable progress. It is a matter of regret that our commerce should be hindered by heavy charges; but where no international obligations interpose, it is in the power of Portugal or any other country to levy such duties as she may impose within her own territories. Hon. Members opposite have referred to the condition of the settlements in the interior of Africa. I must entirely deny that anything like a state of war has been entered into by Her Majesty's Consul on the authority of Her Majesty's Government. It is true that in view of the danger that threatened European Settlements, two British Consuls assisted personally in checking an attack upon those Settlements and in beating back the Arabs, but undoubtedly it would not be the duty of the Consul to join in any hostile expedition against these tribes. It had been said it was for the settlers themselves to take steps for their own protection. That was obviously their duty, and it would be out of question to hinder them from taking steps for their own legitimate defence; but it would be incurring a most dangerous responsibility if Her Majesty's Government were to authorize, as suggested by the hon. Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), the Consul to enrol men, or to take up any position in which he would require to be supported in case of disaster. It would be impossible that we could support a force entirely cut off from the British base, and from British territory. The hon. Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall (Mr. Conybeare) has asked me questions with regard to matters of very recent date, but I hope he will allow me to postpone giving an answer to them, because it would require reference to documents which are not at hand. I trust it will not be supposed that we are not aware of the importance of not losing an opportunity of developing our interest through supineness, and the recent assumption of our Protectorate in what is generally called Amatongaland is a clear indication that neither the Imperial nor Colonial Authorities are indifferent to their obligations in that respect. I hope we shall keep pace with the expansion of colonization within the sphere of these most important Colonies in South Africa, the legitimate development of which they have a right to expect shall not be checked. It is undoubtedly an important point to which the hon. Member has directed attention, namely, that there should be no waste of the valuable mineral deposits in these countries by hurried grants made by the Native Chiefs, so that if they should become British Colonies, they should not be found to have been despoiled of those natural resources. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that those important considerations will not be lost sight of. In assuming a Protectorate it is evident that we ought to give advice and also exercise control.

Dr. CLARK: Have we assumed a Protectorate over Matabeleland?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: I must, I think, ask the hon. Member to give me Notice to enable me to answer that question with more precision than I can do at the present moment. I had no intimation that this discussion would be initiated to night; but I may say that of the correctness of the view that British enterprize in these territories should proceed on a settled plan, there can, I think, be no doubt. While there is much to be said in favour of the view that the vast regions of the interior of Africa should be opened up by an extension of railways from the South, it seems to me that there may also be valuable communication from points on the Eastern Coast. I trust the Committee will not think it necessary for me now to go into further details, and I am only sorry that it has not been possible for me to anticipate the questions which hon. Gentlemen opposite have referred to.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: As there will be another and early opportunity of discussing foreign affairs, I claim to move "That the Question be now put."

The CHAIRMAN said, that looking at the time of the evening (7 p.m.), and the importance of the subject, he thought it reasonable that the discussion should proceed, say for another half-hour.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he did not propose to enter into the discussion on Matabeleland, because he thought the right hon. Gentleman had shown that it was desirable not to do so without Notice. He rose only to advert very shortly to the points raised by the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) and the hon. Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth). He hoped he was correct in understanding that it was the intention of the Government that there should be free and open navigation of the Zambesi. The free navigation of that river was a matter of great importance to this country, and he thought that Her Majesty's Government should not admit any interference with that policy, which would, he believed, make it one of the great highways of commerce. With regard to the point of the hon. Member for West Bradford, he wished to express the satisfaction he felt at the acknowledgment of the right hon. Gentleman at the great forbearance which had been shown on that side of the House as regarded the foreign policy of the present Government. But while they felt that it was desirable to avoid anything which would embarrass Her Majesty's Government and increase the great difficulty in which they had been placed during the last few months, they thought at the same time that it was the paramount duty of the Government to embrace the earliest possible opportunity of taking the opinion of the House, and through the House the opinion of the country, before committing the country in any way to a change of relations with any foreign Power.

Mr. HUNTER said, there was one point to which he must ask the attention of the Committee. He thought the First Lord of the Treasury and the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate would admit that, if it was the intention of hon. Members to censure the course of the Government with regard to their action in reference to emigration from Scotland, they should do so at the first possible opportunity. It would be in the recollection of the Committee that when the question of the condition of the crofters was last before the House, the Government had disclosed very little with regard to their plan of emigration. In answer to Questions put to them from that side of the House, both the Lord Advocate and the First Lord had taken refuge in silence, but promised that a full scheme of emigration should be laid before the House. His astonishment had been very great to find, although the scheme had not been laid before the House, a new departure of a most grave and serious character had been taken on the sole responsibility of the Government and the Secretary for Scotland, and that on Monday last 25 families were reported to have left their homes *en route* for Canada. He objected to the action of the Secretary for Scotland on two grounds. In the first place, he objected to his not having first submitted his plans to Parliament, and obtained the consent of that House; and, in the second place, he was opposed to his emigration scheme *in toto.* What was that scheme? The Committee had heard that 100 crofters and their children had been sent to Canada, at the same rate at which 400 might be sent. He asked if that was a measure of the slightest practical value for the relief of distress in Lewis or for the benefit of the people in the Highlands. That ques tion the Committee would be able to understand when he had stated the figures relating to the case. Under this scheme they were to remove from the Island of Lewis 500 people out of a population which in 1881 amounted to 25,487, and which at present was probably larger; in other words, they were going to cure the distress in the Highlands by removing one out of every 51 or 52 of the population. Now, he thought that fact was sufficient to show that the action of the Government, if it was to be limited to this £10,000, was for practical purposes wholly useless; and if it was not to be so, it must be the beginning of action which would involve an enormous drain upon the Exchequer. If the people were to be expatriated to America at the cost contemplated by the Government, it was the taxpayers who would have to face a very heavy bill indeed. But he objected also to the scheme, because they had not been told on what terms the crofters had been sent out. All he could gather from the statement of the Lord Advocate was that the people were to be in a state of bondage for five years, either to the British Government or to certain Land Companies in America. They were not going out with their hands free to begin the world; they went with a load of debt upon them, which it was contemplated might, under favourable circumstances, be removed in five years; but, although in some cases there might be an ultimate improvement in the condition of the crofters, they were in the meantime to remain under the tender mercy of the Land Companies. There was another thing which he must refer to, and that was the kind of place, of all places in the world, to which they had been sent to. These people had little power of resisting cold; they lived in a climate which was naturally damp, but never very cold, and it was from such a climate that they were being sent to the British Siberia, where the extremes of heat and cold were greater than in any other part of the British dominions. Whatever might be the result of that experiment he could not regard it as one free from danger and risk, for no spot could have been less congenial to the habits of the crofters. Now, he objected again to State emigration as being nothing more than a perfectly hollow and illusory remedy for the distress in the country. Emigration had been recommended to them by no less a personage than the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and that was done upon the ground that there was something abnormal in the rapid increase of the population in Lewis; it was said that the people there were so given to multiplying their species, that it was impossible to deal with their grievances until some radical change took place in the population. But anyone who looked at the facts would see that the Lewis people were not sinners in that respect, above all others. If it were to be said that up to 1851 the population of Lewis increased somewhat rapidly, there would have been facts to support that conclusion, because, beginning with the present century and coming down to 1851, he found that the population had doubled in 45 years; whereas in England and Wales the population had doubled in 51 years. But since 1851, while the increase in the population of England and Wales had been 45 per cent, that in Lewis amounted to no more than 23 per cent, or only one-half the rate of increase in the former case. There was contained in the Papers laid on the Table of the House a most striking statement made by a gentleman who conducted the inquiry at Lewis on behalf of the Government, to the effect that in 1851 it was confidently predicted that unless the surplus population of Lewis were induced to remove some fearful calamity would ensue. But the people had not removed, and the predictions of 1851 had not been verified, and he said that the people remained and continued to multiply with great rapidity; that they had not starved, but year after year were adding to their expenditure on food and clothing, by-and-bye adding luxuries to their former articles of daily use. There was nothing abnormal in the increase of the population of Lewis, although it had been larger than the increase in purely agricultural districts, the reason being that the people there had never been wholly dependent on agriculture in the present century. During the early part of the century they had the kelp industry, and after 1851 they had the fishing industry. It was, therefore, not a question of over-population; the distress in Lewis was simply the effect of the temporary depression under which their primary industry of herring fishing was suffering. After 1851, that industry had enlarged to such an extent as not only to maintain the whole population, which was considered very excessive, but to maintain a far larger and steadily-increasing population. He entirely refused to accept the views of those who said that the fishing industry was permanently destroyed in the Highlands; he could not believe that when there was a population of 30,000,000, so to speak, at the doors of these people, and an ocean teeming with fish, that permanent collapse of that industry had taken place, and therefore he thought the course of the Government would have been to deal with the present distress as of a temporary and not a permanent nature. The present condition of the people was not due to over-population; they were in distress, because they were denied access to the land. The general law was that a population would multiply until the lowest standard of comfort was reached, and the only thing that differentiated Lewis from the other parts of the Kingdom was that the standard of comfort there was very low. Some 200 years ago the standard of comfort throughout the country was about the same; but as time had gone on, the standard had improved elsewhere, and had remained very low in Lewis. He did not think it could be said that less than 25 per cent of the gross earnings of the people had been destroyed by the landlords. If that 25 per cent had been left to fructify in the pockets of the people, or used to raise their standard of comfort, there would be very little reason to complain of the total or relative amount of population in Lewis. He thought emigration was very much to be deprecated, because there were alternatives. There were home industries which might be created by the direct action of the Government. He was unwilling to put before the Committee any ideas on the subject, because, until they had Home Rule for Scotland and a national purse, a proposal which recommended itself to many people in Scotland might not be considered a practical one. But, to anyone who had travelled in the Highlands, it would be evident that the destiny of a large part of the Highlands was not to grow deer and sheep and grouse, but to grow timber. He did not attempt to enter into the question at any length; but he might remind hon. Members that the subject was before a Committee of the House last year, and that three foresters—the foresters of the Duke of Atholl, the Countess of Seafield and of Lord Mansfield—three of the most experienced men in Scotland, gave evidence. The substance of their testimony was that a great part of the land in the Highlands, which for a sheep rent, a deer rent, or a grouse rent, would only yield 1*s.* 3*d.* per acre, would, if planted with timber, yield from 7*s.* 6*d.* to 10*s.* per acre. There was unquestionably a vast amount of money in that proposal. The reason why proprietors had not planted as largely as they might was obvious; they could not afford to plant for posterity; but the nation could afford to plant for posterity, and if a practical scheme for planting the greater part of the Highlands with timber were inaugurated, it would be found that so far from it being a wise course to export the population to British Siberia, or elsewhere, they would require a larger population than existed in the Highlands at present. Therefore, he said that on every ground the conduct of the Secretary for Scotland in this matter was to be deplored; it was to be deplored that he should have taken the question of emigration out of the hands of the House of Commons and decided it for himself, and especially in the manner he had done. In order to take the sense of the Committee upon the conduct of the noble Marquess, he begged to move to reduce the Vote by £100.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) said, it was quite clear that if the Government were to emigrate every man, woman, and child in the Island of Lewis with the exception of one family, and the same conditions were to apply to that family as now applied to the people, they would be paupers, because they would be shut out from the resources of nature. His hon. Friend (Mr. Hunter) had suggested certain alternatives to emigration; but there was one alternative which he did not suggest, and it was one which must naturally suggest itself to Her Majesty's Government, and that was that the people should have access to the land. That alternative should, in his opinion, take precedence of that of planting the Highlands. It was generally assumed that there was not sufficient land in the Island of Lewis for the population; yet, as a matter of fact, there was in that Island 35 acres for every man, woman, and child there. Would the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) say that the majority of the people had a holding of anything like that size? He (Mr. A. Sutherland) thought that until there was something approaching an equal division of land, it was not time to talk of emigration. They knew there was a state of things existing in the Island of Lewis that must be painful to the right hon. and learned Gentleman as well as to them. But the question was whether the Government had hit upon a proper remedy. He and his hon. Friends maintained that the Government had not done so; that they were deliberately shutting their eyes to the remedy which was at their door, and they were taking a course which would prove utterly futile. It would appear as if there never had been emigration from the Island before. There had been a constant stream of emigration from the Island for many years, and yet it had been of no use. Why? Because concurrently with that emigration there had been no opening up of the land for the people. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate knew perfectly well that the whole of the destitution in Lewis—the whole of the unsatisfactory state of the Island—arose from the pursuance of such a policy. This House had recognized the fact in legislation; because one of the conditions laid down in the Crofters Holdings Act, 1886, was, that there should be an attempt made to revert to the state of matters with regard to the distribution of the land which existed 80 years ago. That condition was a practical recognition that the Government made a mistake in allowing the depopulation of the Island, and that landlords made a mistake in carrying it out. The Committee was perfectly justified in criticizing the conduct of the Government in the matter of emigration, because emigration was not wanted by the people. He was perfectly aware that emigration was wanted by the Highland landlords, but it was never desired by the people. While redistribution of the land had been asked for by the Highland people for years, their request had never been listened to. Emigration was wanted by the landlords, so that there would be no danger of the people asking for land, and the Government hastened to carry out the wishes of the landlords. He asked the Committee to contrast the conduct of the Government in the matter of emigration with their conduct with regard to money that was expressly voted by Act of Parliament. There was a clause in the Crofters Act to the effect that a certain amount of money should be devoted to the purpose of assisting people in the crofting parishes of the Highlands to buy boats and fishing gear; yet it was only after an agitation in the House, extending over a year, that the Government thought fit to give power that that money should be paid out of the Exchequer, and even then it was given under conditions which made it almost impossible for the people to get any benefit from it. No money had been asked by the people for emigration; but in the case where money was provided by Act of Parliament the Government did everything they could to throw obstacles in the way of giving it. Then he noticed that it was only picked families who had been deported. What would be the result on the Highlands if the flower of the population were to be taken out and the useless people left at home? What result would that have upon the development of the country? How could the Government hope to develop the fisheries, or do anything to mitigate the sufferings of the people when the flower of the population were sent away? Besides, he could not think that the conduct of the Government in this matter was Constitutional. It required an Act of Parliament to grant money in order to help the people to get fishing boats, but it seemed it required no Act of Parliament to deport the population. That was a matter upon which he hoped the Lord Advocate would be able to afford some satisfactory explanation to the Committee. For the reasons he had given, he heartily seconded the Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Hunter).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Item of £1,000, for the Secretary for Scotland, be reduced by the sum of £100."—(*Mr. Hunter.*)

Dr. R. M'DONALD (Ross and Cromarty) said, there was one point of some importance to which no attention had been drawn in the course of the debate, and that was that the Government had begun too late. They were sending these people to Canada after the crops had been sown, when, indeed, the crops were half-grown, and there was nothing more to do than prepare for the winter. Of course, they would have £100 to live upon; but what was to become of them until next year? Could any Gentleman who knew anything about America or Manitoba controvert the statement that emigrants going out now had nothing to do but build shanties? If the Government wanted to send these people away, why not send them just when the snow was melting? As it was, the money given to them would be spent before the next season came round. He was afraid that either this Government or the Government of Canada would have to furnish these people with money to prevent them dying of starvation. There was another point to which he wanted to direct attention. This was the only remedy, as his hon. Friend the Member for Sutherland (Mr. A. Sutherland) had said, which was always offered to them, no matter what Government was in Office. The Government professed to know the wants of the Highland people better than they who had been born and bred amongst those people. The Lord Advocate could not but allow that if he moved half the crofters in the Highlands, and gave two crofts to each crofter remaining, the latter would be very nearly as badly off as hitherto. But supposing that half the population were removed, and that the remaining crofters would be better off, what did the proposal mean? It meant that they would have to remove from 20,000 to 25,000 families. Were the Government prepared to do that? If not, what was their remedy worth? Who was to gain by this scheme? He did not see how the landlords would gain. He understood that each family was to get £120 out in Canada. Assuming that on the average there were five in a family, the fares to Manitoba would bring the total cost of the emigration of each family to £180. To remove half the population of the Highlands, therefore, they would be required to spend £3,600,000. Was the country prepared to spend so large a sum of money in sending crofters out of the country? It would be much more sensible for this Government, or any Government, to spend £500,000 sterling in increasing the crofts, and giving the crofters a chance of making a living in the country in which they were. But the Government seemed to think it was the landlords who must be attended to—that they must not be interfered with in any way. Why had the present Government, who had assented to the proposal for increasing the holdings, when asked to prepare rules and regulations respecting the increase of holdings, always answered "No?" He would not weary the Committee with any further observations, because what he was particularly anxious about was that the Lord Advocate should tell the Committee how these people were to live in Manitoba until they got their first crops out of the ground.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: My hon. Friend (Mr. Hunter) was correct in saying that the answers given to the Questions have been dull in the sense of being short; but if, in answering Questions, one had gone into an argument, it would have taken up too much time, besides being irregular. But I think I stated very distinctly, in my answers to Questions, that it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to give a full opportunity to discuss this matter upon an Estimate which would be laid before the Committee of the House for this purpose. I take it that it is the mind and intention of my hon. Friends that it would be more just to go into the matter then, and that this is but a preliminary skirmish with the view of opening up the question. Having given that distinct intimation, it was our intention to place materials before hon. Members in ample time for that discussion, because it could not come on before the Recess. My hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Hunter) made a remark which struck me as a very remarkable one. He said the proprietors in Lewis had in the past taken 25 per cent of the gross earnings of the land, and all the other earnings, to themselves. If that was the case, and if it be the fact, as has been stated over and over again in this House, that the average payment to the landlord in Lewis is only £2—[Hon. Members: £4.] I beg pardon; my information is different; but I will take it at £4.

DR. CLARK: £4. We got the information from yourself.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I do not think I ever stated that the average rental in Lewis was £4. If I did, it was, I believe, wrong; but I will take it at so much. Twenty-five per cent on that would leave for the whole family £16 per annum upon which they could live. But our policy has been all along to accept the decision of the Crofters' Commission, which sat some years ago; which declared that, without emigration from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, there was no real hope of any satisfactory solution of the difficulties which exist. We have been supported in that by hon. Members of the Party opposite, who have inquired into this question, and have in this House, within the present year, told us the same thing. Our policy is one which we have declared over and over again, and it has been met with obloquy. I am afraid we must bear that obloquy. If it is wrong, it must be put right by those who have the power to put it right; but consistency in this matter is the course we intend to pursue. We cannot help it. It is said that this is a scheme to send people out from the Highlands to what is called British Siberia. I can only say that people who have gone from the Highlands to that part of the British Dominions on former occasions have prospered, and have been happy and successful; and that the result of their going, on the inducement of others, had been that they themselves had induced others to go. The experiment we have made is a small one; but, in making it, we give the best proof of our good faith. If this place to which these people have gone out is, indeed, a British Siberia, then we have done certainly a most foolish thing as regards the future, because the reports which will reach home will be such as will prevent any further carrying out of our scheme. We are willing to face that condition, and we shall see who is right in the matter. Observations made here are reported; and I only say this for the purpose of stating that we do not agree with hon. Members opposite that it will be found to be a Siberia. No doubt, people who go out to Canada, and accept its more genial summer, which is better adapted for raising good crops, must face the consequence of a severe winter. These people in Lewis are spoken of as being "deported." I really must ask my hon. Friends not to use such language; it is not fair. There is not one of the persons who has gone off in the steamer to-day who has not gone willingly. As a matter of fact, there has been a difficulty in making a choice, and many have remained behind disappointed. I say it is not fair to use such a word as "deported," which indicates compulsion, instead of, as we hope, willingness, and with the result of inducing others to go. If there is not willingness to go, then our scheme falls through. I may mention another fact which I think of good omen. The opportunity presented to these people to go abroad has resulted in this—out of 100 who have gone I learn to-day that six married before they started. I am glad to say they were sufficiently prudent to abstain from entering on the obligations of matrimony before they started for that land, where, we believe, they will prosper. My hon. Friend the Member for Ross (Dr. R. M'Donald) complains that these people have been sent out so late in the year. I quite admit it would have been a good thing if we could have started them a little sooner this year. That was not to be done; but we have had very excellent advice, and the advice given by those who know something about the matter is that we are not too late in sending them out, considering the way they will be received and looked after during their first year. It is a serious matter; but I can assure hon. Members it was not overlooked. Now I would like to correct one or two matters of fact. There is no intention to ask any interest on the money advanced to these people for the first four years, so that they will not be oppressed with any fear of that; and although they are to receive the money for four years without deduction, ultimate payments, including principal and interest, will not come to more than £4 16*s.* per £100.

MR. HUNTER: For how many years will it run?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I think it will run for about 12 years, and I think there will be no difficulty in accomplishing that repayment. Nor will there be the least disposition on this side of the ocean or the other to press these people, if it should turn out that the period is too short. The matter will be controlled and managed by a Board of Commissioners, representing the Imperial Government, the Canadian Government, private subscribers, and the Land Companies.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND: Will the crofters who receive the money be represented?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I think they will be represented by the private subscribers, who have philanthropically advanced money.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND: Are those who pay the interest represented direct?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: It is not usual, I think, so to treat people who have money advanced to them, and have to repay it. But, I repeat, they are substantially represented by the private subscribers, who have taken an extreme interest in this philanthropic scheme, and believe in its success. It is perfectly true that what we are doing at this particular moment is, as the hon. Member (Mr. Hunter) has said, a mere drop in the bucket. But you must make a beginning somewhere. If we succeed, as I earnestly hope we shall, we shall have a good opportunity of showing whether emigration can be carried out with practical success; and I have no doubt, if it is shown that that can be done, the people themselves will take it up.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) said, he would much have preferred that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, instead of entering into a discussion which was hardly germane to the particular Vote before them, had told them by what authority, statutory or otherwise, the Government engaged in a scheme involving expenditure without, first of all, obtaining for it the sanction of the country. The right hon. and learned Gentleman told them that a Commission was to be appointed, and he told them how that Commission was to be constituted. Was that Commission to be a statutory one; and, if so, by what authority was it to be appointed? Was it to be appointed by Parliament; and, if it was to be appointed by Parliament, why had the Government commenced a scheme to be regulated by a Commission without, in the first place, having obtained the requisite power from Parliament? The right hon. and learned Gentleman told them that full opportunity would be given for the discussion of this matter; that Papers and Estimates would soon be laid on the Table; and that that would afford an opportunity for discussing the whole subject of State-aided emigration from the Highlands. If they were to have Papers and Estimates so soon, why had there been this unseemly and unconstitutional haste in forcing on an experiment which he thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman would admit it was perfectly right they should have full opportunity of considering? Why had the Government been in such haste, without any powers, without any authorization from the House, to spend money upon this scheme? His hon. Friend the Member for Sutherland (Mr. A. Sutherland) asked the Lord Advocate to explain by what authority he committed the Government to this expenditure of money, by what authority he had acted in the matter; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman carefully avoided the point. The Lord advocate went into all sorts of extraneous matter; he raised a laugh here and a laugh there; but he carefully avoided what was the real matter of which he (Dr. Cameron) and his hon. Friends complained. The Lord Advocate told them that the Crofters' Commission recommended State-aided emigration, and that the policy of the Government was to carry out the decision of the Crofters' Commission. That was only one of the recommendations of the Crofters' Commission. Why had the Government not shown something like equal alacrity to carry out some of the other recommendations of the Commission, to carry out recommendations which they might have carried out without doing what appeared to him to be an unconstitutional act—namely, forestalling the House in the expenditure of public money? At the commencement of the evening he was much struck with a remark made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler). That right hon. Gentleman referred to the most valuable Constitutional provision under which, he said, no payment could be made out of the Treasury after the 31st of March, except on the authority of a direct Vote of the House. But when the right hon. Gentleman was saying that, they knew that in a few minutes they would have to discuss this commitment of the Government to the expenditure of money for a policy which was open to the gravest criticism. He did not blame the Government for trying an experiment of this sort tentatively, and in such a way as to make sure they did not do mischief; but what he did complain of was that while they pretended to give the House a full opportunity, by laying Papers on the Table, and introducing a special Vote, for the discussion of a most important question—namely, the propriety of devoting the funds of the State to the emigration of certain people, they prejudged the whole question by rushing in and carrying out the scheme with a high hand. The right hon. and learned Gentleman told them that of the men who had been emigrated no fewer than six got married on the morning before they left. He (Dr. Cameron) could quite understand that, because, according to the estate regulations, any young man who married without permission was liable to be evicted. No wonder that when men got an opportunity of going abroad they should rush into matrimony. In going into this scheme, the Government had gone in for a scheme which was tried by Sir James Matheson, and failed. Sir James Matheson spent, in connection with this very Island, as large a sum of money as the Government proposed to spend—he spent £12,000 on an emigration scheme, and the result was absolutely *nil.* Years passed, and it was then said that unless an emigration scheme were adopted the Island would go from bad to worse. As his hon. Friend (Mr. Hunter) had proved, by the quotations he read to the Committee from the Report of the Board of Supervision, events had completely given the lie to that prediction; and yet, in face of that, the right hon. and learned Gentleman proposed to repeat the experiment. He did not blame the Lord Advocate; he did not blame the Government for acting upon their conviction: what he blamed them for was committing the country to the expenditure of public money in a new direction and for a new departure altogether, and for doing so, when there was not the smallest need for haste, in such a manner as absolutely to forestall the House in the matter. He thought the least the right hon. and learned Gentleman could have done, if he wished fairly to carry out the pledge he gave to the House that they should have an opportunity of discussing the question before anything was done—[Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD dissented.] He admitted that they required to construe an answer of the right hon. and learned Gentleman as they would a contentious clause in a Bill; but, certainly, the interpretation he had put upon the pledge of the Lord Advocate was the interpretation which any ordinary-minded man would put upon it. It certainly would have been very much better had the right hon. and learned Gentleman refrained from doing anything until he had given hon. Members an opportunity of discussing the whole question.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he wished to say a few words in answer to the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron). They were asked by what authority they had acted in this matter? They had acted, as all other Governments had acted, in the face of a great emergency. They had taken upon themselves the responsibility of applying public money which, if Parliament did not give them, they must make good. They were in face of a great emergency and difficulty. The hon. Gentleman (Dr. Cameron) said he had no objection whatever to a tentative process, or to an effort to ascertain whether the emigration of crofters from Lewis would tend to the advantage of those unfortunate people, and all he found fault with them for was that they had been in a hurry. The hon. Gentleman thought they had done this before they ought to have done it—that Parliament ought to have had a full opportunity of expressing its opinion upon the whole scheme before anything was done. But what would have been the result of that? The tentative process which the hon. Gentleman desired should be carried out could not be carried out that year. For another year these people who had now gone out must have remained in Lewis, must have remained in a condition of destitution, and with the prospect of starvation before them. The Government would have been just a year behind in the testing of this experiment which, in their conscience, they believed to be necessary, and which they hoped would be entirely successful. They were applying a scheme of emigration tentatively, upon their responsibility, as one of the measures which they hoped might, if extended, afford relief to those distressed people. The hon. Gentleman said they ought to have laid the Papers and the Estimate on the Table before embarking on the scheme. They could not. It was impossible for them to lay Papers on the Table and ask for a Vote of £10,000, which Parliament knew they were about to apply for, in time to have obtained a judgment upon it. They had to carry out negotiations in Canada; they had to obtain an Act in the Canadian Parliament authorizing the course they had taken. Until that Act was obtained they could not proceed. The crofters themselves were only too anxious to go. The difficulty had been to make a selection, and in making a selection their aim and purpose had been to choose those who, as far as human foresight could see, would profit, and be successful in the new country. Whether the Government failed or succeeded, whether they were right or wrong, they had acted in the discharge of what they believed to be their duty to these people. They were prepared to take the consequences, and they believed that Parliament would approve of their action.

DR. CLARK said, he and his hon. Friends would take a Division, because the arguments used on the part of the Government by the Lord Advocate and the First Lord of the Treasury did not meet the case at all. He quite admitted it was competent for the Government to act independently of Parliament; and if some special reason had been urged for their doing so, he and his hon. Friends might not have taken the action they intended. As a matter of fact, no experiment could be tried by the Government during the present year. The emigrants, or transported crofters, would not reach their destination until June, and it would be utterly impossible that they could do anything during the present year, so far as the sowing of crops was concerned. By sending them out now the Government were simply wasting the men's time. The Government were sending these crofters out far too late to be of any use this year, and the experiment they were making would be null and void, in place of being attended with satisfactory results. All the result would be to give some 40 or 50 extra labourers to the farmers in that neighbourhood. The reasons given by the Lord Advocate for the unconstitutional step taken by the Government—for it was unconstitutional for the Government to spend money without the knowledge of Parliament, and to conceal the fact until pressed for information in the House—were wholly insufficient. There was no necessity for the unseemly hurry in which this emigration scheme had been carried out. The proper time to have sent the people out would have been in the Indian summer, or the fall of the year. It was said that the late Royal Commission had recommended that emigration should take place; but the late Royal Commission did not do so. Only a portion of the Royal Commission recommended it. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) did not recommend it—the recommendation only came from the landlord part of the Commission, and even then it was only one of the minor recommendations of the Commission. The important recommendations were two. The first was that the size of the present crofters' holdings should be increased. It was recommended that the Sheriff should have power, when a township declared itself overcrowded, to increase the holdings in that township; but nothing had been done by the Government to carry out that, the principal, recommendation of the Commission. Secondly, they recommended that, in addition to new holdings, new townships should be formed under the conditions laid down in the Crofters' Act; but as he had lately brought before the notice of the House, though clauses were put into the Crofters' Act, allowing the Crofter Commission to increase holdings for five years, now over two years of that period had passed, and not a single holding had been increased by the Commission, and during the remaining three years he did not expect that there would be more than 500 holdings increased, because the conditions upon which the enlargement was to be allowed would render the crofts worthless. The Government, he maintained, ought to have amended the Crofters' Act before they tried this emigration scheme, and ought to have allowed the Crofter Commission to have increased existing holdings, and to have created new townships for the accommodation of the great bulk of the population. Under the Crofters' Act, in the arrangements for increasing the holdings, the Government had not touched that other important factor in this matter—namely, the cottars who were one-third of the population in the crofter districts. These cottars, who were evicted crofters or their immediate descendants, had no land, and the only way to benefit them was to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission he had named—namely, to create new townships. But nothing of the kind had been done, and of all those recommendations of the Royal Commission which were made unanimously, the Government had disregarded the only recommendation they were anxious to adopt, having been a recommendation upon which the Commissioners were not at one. He (Dr. Clark) was opposed to the principle of the scheme the Government were carrying out—he was opposed to their policy in this matter in every shape and form. He had lived, he thought, in every one of our self-governing Colonies, and he knew something of our Crown Colonies; and he must say that, so far as comfort in the ordinary conditions of life was concerned, he should infinitely prefer to live in Sydney, Melbourne, or Dunedin, than in London, Dublin, or Edinburgh. Physically, those places in the Colonies were infinitely better than our large towns at home, and it was only sentimental reasons which kept him here. The other countries were superior in a great many ways, and they would be great nations when we probably were played out; but, as a citizen of this Empire, and as a Scotchman, he certainly objected to the principle underlying the Government policy. They were clearing away the agricultural population of these Islands, and for what? In order to create deer forests and sheep farms. What was the economical condition of the country under the present system? Why, it was this—that the land was becoming less and less fruitful, the production from it decreasing year by year. The sheep farms had no labour placed upon them, and were returning to a state of nature, the result being that they did not grow more than half, or, at the outside, two-thirds of what they used to grow. The land formerly occupied by crofters, being allowed to remain fallow, was producing less and less every year, and, of course, the general production of the whole country was less and less every year. No one would contend, except, perhaps, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, that deer forests were of any use to the people generally, and he said emphatically that if they were going to get rid of their country population they would bring about a national calamity. We relied too much upon the extent of our manufactures. He knew something about the countries that used to be our customers for our manufactured goods, and he said, from his knowledge of them, that they were now supplying themselves with those commodities which they formerly used to obtain from us. What we should have to depend upon ultimately would be the home trade, and if we lessened the possibility of providing for our own wants at home we should be gradually preparing the way for a national calamity—we should be filling our towns more and more with an idle population with less food to feed them on, and would be, in fact, guilty of a national crime. However, those were questions which must be entered upon fully when the Government brought their scheme formally before the House. All that could be done now was to protest against the policy carried out by the Government, and to protest against the manner in which it had been sought to conceal from the House the real facts of the case until hon. Members had, unwillingly, wrung those facts from the Front Bench opposite. Furthermore, Members interested in this subject submitted that the Government were carrying out their experiments at a bad time of the year, when there was no chance of success, instead of deferring the discussion and putting off the adoption of arrangements until a period when there was a likelihood of light being thrown upon the subject, and a probability of the scheme being carried out successfully. He supported the Motion of his hon. Friend, and trusted he would carry it to a Division.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, he wished to say a few words upon this question, and to call the attention of the Government to certain points at this stage, because he had had several communications from members of his constituency who were crofters and fishermen, and who were desirous of ascertaining whether the proposed scheme of emigration would be applied to that part of the country which he represented. He had once or twice asked the Lord Advocate for information on the subject; but, in reply to every Question put to that right hon. and learned Gentleman with regard to the government of Scotland, they got little or no information. He did not altogether think it was the fault of the Lord Advocate, however. It was the fault of the First Lord of the Treasury, who would not have the Secretary for Scotland in the House of Commons. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate merely came to that House as a machine to read from Papers answers to certain Questions. When the Scotch Members pressed him earnestly for further answers, he was, of course, like the Chief Secretary for Ireland, the President of the Local Government Board, or the Chancellor of the Exchequer, so far as Scotland was concerned, and so far as the subjects to which the Questions related were concerned—that was to say, he knew nothing about them. The consequence was that Scotch Members had to drag important statements from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate bit by bit, and often had to put the same Question down on the Paper three or four times, because they could not get a reply. He declared that, so far as the present Vote was concerned, the Secretary for Scotland and the Government were very much to blame for not having someone in that House who was responsible for the affairs of Scotland and knew what was taking place in Scotland, and who was, in fact, the Secretary for Scotland. He thought, if the First Lord of the Treasury would consider this matter—if he ever did consider Scotch affairs—the right hon. Gentleman would see that this debate illustrated emphatically the point he (Mr. Anderson) was making. On this emigration question what information had they got? Hardly any, except that they were told that the policy—the only policy—of the Government with regard to the state of things in Scotland was emigration. Well, he should have thought that, inasmuch as there were other alternative policies, the Government might have turned their attention to them. The policy the crofters wanted was not that of sending them to Canada or other far-off places. They wanted to live in their own country; they wanted to have land given to them, and to be allowed to cultivate that land. He wondered whether the Government had seen the Memorial just presented to Lady Matheson, in which it was pointed out to her that two districts which were now deer forests—namely, Lochs and Aline, 30 or 40 years ago were covered by small though flourishing crofter townships. These places were cleared for the purpose of making the Lochs Forest and the Aline Forest. He (Mr. Anderson) wanted to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he did not think the attention of the Government should be turned rather to the expressed wishes of those people, in order to see if they could not bring in some legislation which would bring the crofter population back to the land they originally occupied? To get up here and say that the people wanted to emigrate was all stuff and nonsense. They did nothing of the kind. They looked upon going to foreign countries as absolute banishment. Think of what emigration meant to a man well advanced in life! Emigration might very well be a good thing to a young unmarried man of 18, or from 18 to 25; but if they took a man past 30 years of age—say a man of 40—with a family, and, transplanting him from his own country, sent him over to Canada, without friends, ignorant of the habits of the people and having to learn everything there, it was no wonder that they found numbers and numbers of instances in which the people returned to their own country, having, as emigrants, proved utter failures. He would send to the First Lord of the Treasury—if in the midst of his multifarious duties he could devote a little time to the perusal of such a document—an account which appeared in one of the local newspapers of the counties he (Mr. Anderson) represented. This account, which he had received that morning, gave particulars of the condition in which some of these emigrants found themselves abroad. The account was given by two fishermen who had heard from emigration agencies brilliant statements as to the profits which were to be made by fishermen, and, being hard pressed to live at home, they had been led away by the rosy descriptions they had heard and had emigrated. But what did they find in the country to which they had emigrated? Why, they had had to go from place to place, and had everywhere found the trade crowded by competition; but, worse than that, they found wages far lower and living very much inferior, and houses far worse and the fishery much more difficult, than at home. And yet it was said that these men were to go out to British Columbia and fish and secure great prosperity. He did not think it was possible to read an instance of more absolute failure than that of the two men he referred to, and he trusted the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury would not object to his sending him the account in question. If the right hon. Gentleman, as he had said, could in the midst of his other numerous duties find time to read it, it would, no doubt, produce a very strong effect upon his mind, as it would open up to him a new phase of this question which he had not been in the habit of considering. The Government were remarkable in this matter for a want of policy. They had not considered the interests and the capabilities and the character of the persons who were to be benefited, and they rushed blindly into this scheme of emigration. To think, as the First Lord of the Treasury had said, that at this great crisis an expenditure of some £10,000 would be sufficient for the relief of the distressed crofters, and to think that by that means they would be putting a stop to agitation and really conferring a benefit upon the population, was the most absurd proposition ever made from the Treasury Bench. But there was another point upon which he wished to say a word; and it was this—Where were the Government going to take these people from? Were they going to take them simply from Lady Matheson's estate? Were they going merely to give her an opportunity of getting rid of her crofters by sending them off, that she might be relieved of the trouble they gave her? How did the Government mean to select the emigrants? He rather thought—in fact, he had heard it stated—that the emigrants were selected in this way—there was a sort of anxious desire that the leading crofters, those people who were agitating to get their land back, should be got out of the way, and that those were the people who were preferred in the patronage of the Government. It was said that the Government were anxious to transplant from their native country those people who gave most trouble; and certainly, unless some preference was exhibited, he was at a loss to understand how the selection was being made. There must be some influence of that kind at work. At any rate, he would ask the Government this question, which he thought was a fair one. Why were the fishermen living on the Eastern Coast of Scotland left out? Let the Government think of the jealousy they were creating with these people. There was amongst the fishermen of the Moray Firth a great deal of distress, and perhaps the men there were anxious to try the experiment of emigration. Probably, after reading the account of their want of success given by the two fishermen to whom he had referred, these people would not be so anxious for emigration as they had been hitherto; but, be that as it might, the people on whose behalf he was speaking were anxious, whilst there was money being spent in this way, that they should derive some advantage from it as well as other people. He did not wish to increase the difficulties of the Government. All he desired to say was that he viewed with great disfavour any scheme which would ignore the counties he represented; and if the scheme did not include these people he certainly should move its rejection. If the scheme was one merely for the purpose of spending money on one particular county or estate, he looked upon it as very objectionable; and, therefore, he trusted that, before the scheme was wholly carried out, the Government would consider the suggestion he was making. Perhaps the remarks he had addressed to the Government would come to the notice of the Secretary for Scotland. They would not be reported to him by the Lord Advocate, because that right hon. and learned Gentleman had not been there to listen to them; but he (Mr. Anderson) trusted, at all events, that through one of the many different channels which had to be traversed in order to get at the Secretary for Scotland, and to bring any influence to bear upon him, there would be brought to his notice the view taken by some Scotch Members upon this subject, and that the scheme would not, after all, be an exclusive one, but would extend to other counties. He knew the difficulties which surrounded the subject—he knew the difficulties the Government had to face in dealing with the Crofter Question; but the Government seemed to be impressed with the idea that there were no crofters in any of the counties, except four or five. They seemed to have the most supreme ignorance as to what the crofters were, and where they were to be found. He trusted they would consider the few remarks he had made, and certainly hoped that his hon. Friend who had moved the Amendment would carry it to a Division, as he did not think the House had been fairly treated in this matter. He thought that on this, as on other questions as to the management of their affairs, Members representing Scotch constituencies were not fairly dealt with by the Government, mainly for the reason, as he had pointed out, that they had nobody to represent Scotch affairs in the Government in that House.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 37; Noes 88: Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 114.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he wished to call attention to a subject of local interest in connection with the item in the Vote for County Courts. There had been no satisfactory explanation given with reference to the complaint which had been made of the action of the County Court Judge at Stowmarket in Suffolk. There had been a good deal of friction between the County Court Judge and the suitors who came before him in the ordinary course of business. Questions which had been asked of the Government had had reference to special points; but the broad question which appeared to underlie all these special points was this—that the County Court Judge in question had been acting in a very harsh manner, and not to one person only, but to a great number of persons who had come before him. In that House the Government had referred hon. Members to the Lord Chancellor, and had put hon. Members off with answers which were not satisfactory—he would not call them evasive answers, because he did not suppose they were anxious to burke the question. No doubt, it was a difficult and even a delicate question; but he contended that in a matter like that, where constant complaints were arising from different Members of the House who were asked to take up the matter and press it upon the attention of the Government, where they had evidence of a state of things which could not be allowed to continue, it was no answer to the poor people whose claims for redress in a Court of Justice had been set aside and injured by the conduct of a particular individual—it was no satisfaction to them to be told——

The CHAIRMAN: I understand the hon. Member is raising a question as to the conduct of a County Court Judge.

Mr. CONYBEARE. Certainly, Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: The salaries of County Court Judges are paid out of the Consolidated Fund, and are not included in this Vote.

Mr. CONYBEARE: What, Sir, is this Vote for County Courts for?

The CHAIRMAN: The salaries of the Judges of the County Courts and the salaries of the Judges in the higher Courts are included in the Consolidated Fund.

Mr. CONYBEARE: Then do I understand, Sir, that it is impossible to discuss a question connected with the County Courts upon the Estimates?

The CHAIRMAN: It is impossible to discuss a question as to the conduct of a County Court Judge upon this Vote.

Mr. CONYBEARE: Then I beg to give Notice that I shall take the opportunity of bringing this subject forward on the Motion for Adjournment.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said, in the course of some introductory remarks made on this Vote on Account, the hon. Member for the Eastern Division of Donegal laid particular stress on Vote 37. Dealing with it in a very few words, the hon. Member had practically shown that a great deal of money had been wasted over the Vote in past years. Anyone who would take up the Auditor General's Report on this Vote would see from those figures that the estimated receipts last year were £78,500, and the actual receipts £74,011 3*s*. 3*d*.; therefore the Estimates exceeded the receipts by £4,448 16*s.* 9*d.* But that was not all. He did not propose to deal with the matter *in extenso,* but he wished to draw the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury to it, and he knew that that Gentleman in that House was always most anxious to clear up any point——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member that we have passed the item upon which he is speaking.

DR. TANNER: I was not aware, Sir, that these Votes were being taken *seriatim.*

THE CHAIRMAN: There was a Division on an item subsequent to that to which the hon. Member is refering.

DR. TANNER: I presume, Sir, I should be in Order in taking up any Irish Vote on page 3, the Lord Lieutenant's Household for instance. There has been no Division on those Votes. I would ask your ruling, Sir, upon another point, and that is this—supposing a Division is taken upon any one of these Votes, and that then any one of us discusses a Vote lower down on the list, would it be in Order for an hon. Member who might not happen to have been present, and who might have something to say on a succeeding Vote to that made the subject, would he be able to speak?

THE CHAIRMAN: It is quite unnecessary to deal with a hypothetical case. The case in point has already been practically decided.

DR. CLARK said, he wished to say a word with regard to the payment of Fiscals. A Royal Commission had recommended that in future Procurators Fiscal, when appointed, should be limited to Crown work—that was to say, should be the servants of the Crown, and should not represent landlords as well. Since then, however, an important appointment had been made, and this recommendation had been overlooked, notwithstanding that all the lawyers in Scotland had been opposed to it. He thought it desirable that they should know how they stood in this matter, as there had been a pledge given by the late Lord Advocate. The Scotch Members understood, and it was agreed that in future Fiscals should be appointed for Crown work only, and that they should not be allowed to do private work, for the reason that if they were allowed to do private work as well as Crown work, the private work was affected by that Crown work. He (Dr. Clark) desired to know why, notwithstanding the pledges which had been given, the recommendations made by the Royal Commission had not been carried out? He did not wish to take up the time of the House by moving the reduction of the Lord Advocate's salary; but he wished to know the reason why the Treasury stood in the way of carrying out the system recommended by the Royal Commission?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he was afraid he had no facts upon which to answer the specific question put by the hon. Member. The hon. Gentleman knew that in some districts the Procurator Fiscal had to give his whole time to the Crown, and take no other work. In other districts, however, a much higher rate of pay would have to be given to get the requisite ability than that which the amount of work would really require or demand, if the Procurator Fiscal were required to do no other work. He was sorry the Lord Advocate was not present, but he would communicate with him and ascertain what had taken place.

DR. CLARK said, he should like to ask the Government if they could give him any information as to the reason why the Crofter Commission had not been allowed to appoint Assistant Commissioners, in order that they might dispose of their work more quickly than they were doing? Three or four times this subject had been brought before the notice of the Treasury, and Scotch Members had understood that at last something was to be done to appoint Assistant Commissioners in order that the Commission might get through a portion of the work which was very urgent. Lewis had been spoken of a good deal in connection with the Crofter Question, but during the two years that the Commission had been at work they had not yet got there, and goodness knew when they would get there, because he understood they were going to Orkney and Shetland first. That was very hard on those poor crofters who applied to the Commission nearly two years ago for relief, and had not yet had their cases attended to. Unless the Government did something to have Assistant Commissioners appointed, the three men who were now at work on the business of the Commission would not possibly be able to hear all the cases. They had dealt with but few of the holdings, and the time they had occupied in deciding these cases was worth more than the value of the crofts. The Commissioners examined the land, and the work they did was so little compared with the necessities of the case, and with the work they might do, that he did not think it was worth while for Parliament to carry on the Commission at all in its present inadequate shape. Surely an appeal ought to be heard within 12 months of the time of its being lodged? Men, feeling that they were rack-rented, and seeing on estates in other parts of the country reductions made ranging from 25 to 75 per cent, were naturally unwilling to pay their rents, and in this way things were getting into a very bad state. The Government would have serious trouble to face unless they made provisions to have the crofter cases heard, and also to have appeals decided. He thought that the present attitude of the Government was a penny wise and pound foolish one, as it led to great expense being piled up. He trusted they would make good what the Act permitted. Clauses were passed in the Act to allow Assistant Commissioners, Valuers, and officers of that kind to be appointed; and surely it was the original intention of the Government to appoint men to do the work, and not to have the muddle and deadlock which existed at present. The Commissioners had been unable for years to do the work. As he had pointed out, in an island like that of Lewis, they had been unable to do it. The only way in which it was possible to get the Commission to go anywhere to hear cases within a reasonable time was to kick up a row, and to do illegal acts. That, however, was teaching the peasantry a very bad lesson. He thought that the Government should give the Act a fair chance, so far as they could, and should not prevent its being carried out merely because the Secretary to the Treasury was afraid of spending a pound or two. The Government seemed to forget that for every pound they spent for legal purposes in Scotland in England they were spending £2 10*s.* 0*d.*, and in Ireland £5. He protested that in this matter they were treating Scotland in a mean and niggardly fashion.

Dr. TANNER said, that, in the Vote on Account, there was included an item to which he took considerable objection; in fact, if the Members of the Party to which he had the honour to belong took the matter up seriously, it would require a whole Sitting to deal with it, or, perhaps, two Sittings of the House. The item to which he referred was one for Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions in Ireland. Now, it was within the recollection of the House that since the Criminal Law and Procedure Act, which was popularly known as the Coercion Act, was passed, a number of cases had been tried under its provisions, and again and again illegal actions had been committed by the magistrates who had tried those cases. He felt sure that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen—no matter how much they might differ from hon. Members who sat below the Gangway on that (the Opposition) side of the House—if they only thoroughly appreciated the facts, would understand that it was necessary that the Irish Members should be privileged to discuss these questions when money was asked under such a Vote, seeing that that money was not only to pay the magistrates who tried the cases, but the prosecuting counsel who appeared before the magistrates. Practically speaking, from the magistrates who sat on the Bench to the counsel who prosecuted, and the policemen who arrested a person, all these officials were paid by the Crown, and they were all part and parcel of the same method of carrying out, as far as possible, the political *modus vivendi* of the right hon. Gentleman who conducted, or rather misconducted, the business of Ireland. He should like to bring before the notice of the Committee two or three cases which had come under his own observation. What he was about to describe he had seen himself, and they said that—"Seeing was believing." The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, however, when he (Dr. Tanner) told him what he had seen in connection with one of the cases, had stated that his (the right hon. Gentleman's) information—which was inconsistent with what he (Dr. Tanner) had seen—was received from a reliable source; and what the right hon. Gentleman's insinuation there was he (Dr. Tanner) would leave to the judgment of the House. He would now allude to the case of one of his constituents—the case of a man named Creedon. This man, on Sunday the 8th April last, went into the town of Macroom. Well, it was within the knowledge of most men who paid any attention to Irish affairs that Ireland had been relegated, or was supposed to have been relegated, to a subordinate position by Her Majesty's Ministers, although, as a matter of fact, she still occupied that position to which she was entitled, aye, and which she would ever maintain. The Government might do their utmost against her, but she would come to the fore again and again. The more they tried to put her down, the stronger she would stand in front of them, and the more certain she would be to procure the downfall of the enemies to patriotic and single-minded and undivided action. But he was about to refer to the case of the young man Creedon. On that very day, Sunday the 8th of April, several meetings were to be held in different parts of Ireland by the Irish Nationalist Party. It had been determined to hold these meetings in consequence of a boast of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. For his own part, he did not find any fault with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for making this boast. The poor unfortunate right hon. Gentleman really did not know very often what he did. He had never visited the Province of Munster; he had never visited the Province of Connaught, and he had never gone into Ulster. In that very House he (Dr. Tanner) had said that, if the right hon. Gentleman would allow him, he should only be too glad to bring to his personal notice a great number of cases which might, perhaps, occasion his turning over a new leaf and being a better boy for the future. The right hon. Gentleman had stated in that House that the National League was dead. He (Dr. Tanner) happened to be the Representative of a portion of Cork in which the National League was "suppressed," consequently the right hon. Gentleman's boast referred to a portion of his (Dr. Tanner's) constituency. Well, the members of the suppressed branches of the National League determined that they would show the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant that he was utterly mistaken in his premises, and that in the speech he had delivered he had made a false statement to the country. Of course, it was immaterial for him (Dr. Tanner) whether or not the right hon. Gentleman had simply made his statement for the purpose of catching votes in this country, and to show what a great man the right hon. Gentleman was; suffice it to say that it was determined to hold meetings of the National League all over the country, and it subsequently transpired that several meetings were held in Macroom. On the Saturday before the meeting to which he was about to refer, he happened to meet in the City of Cork an old gentleman, a quiet old gentleman, a really good old man to play a game of whist with, but a person utterly unfitted to act as a magistrate, the duties of such a post being altogether past his time of life. This old gentleman told him that the meeting in Macroom was to be suppressed, whereupon he rejoined—"Who is going to suppress it?" and, turning round with a gallant air, this Captain Redmond—for this gentleman, as his name would indicate, had held a position in Her Majesty's Reserve Forces—of course, most of those gentlemen who belonged to the Magisterial Bench were attached to Her Majesty's Reserve Forces and had never been in action—Captain Redmond's manly breast heaved, and he said—"I am going to suppress it!" Now, really, there ought to be some common sense displayed in the matter of the suppression of these meetings. When an elderly gentleman of that kind took upon himself to suppress an entire district, and refused to give anyone any information as to the matter, he protested that the policy which permitted such a thing was absurd, and that the state of affairs was such that it could not be expected to meet with the sanction of the people of the country they now occupied. He asked Captain Redmond for further information, but he refused to give it. He (Dr. Tanner) had gone down to Macroom next day, as it was his duty to do. He had not been served with a copy of the writ stating that the meeting was to be suppressed, and he held the meeting in the morning—a meeting which was attended by some 500 men on horseback. At that meeting they discussed the matters most worthy of their consideration, and they congratulated one another on the fact that notwithstanding the edict of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who knew nothing whatever about the district, not only was the League doing well there, but, as a matter of fact, the numbers of the National League in the town of Macroom had increased once and a-half what they were before the publication of the edict. They also congratulated themselves upon the fact that in other places similar advances had been made by the League. So great had been the success from a National point of view which attended the suppression of the League, that it was a question whether it was not advisable, in order to make the organization more successful in those places where it had taken less hold amongst the people, to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, as a special and peculiar favour, to suppress the organization in the remaining parts of the county he had the honour to represent. Well, the morning meeting was held, and at 2 o'clock they proceeded to hold another meeting. At that time a troop of Cavalry had ridden into the Square, and there were over 100 Constabulary there. They were led by Captain Redmond, who walked up and down the Square, looking very uncomfortable, and by two or three District Inspectors of Police, trying to make the best of their time smoking cigarettes. He (Dr. Tanner) then thought it was desirable to make a protest in the name of the constituency and in the name of law and order, as supported by the people, as against this illegal demonstration on the part of the Crown. Accordingly, in order that the people might not suffer, he himself undertook to go forward. He tried to get the people to step back and remain quiet whilst the protest was being made, because he knew, from circumstances which had preceded this occasion, that the police had received orders "to bâton, but not to arrest." The Crown did not take the responsibility of arresting him on that occasion; but they did what they would not have dared to do in England, Scotland, or Wales—that was to say, they tried to break his head. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members opposite might laugh; but he could assure hon. Members from the North of Ireland and also English Members that if they could have witnessed the conduct of the police officials and the official supporters of law and order on the occasion in question they would not have been disposed to laugh, and would have been very much ashamed of supporting a Government which endeavoured to carry out its mandates by such brutal illegality. What happened on the occasion to which he was referring? He went into the Square, being perfectly content to do so, so far as he was personally concerned. He had, as he had said, told the people to be quiet and not to follow him; for if they did they would get into trouble. He had said—"Stop there, and let me go on." He got to the centre of the Square, and there he was collared. [*Laughter.*] He doubted whether hon. Gentlemen would laugh if they knew what took place. The District Inspectors in days gone by used to be considered gentlemen; but in recent years they had sadly degenerated, and that description could no longer with justice be applied to them. Well, while he was in the hands of three policemen and firmly pinioned, a District Inspector came up, and deliberately struck him in the face. The District Inspector would not have done it if his (Dr. Tanner's) arms had been free. Was, therefore, the act of this person gentlemanly or cowardly? He did not think hon. Gentlemen opposite would endorse such action; but he could assure them that it was quite a common occurrence in Ireland under the existing state of things in that country. He merely alluded to this incident because it was a personal matter, and he had no grudge against the unfortunate man who had been guilty of this piece of brutality. He treated him and the rest of his class as beneath contempt, and merely alluded to the subject *en passant.* The policemen who collared him took him off the Square; but he would do some of them the justice to say that in the evening they came to him and apologized, stating that although they were obliged to carry out the mandate of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, practically speaking, their hearts, their inclinations, and their minds were altogether against such dirty work. This young man, when he saw him dragged from the Square, made an exclamation, and the policeman struck him.

Mr. MAC INNES (Northumberland, Hexham) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 103; Noes 13: Majority 90. — (Div. List, No. 115.)

Original Question put accordingly, and *agreed to*.

Resolutions to be reported upon *Thursday* 31st May.

Committee to sit again upon *Thursday* 31st May.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY FOR INJURIES TO WORKMEN BILL.—[Bill 145.]

(*Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Forwood.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.), in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that the Bill was a consolidating as well as an amending one. In the interests of the working classes it was desirable the law on this subject should be put into one Statute. He would not now debate questions of large principle which he regarded as settled. It seemed to him impossible, as some Members wished, to sweep away the doctrine of common employment which had grown up in English laws. It was fair to call on an employer to provide plant and machinery in good condition; but that he should be rendered liable for the casual negligence or wilful misconduct of a servant was a doctrine which could not be upheld. It was not proposed in the Bill to do away with the doctrine of common employment; but they did propose to correct what they might deem had been the undue extension of that doctrine in the Courts of Law. All lawyers, he thought, would agree that when an employer delegated his control and authority over his workmen to a manager, who was an *alter ego* of himself, and who superintended in his name, the manager could not, and ought not, to be treated as a fellow-servant with those over whom he ruled. If he were so treated a premium would be placed upon such delegation of authority. It was right, therefore, in his opinion, to exclude all such cases from this doctrine of common employment. There was another matter dealt with in the Bill of some novelty to which he must refer. There largely prevailed, especially in the building trades, a practice of the contractor giving out different parts of the work to sub-contractors. Those sub-contractors were frequently men of straw, whose responsibility and liability to workmen were extremely inadequate, and yet the principal employer escaped liability because there was no privity between him and the men employed by the sub-contractors, although the plant or materials supplied by him proved to be deficient, and consequently led to accidents. That seemed to be a hardship; and it was attempted to be remedied in the 2nd clause of the Bill. While the liability of the sub-contractor was kept alive, the principal contractor, for whom the work was really being done, was made also liable for accidents which happened owing to the patent defect in the plant used. The next point he desired to refer to was that with regard to the burning question whether workmen should be allowed to contract themselves out of the Act. There were three possible courses that might be adopted. In the first place, absolute liberty might be given to the workmen. The second alternative was absolutely to prohibit contracting out of the Act; and the third was to prohibit the *sub modo*—that was to say, unless something as good as, or better than, the provisions of the measure existed in the contract of employment. The first course was one that naturally commended itself to some men of masculine mind, who thought it unwise to treat the working men of this country, who were its mainstay, like women and children, lunatics and sailors — these were all classes which the law, sometimes wisely, sometimes somewhat oddly, treated as incompetent to protect themselves. But among the friends of the working men who best knew their wishes there was a strong feeling that working men were often subjected to such pressure and coercion and influence on the part of their employers that the men were not really free agents. Absolute prohibition was condemned by the Committee which sat about the year 1876, before the Act of 1880 was passed; but the Committee which sat last year was about equally divided on the subject; so that the opinions in favour of prohibition had made progress. By the casting vote of the Chairman, the Report in favour of prohibition *sub modo* was adopted, which had been followed in the drafting of this Bill. The result of absolute prohibition would be that since the masters could not be prevented from insuring, the injured workmen would on all occasions have to meet, as antagonists, Insurance Companies, whose whole energies would be devoted to fighting every claim for compensation; there would thus be a great increase of litigation, and great hardship in many deserving cases. Moreover, absolute prohibition would put an end to a number of arrangements existing at this moment, and which were, in his judgment, much more beneficial to the men than any chance of compensation they could obtain under an Act of Parliament. Two, at least, of the great Railway Companies—namely, the London and North-Western and the London, Brighton, and South Coast, had established between themselves and their men arrangements for mutual assurance, which seemed to him to be of the most beneficial and salutary kind. Of the 53,000 *employés* of the first-named Company only 25 had refused to enter into this arrangement, and of the 9,000 or 10,000 workmen employed by the London, Brighton, and South Coast Company all except two had entered into a similar arrangement. Of the men employed in the collieries it was given in evidence before the Committee that 83,000 men in England had entered into such arrangement, while in North Wales 10,500 had done so. Contemporaneously with that the number of accidents had greatly diminished, especially in the latter case, so that that fact showed that the arrangement had not tended to carelessness, or want of security for the workmen themselves. This system appeared to be one of great advantage to the men, and it was, therefore, the purpose of the Bill to encourage such arrangements. The scheme they contemplated in the 3rd section of the Bill allowed the employer and the workmen, if they agreed, to contract themselves out of the Act, provided always that an adequate consideration was given by the employer for such contract. That adequate consideration was defined by the Bill to be this—some system of insurance against accidents of all kinds, and that covered not only the limited class for which the employer was liable under the present Bill, but accidents of all kinds such as were inevitable, or even the result of the injured man's own negligence. The field that was covered by the sort of insurance which they allowed as an alternative to liability under the Bill was a very much wider field than was covered by the Bill itself. The Bill required that the employer should make a contribution to the insurance fund in accordance with the average proportion of accidents for which a master was liable under the circumstances of that particular trade to the total number of accidents of all kinds that occurred. Thus, if in a particular trade it was calculated that a master was, on an average, liable for a third of the accidents that occurred he would have to contribute one-third to the insurance fund. It was also provided that the employer should become a guarantor of the solvency of the insurance fund. One rock upon which schemes of assurance were extremely likely to split was that the actuarial calculations might not be accurately made, and the fund contributions might not be adequate to meet the demands made upon them. It was, therefore, necessary to throw upon the employer the duty of guaranteeing the soundness of the scheme. This at first sight might seem a little hard, but workmen could not be expected to judge whether the scheme was a sound one, and therefore the responsibility must be thrown on employers. It seemed to the Government extremely desirable, if possible, to avoid litigation, which could benefit nobody but the hedge attorney, who was the chief person interested in legal proceedings of the kind. It was, therefore, important to ascertain beforehand that agreements entered into between employers and workmen were fair. The Bill provided that one of the Departments of the Government should examine and certify that any contract made, or proposed to be made, between employer and workman was a contract under which the latter obtained adequate consideration for renouncing the advantages he would have under the Act. The Board of Trade would certify as to all schemes, except those in regard to coal mines and factories, which would come under the control of the Home Office. Practically those clauses were an endeavour to carry out the recommendations of the last Committee on this subject. He might here state that since 1881, when the Employers' Liability Act passed, the total number of cases set down for hearing under it amounted to 1,800; of these, there was a verdict for the plaintiff only in 419 cases, while there were settled between the parties 265 cases, in which he assumed the plaintiff got some benefit at least, making a total of 684 cases of successful litigation out of 1,800, or only 38 per cent. Thus, in 62 per cent of the cases set down for hearing, the workman failed in the object and purpose of his litigation, and the unhappy employer was subjected to the burden of paying his own costs and probably the costs on the other side. The hope of the Government was that these clauses would lead to some system of general insurance, and that the several trades in various parts of the country might federate with that object. With regard to the plans of general compulsory insurance, such as was embodied in legislation in Germany in 1884 and in Austria in 1887, their experience was too recent and too slight to enable them to come to anything like a sound judgment; and, besides, the details of those Continental measures would, in his opinion, be absolutely intolerable in a country of freedom like this, involving, as they did, a very serious amount of interference with trade, which was necessary and inevitable under the systems. He believed that by the machinery of this clause it would be to the mutual interest of employers and employed to institute a general scheme of insurance, and that it would do more to smooth the asperities of the labour question than almost any other system that could be introduced. He believed, too, there were sufficient data for calculating risks and rates of premium, so as to make a scheme solvent and safe. The example of the London and North-Western Company showed that in a great undertaking like that there were the materials for completing a scheme safely and successfully within the limits of the undertaking itself; and his view was that by grouping collieries by districts, and the textile industries and the building trades in various parts, and getting them to combine, schemes of mutual insurance might be carried out in a solvent and practicable manner for the benefit of the workman. A novel feature in the Bill was the extension of its benefits to seamen. The recommendations of the Committee on this subject, in his opinion, were wise and went far enough. Nobody could deny the difference between the employer of labour at sea and the employer on land, for the simple reason that the former when once his ship was at sea lost all control over his delegates and agents; and, therefore, to make him responsible for their negligence or error of judgment when the ship had left harbour and was on the high seas would be an unjust extension of the principle of employers' liability. Moreover, shipowners were already under a special code of regulations, and were not free to employ whom they liked as engineers, seamen, captains, and mates. Accordingly, this Bill did not go further than the Select Committee's Report, and made the shipowner only liable for accidents occurring to his *employés* while the vessel was in a British port, where his position resembled that of employers on land. When once the ship had left the port his responsibility was limited to this—that she must be properly equipped with everything necessary for the protection and safety of the men before she starts. Here, again, with the object of preventing litigation, the Government had introduced a sub-section which had been the subject of some criticism, enabling the Board of Trade to say in advance what things a ship of any particular class ought to have in order to its proper equipment in relation to the safety of the seamen, and it was suggested that these regulations should be annexed to the agreement of the sailor, so that he should have notice of what the ship ought to contain in order to satisfy the law. Another change introduced was the clause consolidating the Common Law action with the statutory action, so obviating a frequent cause of annoyance and suffering under the present law, and, at the same time, it was proposed to extend the jurisdiction of the County Courts in order to enable them to deal with Common Law claims as well as the statutory amount which exceeded the present jurisdiction of the County Courts. There were many other points to which he should like to advert, but he refrained from doing so with the view of giving as much time as possible for discussion. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews*).

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, that before he commenced his remarks on the Bill, he must again take the opportunity of protesting against being "cornered" in this matter—against being so compressed and cabined in a debate on so important a Bill. He feared he could not interpret the situation in the same way as the right hon. Gentleman opposite had interpreted it. After taking a very active part officially on behalf of the trades of the country for 20 years, it was very difficult for him to compress his remarks into so short a period as was now allowed. However, he would contribute his share towards, if possible, closing the debate before 12 o'clock, if his hon. Friends would acquiesce in such an agreement. [An hon. MEMBER: Certainly not.] At any rate, he would contribute his share in that direction. There were three particular points in connection with the question of employers' liability, raised in the present Bill, upon which he wished to speak, and they were the question of common employment, the question of insurance out of the Act, and the further question of limitation of compensation. Now, with regard to the question of common employment, the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had argued it at very considerable length, and he had quoted the conclusions arrived at by the Committee of 1876-7 so far as their Report was concerned, though the right hon. Gentleman had not given them any quotation from the evidence of the most important witness examined by that Committee. Now, with regard to the question of common employment, there was only one basis upon which the question could ever be satisfactorily settled, and that was on the basis of the abolition of common employment. Common employment was nothing but a subterfuge for shielding employers from their natural liability. Employers were liable to all others persons except to the men engaged in their employment, for injury caused by any person engaged in their employment, and if that were so, upon what basis of logic, upon what sense of justice could an employer be excused from being equally liable to compensate a person in his employ for injuries received whilst engaged on his work, no matter by whom the injury might be done? He appealed to the Home Secretary to listen to him for a moment. He was not going to argue this subject at length here, but he should have a great deal to say on the matter when the Bill got into Committee, and his speech to-night would not deprive him of a full opportunity of discussing the question at a later stage. Let him give one instance, and that was as good as a hundred instances that were occurring every day in the building and some other trades. The case was this. On the extension of the Charing Cross Railway Bridge now in process of construction, two or three months ago, a mason was at work. He was injured through the falling of some bags of sand, receiving a great weight from a great height on to his right shoulder, which so injured his arm and his wrist that he would be for ever prevented from earning his living at his trade. Now that was a most serious accident to happen to any man who had nothing but his health and strength and bodily skill to depend on for the maintenance of himself and his family. Well, this accident occurred through the man in charge of the bags of sand, whose business it was to lower them from a high platform to a lower platform, improperly slinging the bags, as the pin was not hammered tight on the top of the bags, and so, when they were slung off the platform, they toppled and fell on the man. The man was a ruined man, although only 30 years of age. He and his family (for he had a family) were a charge on the ratepayers or on the benevolence of his friends, and yet the Government said that because that accident occurred through the incapacity or negligence, or whatever they liked to term it, of a man in common employment, there was to be no claim for compensation. A more monstrous piece of injustice to a workman could scarcely be conceived. This man had no more control or influence over or knowledge of the man who slung the bags of sand improperly than if he had been a workman in any other part of England or in some other part of the world. He could not see and could have no means of protecting himself against the want of skill or care on the part of the man above him. Now he (Mr. Broadhurst) asked the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary whether he thought that the law should remain in the condition whereby these accidents could occur constantly, and a workman and his family have no recompense whatever against the employer? He (Mr. Broadhurst) should, at a later stage, move such Amendments as would relieve the Bill of that anomaly, of that great injustice, and also relieve the Bill from much of its confused language. He did not say this was the fault of the draughtsman, but the confused language seemed to him to be introduced in order not to do an injustice to the workman, and at the same time to protect the employer from such liability as he would have to incur in the case of any other person except a workman in his employment. That was a subject they would have to hear a great deal of in Committee, and notwithstanding the Report of the inquiry which the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had quoted with very considerable satisfaction, and with his eyes towards the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), whom he (Mr. Broadhurst) understood was likely to give the right hon. Gentleman valuable assistance on this matter. ["No, no!"] Oh, the hon. Member did not propose to give assistance on this point, and he (Mr. Broadhurst) begged the hon. Member's pardon. It was upon another subject, but that other subject was not altogether unconnected with the point he was now referring to. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Matthews) had been smiling, and he (Mr. Broadhurst) thought his reply to him would be this, that in the case of the man injured at the Bridge under this Bill, he would be provided for and protected by the system of insurance proposed. To that system the labour party entirely objected from beginning to end, and it was upon that point he believed that the right hon. Gentleman was relying upon the hon. Member for Northampton for considerable steam power in pulling the Government through this very difficult task. With regard to this point, especially if the House would permit him, he should like to read something very shortly, only one or two words from the Report of the Select Committee of 1876-7. Although he was not a Member of the House at the time that Report was presented, it was at the instance of the body of which he (Mr. Broadhurst) was then, and still continued to be, the Secretary, that that Select Committee was appointed. He had attended every one of the sittings of the Committee from the beginning to the end, and had taken some part in arranging for the witnesses, and so on. Well, the most distinguished witness that was examined by that Committee was Mr. Justice Brett, and he thought the whole House would agree that a more brilliant Judge and a more fair-minded man and a more certain man on points of law was scarcely known in the judicial system. He (Mr. Broadhurst) personally did not regard Mr. Justice Brett with any great degree of affection or personal regard, for Mr. Justice Brett had felt it to be his duty to inflict upon a man whom he knew a most cruel sentence in connection with the strike in the Metropolis. Well, Mr. Justice Brett's whole evidence from beginning to end was centred in the question of common employment, and his Lordship argued the matter with every witness. A Member of the Committee at that time was Mr. Ripley, then representing Bradford in this House—a large employer and a man of large experience, but one who could not agree with this proposal. Mr. Ripley asked this question, whether he, Mr. Justice Brett, considered that it would be better that a master should not be liable for injury done to a servant in his employ. The learned Judge, in reply, said he disagreed with the Common Law on compensation. He did not think an employer should be liable for the act of his servant; but, he said, so long as he was liable in any one case, there was no reason or justice why he should not be liable in the case of accidents through the negligence of one servant causing injury to another servant. The learned Judge said—

> "Will you forgive me for stating that I must say again if you alter the old law with regard to everybody, then you should say that nobody ought to be liable for anything but his own negligence or want of care or skill, but so long as you maintain the general law, I think that general law ought to be applicable in regard to the liability of a master for injury to a servant."

Evidence of that kind, replies of that nature, were to be found in every column of the eight or 10 pages of the evidence given by that very great and distinguished man. It would be difficult for the opponents of this proposal to abolish common employment to produce any two, or indeed any half-dozen, witnesses who could possibly have greater weight on this subject than the one witness which he (Mr. Broadhurst) had quoted from this Parliamentary document. And now, with regard to the question of insurance. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary boasted—and very properly boasted—that the thing was very good so far as it went—that it had prevented contracting out of the Act. He (Mr. Broadhurst) understood that to be the correct interpretation of the Bill. But, at the same time that the right hon. Gentleman had made contracting out of the Act illegal, he had made insuring out of the Act much more easy, and it was insuring out of the Act which the labour party objected to, as much as they objected to the retention of this doctrine of common employment. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to a great Corporation called the London and North-Western Railway Company. Well, the London and North-Western Railway Company was a Corporation as paramount of the Civil Service of the State. Surely, the right hon. Gentleman was not going to compare that great body, that great Railway Company, at all with the conditions surrounding ordinary and every-day employment. It was no argument to apply the results of the experience of that Company to the whole labour of the United Kingdom. It did not apply in the building trade. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary said he hoped to be able to group mines and the building trade. [MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): And factories.] Yes, and factories; but he would tell the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the building trade that it was absolutely and utterly impossible to do anything of the kind. There was no continuity of employment in the building trade. A man was employed on Monday, and discharged on Wednesday, if there was no further use for him on the job on which he was employed. How were they to arrange for insurance in such a case, and he gave that as a mere illustration. It was very seldom that a man worked for any considerable number of years in one employment in any one of the industries connected with the building trade, and it would be impossible to arrange insurance under such conditions. That system of insurance struck at the very root of their reasons for this legislation. Their reason for this legislation was not the amount of money they obtained as compensation; they never put it forward on that condition, upon that basis. The first speech he (Mr. Broadhurst) had the honour to make in that House he made from the Benches opposite on the Bill of 1880, and he then declared that they did not want to get money if they possibly could avoid it, and that their desire was to ensure a motive being given to employers to take every possible security for the lives and limbs of their men. They talked about compensation—compensation of £150 to a widow and her half-dozen children who had lost their bread-winner! Did they call that compensation? Why, it was no compensation at all. No doubt £150 was better than nothing; but no money in a case of that kind could be compensation, and it was well known that it was not money they asked for. It was protection to life that they wanted, and if an employer, notwithstanding the figures quoted to the contrary—and this was his opinion from great experience in these matters—if an employer could secure himself from all liability by the payment of 1*d.* per head for his accidents to his workmen into some common fund or some corporation for this purpose, his motive for saving life would be greatly diminished if not entirely destroyed. The employer would pay the same money per year, whether there were accidents or not, and what they required was that when there was an accident, through gross negligence, through bad plant and carelessly arranging material, that a fine should be imposed not of an exorbitant character, but such a fine should be imposed upon those responsible that they would take care in future that no repetition of the accident would occur if they possibly could avoid it. The larger the expenditure of money, the more care would be taken to prevent a repetition of such accidents. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary spoke with some pride of his success in securing the interests of workmen in Sub-section 3 of Clause 3 of this Bill. Would the House permit him (Mr. Broadhurst) to read half-a-dozen lines of Clause 3, and then he would ask whether hon. Members had ever read a clause so cleverly constructed to defy anyone to understand its meaning as this clause was? He thought there must have been some mistake in the course of the printing, and that the words of the clause had probably got jumbled together, for it could not possibly have been deliberately intended to draw such a provision as this. Sub-section 3 said—

> "The insurance should be to such amount and on such conditions as will, having regard to the whole scope of the indemnity thereby given, and having regard to the proportion borne by the number of accidents in case of which the employer is liable to pay compensation under this Act to the number of accidents which are the subject of insurance, insure to the workman, or in case of death, his representatives, a benefit equivalent to the compensation recoverable under this Act."

If he might use such an expression by the permission of Mr. Speaker, and without offence, it would puzzle a Philadelphian lawyer to understand this clause. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary would in his interest in the Bill, and in defence of the reputation of drafting, strike this sub-section out, or have it recast in language which ordinary people could understand. He thought the right hon. Gentleman could not have noticed it at all, or he would not have allowed it to pass. Sub-section 4 was an extraordinary proposal. In it the right hon. Gentleman said that every condition of arrangement entered into for any other purpose of a similar character would be binding on the parties in a case coming under this Bill.—[Mr. MATTHEWS: Admissible as evidence.] He feared he went rather farther than that. They were not going to admit it as evidence even. It might be put in evidence that a firm in Plymouth employing half a dozen men had made an arrangement for insurance with them, and this case might be used as evidence in dealing with the *employés* of a firm in Manchester, Liverpool, or Glasgow employing 500 or 1,000 men. He thought the right hon. Gentleman must see that they were not going to agree to any such extraordinary proposal as that. And now he would hurry to the last point, and that was the question of the limitation of compensation. He must ask the House to agree with him in this, that the life of a workman was worth more than £150. Now, there was the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a great financier and a man of very firm purpose and great business abilities, and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman with his great commercial knowledge would agree with him that the life of a workman was worth more than £150. They agreed to £150 in 1880. [Mr. MATTHEWS: Or three years' wages earned prior to accident.] In many cases the sum of £150 would be the amount in the case of a skilled workman, but that was not his point. His point was that the Labour Party agreed to conditions in 1880 which they were not now going to agree to in 1888. In 1880 it was the dawn of legislation of this kind. They, the Labour Party, out of the House, had to lead hon. Members of this House as they would lead timid children to the water; they had to lead them by degrees, and after years of agitation, and after the expenditure of large sums of money, they induced this timid, shivering, and shrinking House of Commons to give them a small instalment of what was right and just in matters of this kind. Well, the House took their lesson like the bold hon. Gentlemen they were, and the Labour Party now asked them for something wider, something higher, and something more difficult. They pointed to the fact that to-day the opposition they experienced in 1880 from the Party opposite had grown perceptibly less. The prophecy of ruin to the trade of the country which had been so largely indulged in had been falsified as the Labour Party knew it would be, and that Party now asked the Government to say that a workman's life was worth at least £500. There were some hon. Gentlemen who would ask the Government to remove all limit. The life of an M.P. might be worth £5,000. Well, but M.P.'s, as a rule, had fortunes to leave to their families, how much more then was the life of a working man worth when he had nothing to leave his family, and when there was nothing before his wife and family but poverty the moment the bread winner was removed? On that subject he and his Friends would have a great deal more to say, and later on he should move Amendments in harmony with the remarks he had made to the House. He would now only say one word as to Clause 12, which he rather thought the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary did not seem to be so well acquainted with as he was with some other parts of the Bill. Clause 12 gave compensation to seamen under certain circumstances, but the circumstances were so difficult that to his mind seamen would very rarely obtain compensation under the clause. He should, he hoped, hear much from hon. Gentlemen representing the seaport towns in support of his views on this matter. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had limited compensation to accidents arising in the case of a voyage commencing in a port in the United Kingdom. Did he understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that under this clause, in the case of a vessel sailing, say from San Francisco to Liverpool, and an accident occurring in the course of the voyage, the seaman would be entitled to recover? He (Mr. Broadhurst) thought they would not. What reason was there why a man meeting with an accident going out should be compensated for the accident if through the negligence of the employer, and yet when returning home be not so compensated for an accident? He thought that was the correct interpretation of the Bill. [Mr. MATTHEWS: No, no.] At any rate, he would call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to what the greatest authority in the Metropolis had said with regard to this clause, and he would ask hon. Gentlemen who were interested in the subject from the standpoint in which he (Mr. Broadhurst) was interested in it to pay some attention to this. This authority said that this new departure—namely, this Clause 12—was evidently the result of the recommendation of the Royal Commission on the loss of life at sea. [An hon. MEMBER: Who is the authority?] The authority was the London Chamber of Commerce. He was quoting from *The Chamber of Commerce Journal* of May 5 of the present year. That journal said—

> " Shipowners, although objecting generally to the provision, did not appear to be much troubled by it, as they hoped to cover their responsibilities by insurance."

Here was a confession of faith. They knew what that scheme of insurance was invented for in the first case, and what it was continued for now. It was to relieve the souls of those wealthy shipowners from financial trouble. The Chamber of Commerce consisted of shipowners, of great manufacturers of the City of London, and of great salesmen and others, and they said that they were not troubled much by the provision as they hoped to cover their liabilities by insuring out of them. That was a stronger condemnation of the right hon. Gentleman's 12th Clause than he (Mr. Broadhurst) should be prepared to pass on it. He only spoke with great diffidence and considerable hesitation as to whether the clause would ever be of much service to seamen. The Chamber of Commerce whose opinion he had quoted was a Chamber consisting of shipowners to a large extent, and they were very likely to know what would be the result of the provision. Seeing that the provision caused them no trouble, care, or anxiety, and that they would be able to cover all their liability by a system of insurance, it did not seem as though the provision would be of much use to seamen. For these reasons, and for others, he should feel it his duty when the Bill was read a second time—and he hoped many of his hon. Friends would do the same—to hand in such Amendments to the measure as would make it reasonable and just from the standpoint of the workmen properly entitled to compensation from their employers. He had only one other word to say, and that was with regard to the Committee to which the Bill should be referred. He heard it said that it was likely to go to the Grand Committee on Trade. He hoped, however, that it would be sent to the Grand Committee on Law, and he trusted the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary would favourably consider that suggestion, as he (Mr. Broadhurst) thought the Grand Committee on Law would be a much more competent and suitable Committee to deal with a subject of that kind than would be the Committee on Trade, looking at its general composition. The hon. Member for East Donegal had given Notice of his intention to move the rejection of the Bill. He (Mr. Broadhurst) could only say that if the hon. Member should feel it to be his duty to move that Motion—which he hoped he would not do—speaking for himself, he should be unable to follow the hon. Member into the Lobby. He hoped and believed that they would be able so to amend the measure in Committee as to make it one of value to the working classes of the country.

Mr. J. W. SIDEBOTTOM (Cheshire, Hyde) said, he hoped the House would allow him to say a few words on this Bill—a Bill which greatly interested hon. Members—especially those who represented manufacturing and industrial constituencies. Owing to the limited time at their disposal, he must confine himself to one point, and that was the power of contracting out of the Act. He was very glad to find that the Government did not intend to make contracting out of the Act illegal, for he could not agree with the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Broadhurst) that it would be illegal under the Bill. It was not prohibited under the Act of 1880. That power had been used to a certain extent; but in many quarters it had been considered that in any amendment of the Act of 1880 the liberty should be withdrawn. He could speak on that matter absolutely without prejudice; because, although he was an employer himself, he had never contracted out of the Act, nor had he ever made any attempt to deprive his workpeople of its benefits. He thought any employer of labour who would force his workpeople to contract out of any Act of Parliament passed for their benefit would be deserving of the most severe censure which could be passed on him by all right-thinking people. Then, why was he of the opinion that he had stated on the subject? In the first place, to look upon it from the workman's point of view. If he contracted himself out of the Act, and accepted the alternative laid down in the Bill—namely, insurance—he secured for himself compensation for every accident he might meet with in his work, and not merely for those due to the negligence of his employer. In mining, only one out of every ten cases was compensated, and then, very often, the compensation had to be secured by means of Law Courts. But under a scheme of insurance, every accident would be compensated at once, without any trouble and without any friction or ill-feeling on the part either of employer or employed. Then, as to employers. He did not think that, as regarded cost, they cared whether they were free to contract out of the Act or not; because, as the House knew, it was a comparatively inexpensive thing now to insure against risk of accidents in one of the many Insurance Companies which existed for the purpose. He happened to know that in view of the passing of the Bill, at that very moment one or more Insurance Companies were being started for the express purpose of insuring employers against accidents under the Bill. There were many employers who wished for something more than that. They felt their responsibility towards their workpeople was higher than a mere legal responsibility, and would gladly pay double or treble the amount they would have to pay in premiums, if they could only secure compensation to their workpeople in every case of injury. He was glad the Government were not closing the door to voluntary co-operation of that kind, and he hoped that hon. Gentlemen representing labouring constituencies would agree with him when he said that while it was absolutely necessary to protect workpeople against negligent and careless employers, there were many cases in which it was the highest and best policy to form a scheme of mutual voluntary insurance to which employers and employed could contribute to give compensation to the latter in case of accidents.

Mr. RANDELL (Glamorgan, Gower) said, that in rising to address the House for the first time he felt sure of receiving that indulgence which was usually accorded to a new Member on such a trying occasion. In return, he hoped he should not have to detain the House for any length of time, and such observations as he had to offer upon the Bill he intended should not be made in any captious or hostile spirit, but rather with the view to extend the scope and widen the basis of the measure, which he acknowledged was a decided improvement of the Act of 1880. He did not wish himself to labour the doctrine of common employment; but he felt there was no good reason for limiting the liability of employers in the manner proposed, and he trusted that the Bill would be so amended as to place a workman in relation to his fellow-workmen in the same position as any third person receiving injury whilst on the premises of the employer. He would also remind those who had charge of the Bill, that there were positions requiring skilled knowledge on the part of the *employé*, and yet that such places were filled by manifestly incompetent persons. In such cases, it surely could not be right to deprive the workman of his own claim to compensation for injuries arising out of accidents, owing to the incompetency and gross negligence of his fellow-working man. But there was another question of considerable importance—he meant of contractors and sub-contractors. Section 2, which referred to the point, did not, he thought, as drawn, apply to all such cases as it was no doubt intended that it should apply. Take the following instance. A mineowner engaged a sub-contractor to sink a shaft, at so much per yard. The sub-contractor, in turn, employed some dozen men to do the work, and paid them so much per week, all materials being supplied by the mineowner. The sub-contractor was usually a man of straw. Well, owing to imperfect shoring, a stone at the side of the shaft fell, and killed one of the working men. Under the law as it now stood, he ventured to say, the interpretation which would be placed upon the Bill, if it became law, would be that a workman had no right to compensation against the principal employer in respect of such an accident. He knew of an accident of the kind, where the representatives of a deceased workman had sought to enforce a claim for damages, and had obtained a judgment in the County Court below; but, on appeal, that judgment was reversed, although the fact was in evidence that the mineowner's engineer superintended the work of the sub-contractor in respect of the contract. He maintained that this sub-section, as drawn, would not cover that position; and he, therefore, trusted that another clause would be added to definitely remedy the same. Then, as to notice before action, he was of decided opinion that that notice should be done away with altogether. He thought that it only embarrassed the position of the workman injured, or the position of his relatives in the case of his death. Certainly, the extension of time from six weeks to three months was an improvement; but, as he had said, he thought that the notice should be done away with altogether. If a man was seriously injured, by the time he was sufficiently recovered to consider his position, he was surprised to find that his legal rights were gone. If notice had to be given, there was no reason why it should be before action. In all actions of tort he thought it desirable that the statutory period for commencement of an action should be considerably shortened—say, 12 months from the accident, or in case of death, two years. He thought the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) was wrong so far as the interpretation he placed on the Act of 1880 was concerned. He thought that Act gave no alternative as to the limit of the amount recoverable. It was in the Bill, for the first time, that it was sought as an alternative to place the sum of £150 as the limit of the sum recoverable; and he agreed that that amount was far too small. He would prefer leaving the question of compensation to be dealt with by a jury; but he thought that, if they fixed any limit at all, the amount should be increased to £500. It would be preferable, in his opinion, however, to leave the matter in the hands of a jury, for they would know the circumstances of each case, and the matter might safely be entrusted to them. Then, as to the question of the application of the Act to seamen. He had hoped, certainly, after the words which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, who introduced the Bill, that the Government would have dealt more liberally with poor Jack than they appeared to do in the Bill. Looking at the sub-sections, it seemed that the remedy of the sailor was restricted to injury received in port. Sailors were a class of men who had not been so well looked after as they deserved, and he trusted that their rights of action would be more fully looked after by the Government than they appeared to be in this Bill. Then, coming to the definitions of the Bill, it was to be hoped that the expression "workman" would be held to include domestic or menial servants, clerks, omnibus conductors, and tramway conductors. One would desire that the Bill should apply to every person in the position of a servant. As to the question of the time it was contemplated that the Act should come into operation, it should not be lost sight of that the old Act expired by effluxion of time at the end of this Session, and that the new Act should come into operation immediately after the passing of the same. There was evidently now a ready disposition to admit the claims and rights of the working classes, and he trusted that no political partizanship on the one side or the other would be the means of thwarting such good intentions.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he had put a Notice on the Paper to move the rejection of the Bill, but had done so rather with the desire to prevent the Bill being taken after half-past 12 o'clock, if by chance the House should sit so late. Certainly, he should be the very last person in the House to object to the passing of some such Bill as that, because he knew that the Bill now put forward by the Government was to a large extent a recast of a Bill of his own which was referred to a Select Committee last Session. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews), referring to that Bill, appeared to labour under the impression that both his (Mr. O'Connor's) Bill, and that of his hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), did away with the doctrine of common employment altogether. He could answer for one of those Bills, and say that it was not correct to state that it did away with the doctrine of common employment at all, nor did he desire that it should be done away with. Suppose two men, under a common employer, were working together at a large stone, and one man happened to be negligent in handling the stone and that it fell and the other workman was injured; it seemed to him most reasonable that the common employer should be made responsible for that negligence. But what they were anxious last year to procure was that the employer should not be allowed to contract himself out of the liability under the Act of 1880, and that the workman should not be liable to contract himself out of the benefit of the Act. The provisions which were placed in this Bill under Section 3 appeared to him to be absolutely unworkable. As the French said, the door must either be open or shut; the liability must either be on the employer, and there must be no means of contracting himself out of the Act, or else all the arrangements they might make would inevitably end in disappointment, and the effect of the Bill would be a bolstering up of Employers' Liability Insurance Companies. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the Bill as if it were an improvement on the existing law, so far as the interests of the working classes were concerned, and he went on to say that he proposed to simplify the law by combining the Common Law action with the action under the Employers' Liability Act. But he did more than that. He (Mr. O'Connor) would ask the House to consider the force of the 11th section of the present Bill, which related to Common Law rights; the clause was to the effect that where any personal injury was caused to a workman by reason of any wrongful act in connection with the works in which a workman was employed, and the workman was entitled, independently of the Act, to any compensation from the employer, the action for compensation should be brought in the same time and on the same motion as if it had been brought under the Act, and should not be brought otherwise. In that way this Bill, which affected to be in the interest of the working classes, really cut down the Common Law right of the workman to an action under the Act; that was to say, he would only be able to bring an action within the limited time and upon notice being given to the employer. The question of notice was a very important matter; because, in consequence of the action of many employers, workmen were deluded into delaying proceedings by the belief that it would not be necessary to bring an action against the employers at all. He said that that cut down the existing Common Law right; but, again, in Clause 1, Sub-section B, the phraseology was so arranged that the liability of the employer was further reduced at the expense of the workman. Under the Employers' Liability Act of 1880, if any person having superintendence entrusted to him should be guilty of negligence whereby a workman was injured, the workman so injured should have compensation at the hands of the employer; but the effect of this new clause was that unless the injured workmen was actually under the superintendence of the man who was negligent, he would have no right of action against the employer. There, again, they had a reduction of the employers' liability at the expense of the workman. In order to test this clause he would like to quote a word or two from what he believed to be the best handbook on employers' liability, which said on this point—

> "A acts as general superintendent over workmen employed in one department of a factory, and orders one of the workmen to lower a bale of goods from a window by a chain insufficient for the purpose; the chain breaks, and the bale of goods injures a workman in the same factory, but one over whom A exercises no superintendence. Under this Act he is liable."

But, under the present Bill, he would not be liable by reason of want of superintendence exercised over the negligent official. The clause, therefore, required very great attention, in order to prevent it being liable to the objection he (Mr. O'Connor) had pointed out. Again, the class of persons who could bring an action under the Bill would be limited, as before, to those who were entitled under the Act of 1880. The Act of 1880 said in its 1st section that a workman, or, in case of injury resulting in death, the legal personal representative of the workman, and any person entitled to represent him in case of death, should have the same right to compensation against the employer. But Section 8 of this Bill said that the persons amongst whom compensation for injury should be awarded were husband, wife, parent, or child. If they were going to combine the action under the Act with the Common Law action, they would have a difficulty with regard to the terms of Lord Campbell's Act, which included with the wife, husband, parent, and child, grandparents, grandchildren, and stepchildren. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Matthews) said that that was in the Bill. He hoped it might be so; but there were authorities in legal circles who held a different opinion. The right hon. Gentleman also spoke of the disadvantage of actions abating in case of death. It was true that Sub-section 4 of Section 1 provided that an action under that section should lie against the representative of a deceased employer. So far, so good; but while it provided for continuation of an action on the death of the representative of the employer, the right hon. Gentleman seemed to have overlooked the case of the death of the injured workman. ["No, no!"] The right hon. Gentleman said "No;" but he could find in the Bill no provision by which an action commenced by an injured man should be allowed to continue at the hands of his representatives. With regard to Section 3, and the compensation of workmen under contractors or sub-contractors, it seemed to him that that was a recasting, and not a very good one, of his own Bill of last Session. He thought his own drafting was better. With regard to the voidance of contracts dealt with in Section 3, he had only two points to remark upon. In the first place, he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that, unless the jurisdiction of the County Court was increased, there would be a limitation of actions in these cases. Then, with regard to Sub-section 4 of Section 3, which had been already quoted by the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), it provided that any arrangement or agreement entered into by persons in similar employment elsewhere should be admissible as evidence of the reasonableness or propriety of any system of insurance entered into between employers and their men. He asked whether that similarity was to be treated as an issue of fact, or was it held to be a question of law? Was it a point on which appeal would lie? Again, in Section 6, Sub-section 2, it was provided that on trial of an action in the County Court without a jury, one or more assessors might be appointed for the purpose of ascertaining the amount of compensation. Now, no one could doubt the propriety of having skilled assessors where it might be necessary; but that two assessors should be required to help any qualified Court or jury to assess the amount of compensation was a thing that no one ever heard of. He suggested that it would have been well to follow the recommendation of the Select Committee of last year, which was that there should be special juries—that the parties should be entitled to have special juries wherever the case in the opinion of the Court warranted it. That would be much more useful than the appointment of these assessors, who were to do nothing but assess the amount of compensation. With regard to the question of seamen, he was agreeably surprised, when on the Committee, to find that although there were three Representatives of the shipowning interest upon it, every one of them in the most loyal and generous spirit agreed in the recommendation that seamen should be included in the benefit of the Bill. He was glad to acknowledge the action of an hon. Gentleman who was sitting opposite who had no hesitation in supporting that proposal; but he regretted that the clause had been limited. It was only in case of tackle issuing from a port in the United Kingdom proving defective that a man injured in consequence was entitled to recover compensation from the owners. But it was perfectly possible for the master of a ship in any part of the world to have his vessel put in proper order and provide proper tackle. San Francisco had been suggested; but a bottomry bond could always be given for the money necessary to enable a master to put his ship in proper working order, and, therefore, why a man should not be entitled to compensation who was injured on the voyage home just as much as the man injured on the outward voyage, he could not understand. He did not wish to detain the House longer, but there was one further flaw in the Bill that he desired to point out. The right hon. Gentleman had referred, among other things, to the insurance fund in connection with the London and North-Western Railway, and he spoke of the system obtaining there as very satisfactory, and appeared to think that if other employers of labour had established the same system, there would be nothing to find fault with. But the right hon. Gentleman did not tell the House that the system was compulsory, and that the men were obliged to submit to it as a condition of employment, and that the men, if left to themselves, would prefer to trust to the benefit of the Employers' Liability Act. There was one clause in the Bill which related to procedure in Scotch Courts; but, as that appeared to be rather a question for Committee than the present stage of the Bill, he would not make further comment upon it. Before sitting down, he would like to endorse the opinion of the hon. Member for West Nottingham—namely, that this Bill should not be referred to the Committee on Trade, but to the Committee on Law. There was nothing in the Bill which required that it should be referred to the Committee on Trade, but there were many points as to which it would be well that it should be considered by the Committee on Law.

Mr. AINSLIE (Lancashire, North Lonsdale) said, that as one of the Committee which sat on the Bills two years ago, he felt he was bound to say something in reference to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, and particularly to that portion of it in which he spoke of the position that those whom he described as the Representatives of the employers of labour had taken up. He (Mr. Ainslie) deprecated altogether even the supposition that the Representatives, so-called, of the employers of labour had had any other object in view than that of benefiting the working classes; and, not only that, but he thought that from the recommendations of the Select Committee, and from the names of those who supported the various proposals submitted at the conclusion of the Committee, they might judge what the employers of labour desired to do. He wished also to protest against the language of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) who seemed to think that hon. Members on that side of the House were disposed to put a money value upon the life of a workman. In fixing the limit of compensation at £150, as an alternative to three years' wages, the Committee had in view, as he thought hon. Members ought to be informed, more particularly the case of boys and apprentices, to whom an injury in early life was of the gravest moment, and who, if lamed, had a very limited scope of means of subsistence open to them in after life. The idea was that £150 to an apprentice or youth was probably a fair limit. The hon. Member for the Gower Division of Glamorgan (Mr. Randell) rightly interpreted the idea covered in the clause, providing that where negligence was shown punishment would follow, not merely in the mulcting a sum of money from the employer, for there was also a criminal liability to which the employer was subjected. Both these things must be before the mind of every employer when he was engaging workmen and fitting up the machinery necessary to their employment. One matter, which had been left out of sight by hon. Gentlemen who had spoken in the debate so far, was that they, who it might be said represented in the Select Committee the employers of labour, represented two classes of employers—the large employers of labour and the small employers of labour. They particularly had in mind the small employers of labour, the men whose whole capital probably was covered by £50 or £100, and who if they were to be mulcted in the sum of £500, as some hon. Members had suggested, would simply be ruined men. It was to protect these men, as well as large men, that some limit to the money they would have to pay was fixed. With regard to contracting and sub-contracting, he had tried to find out where the limit could be fixed. He did not feel sure, for instance, that if he was painting his house, as he was bound to do so many times in the course of a lease, he would not be liable for compensation for any accidents that might happen to the men engaged by the man employed by him. The wording of the language was so wide that he had to seek not where the narrow limit was, but where the utmost limit was to which the language might extend. He thought that a few words might with advantage be inserted in Committee, defining the limit of responsibility. In regard to the time of the notice, he thought that the Committee went to the utmost limit in their recommendations. He was bound to say that in regard to Sub-section 3, Clause 3, which was the subject of much animadversion by the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), he was for a very long time puzzled to understand what the meaning of that sub-section was. But he thought that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, in his opening speech, made it sufficiently clear that if any alteration in the wording were wanted, he would take care it was made in Committee. He thanked the House for the patience with which they had listened to these few observations.

MR. LOCKWOOD (York) said, he would not detain the House at any length, because he assured hon. Gentleman who sat opposite that he was not going to criticize the Bill in any hostile spirit. They, who sat on the Opposition side of the House, must recognize that what the Home Secretary said in introducing the Bill was perfectly true—that that was, after all, an amending Bill, and if there were faults in it, the blame should not rest entirely upon the Head of the Government who had introduced it. The main faults which he found in the Bill were faults which existed in the Bill of 1880, and his regret was that the Government should have found it necessary to perpetuate those faults in what the Home Secretary had rightly called the amending Bill of that year. Now, to put it shortly, the main objections he had to the Bill were these. The Bill purported to recognize the injustice of the doctrine of common employment, as it was called. It recognized the injustice to a certain extent, but it did away with the good which would result from that recognition by imposing upon the litigants—he was speaking of the plaintiffs who would bring actions under the Bill—harassing conditions, which were a great burden upon such litigants. He objected entirely to the notice of action. For whose benefit was it—for the benefit of the employer? It must be, of course, for his benefit. But what right had the employer to notice of action? In nine cases out of ten the accident happened upon his own premises, and he had direct personal notice of it. If the accident did not happen upon his own premises, it happened where his workmen were working for him, and in that way he had direct notice of it. The great Railway Companies, whose systems extended from one end of the country to the other, had no notice of action in the case of accidents which were the result of their negligence at any part of their systems. There were the great Omnibus Companies plying through the streets of the Metropolis; they surely were more entitled to notice of action than an employer whom it sought under the Bill to make liable for accidents which occurred practically upon his own premises. He thanked the Home Secretary for the figures he had been kind enough to supply him. According to those figures, there were 1,800 actions; but in only 684 had the litigants been successful, the percentage of successful actions thus being about 38; but how came it that there were only 684 successful actions out of 1,800; how many of the persons who brought the actions had been made unsuccessful litigants by reason of being trammelled and hampered and harassed by this very notice of action? It was all very well for lawyers like himself to preserve this notice of action, because it was a fruitful source of litigation. Over and over again it happened that when a working man had gone into Court some objection was taken to his notice of action. The question upon whom the notice should be served, and as to within what time it should be served, and a great number of other considerations, rendered this a very harassing matter for litigants. He objected to the limit within which the action was to be brought. Why impose a limit of six months? Look at the cruel hardship which accrued from that. He had no doubt that many hon. Members remembered the case of "Johnson *v.* Shaw." In that case a man was injured in January, 1883, and by his injuries he was rendered insane. He was put into a lunatic asylum from which he was only brought out—fortunately cured—in July. That man had no means of appointing a committee to represent him in the action, and while that poor fellow was lying maimed and insane in the asylum, time was running against him. When he came out, the six months had expired, and he could not bring his action. There would be as cruel cases of hardship under this Bill. Hon. Members would find that one of the sub-clauses—Sub-clause 4, he believed—gave right of action against representatives of employers. But, supposing an accident happened, and immediately after the workmen had been injured the employer died. They knew what the delays of the law were, and therefore they could easily understand that more than six months might be taken up in the appointment of a representative of the employer who might be sued. In the meantime, the law's delays had prevented the workmen from bringing their action, and time had run against them. Surely, that was an injustice. Now, the third objection he had had reference to the matter of amount. Why did they limit the amount? They were told by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Ainslie) that the Committee, in fixing the amount of compensation at £150, had boys and apprentices chiefly in view. He (Mr. Lockwood) did not see why they should value the life of a boy at £150. Why not trust the juries? The Government were continually telling the House they had confidence in juries. Why did they say that, with regard to employers, the amount of compensation which they should pay should be limited, whereas in all other cases there was no limit as to the amount of compensation? These were his three objections to the Bill. Of course he had others, but he was not going to occupy the time of the House in discussing them. Surely, it was not a very generous provision of the Bill, when they were professing to deal with the working man so far as his employer was concerned, and they were professing to put that man on an equality with third parties who were not employed. Surely, it was not a very generous thing to take away or to hamper or to harass the working man's Common Law right of action. On what principle was that done; how came it that it had been introduced into the Bill? It might have been introduced to satisfy some of the Gentlemen who sat opposite, and who, it would appear, he thought, from one portion of the right hon. Gentleman's remarks, were not pleased with some of the provisions of the Bill, but who took great care to assure the right hon. Gentleman that there was no feeling of displeasure at the measure on their part. He (Mr. Lockwood) did not wish to say anything which could have a hostile bearing on the Bill, for he certainly joined with those who deprecated any Division against the Bill. It was, no doubt, an important question to what Committee the Bill should be referred. This was a Bill which involved questions of procedure, and the clause relating to procedure appeared to him to be the most important clause of the Bill. It was suggested by some Members that the Bill should be entrusted to the Grand Committee upon Trade. Of course, that Committee was quite able to deal with the many questions involved; but they were not, he submitted, capable of dealing effectively and effectually with questions of procedure, and he could only say that, if the Bill were sent to the Trade Committee, when it came back on Report those Members who took an interest in the matter would take an opportunity of being heard again upon the Bill.

COLONEL HILL (Bristol, S.) said, he could assure hon. Members that he should make but a very slight demand upon their time. As a shipowner, he desired to say that he had no wish whatever to offer any opposition to the second reading of the Bill; and he thought he might say that shipowners in general had no wish whatever to avoid any degree of responsibility which properly rested upon them, as upon all other employers of labour, to see that the conditions of their employment afforded the greatest amount of possible safety to the men they employed. But he wished to remind the House that there was a very considerable difference between the conditions of employment on land and at sea. The owner of a mine or a factory had the opportunity, as often as he pleased to avail himself of it, of visiting his mine or factory, and seeing that the precautions that he had ordered were being properly observed. The shipowner had not that opportunity. He might have the best possible vessel; he might have the very best equipment; and he might have the vessel manned and officered by men whom he knew to be good and skilful men, men who had obtained certificates from the Board of Trade to that effect; but when the vessel had gone away he was unable to exercise any supervision at all over her. Then he (Colonel Hill) ventured to say that the immunity from accident on board a vessel depended in a very great degree upon the skill of those on board rather than on anything the owner had had it in his power to do; and there was this also, that it was to the shipowners' self-interest in a very large degree, in a larger degree than in the case of employers on shore, that accidents should not happen. If an accident happened in a mine or a factory, it meant the stoppage of the profit-earning powers of the mine or factory for a certain limited time; but in the case of a ship it was quite different. An accident might deprive the owner of any profit for the whole twelve months, or, at all events, for the whole voyage in which the vessel was engaged. Three months' notice had been objected to in the case of employers on shore, and one of the great reasons of the hon. and learned Member for York (Mr. Lockwood) why there should not be any notice was, that accidents happened at the very door of the employer, as it were, and that the employer had direct personal notice of them. That, however, was not the case with shipowners. But there was another circumstance to be taken into account; a vessel came home, and, as hon. Members were aware, the crew was paid off. Now, if the shipowner had no notice of any claim, he had no means of providing himself with the necessary evidence with which to rebut any incorrect statement which might be made. Then he also urged that no special reason existed for the application of this provision to shipowners; for the latest Return of the loss of life at sea showed that the shipping trade was carried on with increasing immunity from accidents. The last Return, which was published in the April of this very year, showed that in 1885, the last year for which there was any Return, the total loss of life was 1,068. That was a decrease of 425 on the previous year, and the decrease of 1,072 on the average of the last 10 years. He thought the House would feel that that was a satisfactory statement, and that it showed that the shipowners had not been so oblivious to the claims of "Poor Jack" as had been asserted by hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House. Then, again, shipowners and sailors were on very good terms, and he instanced, as a proof of that, that only a very short time ago he had the honour of introducing in the House a Bill which proposed to provide funds jointly by shipowners and sailors for the relief of widows and orphans. But if, however, upon these grounds it might not be considered desirable to except shipping from the operation of this Bill as it was in 1880, he hoped that the Committee, whether it be the Committee on Trade—which seemed to him to be the proper Committee—or the Committee on Law, to which the Bill was referred, would accept certain Amendments for the purpose of simplifying and adapting the Bill to shipping. Amendments would be brought forward to the effect that the liability should be confined to the equipments and fittings only. It had been said that the sailor ought to have the same right to compensation for an accident occurring on the homeward voyage as upon the outward voyage, because there was every facility abroad for refitting the vessels. But that was not always the case. There were places abroad where one could not get as good materials as one would wish to get, and the master had to manage with the best materials he could obtain. The shipowner had no control over such incidents. With regard to the question of time, he had already endeavoured to point out the difficulty which existed, and he would only mention further that the Accidental Insurance Companies insisted upon a notice of claim being given a very short time after the accident. He did not see any reason why notice of claim should not be given immediately upon the arrival of a vessel in port, and he hoped the Committee would see the desirability of adopting the Amendment to that effect. Then there were certain complicated suggestions made in Sub-section C, Clause 12, which would give to the Board of Trade a great deal of power in regard to the classification of vessels and the like, which he thought would be very intolerable. He had only to add that personally he desired that the occupation of the working man should be rendered as little hazardous as possible, and that he hailed with satisfaction any just and proper measure having that tendency.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, that at that hour of the night (11.40) he would only detain the House three for four minutes; but having been one of those who originally before 1878 most strongly recommended this legislation to the House, he was anxious to say a few words. In the first place, he wished to say that it was very satisfactory to him to find a general concurrence of opinion now-a-days in favour of the principle of this Bill. He fully confirmed what his hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) had said—namely, that those who originally promoted this Bill had in view mainly, not so much the giving of compensation in such cases, as the giving of fresh motive to employers to take care in carrying on their works. He thought that principle had been borne in mind in this Bill; but he hoped that it might be somewhat extended in the course of the passage of the Bill through Committee. There was one point he wished specially to advert to—namely, the application of the Bill to seamen. The Royal Commission, of which he was Chairman a few years ago, attached the very greatest importance to the extension of the provisions of the Act to seamen; they did so in the interest of the general security of seamen, not so much with the view of giving compensation to the men in particular cases, but because they thought that this was one of the best ways of bringing home responsibilities to the shipowners, and inducing them to conduct their business in a manner conducive to the safety of the men. He was afraid the Bill as it stood, as regarded seamen, was somewhat too restrictive, and he hoped that in Committee it would be improved in that respect. He did not see any reason for making so great a distinction between homeward and outward bound vessels as was made in the Bill. The owner of a ship who was sending the vessel to a foreign port was not in any worse position than the employer who employed an agent at home. A shipowner must at a port in a distant country employ an agent, and it was the agent's duty to see that the vessel was in as fit a state to return as it was to go out, and therefore he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) hoped that in this respect there would be some change made in the Bill. He very much objected to the sub-sections of the clause to which the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had adverted—namely, those sub-sections giving power to the Board of Trade to make specific regulations with respect to the equipment of vessels. That was the introduction of a provision to which the Royal Commission had objected, and he hoped that these sub-sections would disappear. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the changes proposed with regard to the doctrine of common employment, but he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had been unable to make out whether the Bill made any important changes in the law as compared with the Act of 1880. He had compared the Bill with the Act of 1880, and he found that it was extremely difficult to make out the phraseology. The only other point he would refer to was the question of forbidding persons to contract themselves out of the Act. He entirely approved of that provision; but at the same time he was willing to admit that there was a great deal to be said for the principle of contracting out of the Bill in cases of mutual insurance. In conclusion, he had to say that he agreed with those who suggested that the Bill should be referred to the Grand Committee on Law, because he believed that, on the whole, that would give greater satisfaction than referring it to the Committee on Trade.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he desired to make an appeal to the House with regard to this Bill. He did not feel justified in exercising any pressure, looking to the importance of the subject under discussion; but he gathered from the debate which had gone so far that it was the general wish of Members that the measure should be referred to a Grand Committee—to either the Committee on Law or the Committee on Trade, as to which question the Government desired to express no opinion that evening. They desired to reserve any expression of opinion upon that subject, and they had no prejudice in regard to it in one direction or the other. But, looking at the fact that that was practically the last night on which it was possible to discuss a question of that kind before the Holidays, and that the time after the Holidays was very fully appropriated, he thought he gathered that the general desire of the House was that the Bill should be read a second time that night. If that was the wish, he trusted that hon. Members would be content to reserve any observations they might have to make for a future occasion, and especially until the Bill was sent to a Committee, when full opportunity would be afforded them to raise any question in which they took an interest. He thought it would be for the public advantage and for the convenience of Members generally that the Bill should now be read a second time.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he quite agreed with the general views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith); but he did not quite understand when they were to hear from the Government, if the discussion closed that night, to which of the two Committees the Bill was to be referred. He thought there would be much greater willingness on the part of hon. Gentlemen behind him to assent to the proposal to take the second reading of the Bill that night, if they had a clear assurance from the right hon. Gentleman that the Government would accede to the appeal which had been made by every speaker on the Opposition side of the House, and, he believed, on the other side, that the Bill should be referred to the Committee on Law.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, there must be a distinct Motion on that question, and the Government would put down the Motion to refer the Bill to either the Committee on Law or on Trade on the Monday after the Whitsuntide Holidays.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Are we to understand it is the wish of the Government that the Bill should be referred to the Committee on Law?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was not quite prepared to say that. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] They had no prejudice at all in the matter, and they would endeavour to gather the general feeling of hon. Members interested in the question on both sides of the House, and take the best means they could of ascertaining the views of the House generally. It was a matter on which they could form no decided opinion now; and, therefore, he hoped the House would permit them to leave the matter open until they re-assembled.

MR. MAC INNES (Northumberland, Hexham) said, that the right hon. Gentleman had asked them to assist him in taking the second reading of the Bill that night. If they assented to the second reading now, he hoped that hon. Gentlemen opposite would give them credit for very considerable self-denial. Very many of them had taken a great interest in this question, and they had wished to have it fully and amply discussed in the House; but all the opportunity of discussion permitted to them had been the very short space of time from 20 minutes to 11 to 10 minutes before midnight, because the previous hour was occupied by two speeches—of course, very interesting—from Gentlemen upon the Front Benches. The mass of Members, especially his hon. Friends connected with the mining interest, who took especial interest in this matter, would have no further opportunity of taking part in the debate. There was much discussion as to whether the Bill should be referred to the Committee on Trade or to that on Law; but to the great majority of Members that question was necessarily of no interest. It must necessarily be the case that the great majority of Members had not seats on either of those Committees; and, therefore, if the second reading was passed to-night, the vast majority of Members would have no further opportunity of taking part in the discussion on the Bill. If they did agree to the second reading then, he hoped hon. Members, when they met their constituents during the Holidays, would acknowledge that in this instance, as in other instances during the Session, hon. Members upon the Opposition Benches had shown no obstructive tendencies, as hon. Gentlemen sometimes wished to make out.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Fenwick.*)

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that he could not, of course, object to an adjournment if it was pressed by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway; but he would regret it very much, for he thought it would postpone the progress of a measure in which they took an especial interest. It was really impossible to say when it would be in the power of the Government to name another day on which the Bill could be taken.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, he understood that the chief question now at issue was whether the Bill should be referred to the Committee upon Law or to that upon Trade. Personally, he thought that it would be better that the Bill should be discussed in Committee of the Whole House. As to the adjournment of the debate, he was opposed to the Friends with whom he usually acted. If they had prepared speeches, and wanted a sitting to-morrow, he did not want such a sitting, although he could come down just as well as they. Certainly, he thought they would be disappointed in the intention they had in view, because they would not have a House to-morrow, or, if they did, the vast majority of the House would be composed of the Government Supporters. An hon. Friend of his suggested that the Question should be put; he did not object to that, because he only rose with the object of facilitating matters if he could. He had understood that this important measure, with which they all sympathised in principle, would be read a second time that night, and that there would be no need to come down to the House to-morrow. Of course, if there was a Division to be taken, he would vote with his hon. Friend who had moved the adjournment of the debate; but he should only do so from personal motives. If his hon. Friends were anxious that they should have another opportunity of discussing the Bill, he would support them in their endeavour to get it; but he promised them an empty House to-morrow and an inattentive country, whereas if they followed his advice, and agreed to some sensible arrangement, they might, at some future time, have a favourable opportunity of discussing all the points of the Bill.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said, that at an earlier hour in the evening the Closure was moved by an hon. Member upon the Opposition side of the House, and now, at that late hour, 4 minutes to 12 o'clock, it appeared the Government were not satisfied with their great exploits in the course of the present sitting, but wished to obtain an opportunity, if they possibly could, of bringing on a measure which stood in the name of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He certainly thought the desire of those who took an especial interest in the Bill, and who had every right to be heard, should be acceded to by the Government. Without wishing to take up any further time of the House, he sincerely trusted that the Motion for the Adjournment would be accepted.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) trusted the Government would allow the Bill to be adjourned till to-morrow.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

NATIONAL DEBT (SUPPLEMENTAL) BILL.—[Bill 264.]

(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Jackson*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said, he thought it was most objectionable for the Government to attempt to rush through a Bill of that kind just before 12 o'clock.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon *Thursday*, 31st May.

NATIONAL DEFENCE BILL.—[BILL 235.]
(*Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Lord George Hamilton, Mr. Brodrick*)

COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee be deferred till Monday 4th June."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) asked, whether the measure would be taken as the first Order on the 4th of June?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, it would be taken substantially as the first Order on the day named.

Motion *agreed to.*

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—THE WHISTUNTIDE RECESS.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, it had been represented to him that it would be for the general convenience of the House if he now moved that the House, at the Sitting to be held To-morrow at two o'clock, should adjourn until Thursday, the 31st of May. He would, therefore, make that Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House, on rising To-morrow, do adjourn until Thursday the 31st of May."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I object, Sir.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, if his hon. Friend the Member for the Camborne Division (Mr. Conybeare) withdrew his opposition and the Motion were agreed to, any Business would be taken at the Morning Sitting in addition to the Employers' Liability Bill?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he had no hesitation whatever in giving an assurance that no other Business would be put down on the Paper or taken at the Morning Sitting, as far as the Government were concerned.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Not even Report of Supply?

MR. W. H. SMITH: No.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I hope my hon. Friend will withdraw his opposition.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) asked, what reason the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) had for making the Motion now? It would be quite as safe to do it to-morrow.

MR. CONYBEARE said, he had two reasons for pressing his objection to the Motion. In the first place, he believed that it was most unusual to make such a proposition on the day before that on which the House was to rise for the Holidays; and, in the second place, it was clearly the intention of the Government to burk all discussion on the Motion. Several hon. Members had matters of importance to bring before the House upon the Motion for adjournment, and he should, therefore, certainly press his objection.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, he understood that if the hon. Member did press his objection the matter could not be discussed, but he (Mr. Harrington) thought he might venture to represent to the hon. Member that it had been generally understood, if not in a direct, at all events in an indirect way, that the House would finish its work that evening, and that if by any chance a Morning Sitting had to be taken on Friday, it would be only in reference to the unfinished debate on the Employers' Liability Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had just stated, in the most distinct way, that no Business of any kind, beyond the Employers' Liability Bill, was to be taken at the Morning Sitting.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to Order. I wish to ask you whether, a Motion having been made after 12 o'clock, and objection having been taken, it is possible to have any further discussion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Not if the hon. Member persists in his objection. Occasionally hon. Members waive their objections.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: On the point of Order I wish to ask——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no doubt that if the objection is pressed, the debate cannot be proceeded with.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I would point out to my hon. Friend (Mr. Conybeare), that if he wishes to discuss anything, he can do so on the Motion for Adjournment to-morrow.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerstone): May I ask why the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) has made the Motion to-day instead of to-morrow?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: It was represented to me by hon. Members on both sides of the House that it would be for the convenience of the House that I should make the Motion now. As far as I am concerned, I have no other object whatever in making the proposal. I must come down to the Morning Sitting, and so must my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) to take part in the debate on the Employers' Liability Bill. It has been suggested to me that if the Motion is taken at the Morning Sitting instead of now, it must be put down first, and, therefore, must delay the debate on the Employers' Liability Bill. Of course, it is quite within the right of the hon. Member (Mr. Conybeare) to object.

Mr. CREMER: Under the circumstances, and after the satisfactory explanation just given by the First Lord of the Treasury, I hope my hon. Friend will withdraw his objection.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: On the question of Order, I have to ask you, Sir, this question. It having been represented to us that, if this objection is pressed, the question that must necessarily come on first will be the Question of Adjournment, and it having been decided by the House a few moments ago, that the first question otherwise to be taken should be the second reading of the Employers' Liability Act, I wish——

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: Is that really a point of Order, Sir?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member for the Camborne Division (Mr. Conybeare) press his objection?

Mr. CONYBEARE: Yes, Sir; I object.

Question not put.

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 39 and 129 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday, 31st May.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

ULSTER AND TYRONE NAVIGATION BILL [*Lords*].

Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Macartney, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and Colonel Saunderson *nominated* Members of the Select Committee (with Three Members to be added by the Committee of Selection).

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (SPECIAL REPOR .

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report.

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY accordingly *reported* from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in respect of the Bail (Scotland) Bill: Mr. Haldane; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Macdonald Cameron.

Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table.

MOTIONS.

COURT OF SESSION AND BILL CHAMBER (SCOTLAND) (CLERKS) BILL.

On Motion of The Lord Advocate, Bill to regulate the number and duties of the Clerks of the Court of Session and Bill Chamber in Scotland; and for other purposes, *ordered* to be brought in by The Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 269.]

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION BILL.

On Motion of Sir William Hart Dyke, Bill for the promotion of Technical Instruction, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir William Hart Dyke and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 270.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 18*th May*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILL—*Second Reading*—Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen [145].

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS — *Ordered — First Reading*—Local Government (No. 8) * [271]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 7)* [272].

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table; and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

QUESTIONS.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACTS—BANDON BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many labourers' cottages have been built in the Bandon Union district by the Bandon Board of Guardians; whether it is a fact that 220 cottages have been applied for in the Union, and 147 authorized by the Local Government Board; whether £449 10*s.* 9*d.* has been already incurred as preliminary expenses; and, what steps will be taken by the Local Government Board to enforce the erection of labourers' cottages by the Bandon Board of Guardians?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Clerk of Bandon Union reports that 13 labourers' cottages have been completed, and 14 are in course of erection. It is the case that 220 cottages have been applied for. The number authorized by the Local Government Board was 133. Preliminary expenses to the amount of £449 10*s.* 9*d.* were incurred up to the 31st of March, 1887. The Guardians were precluded from entering into possession of the lands for the purposes of these cottages until they had taken the usual arbitration proceedings, or had received the consents of the parties interested. The clerk states that the arbitrator's award was not made until December last. The Guardians thereupon took the necessary steps for the erection of the cottages, and are expediting the matter as far as possible.

DR. TANNER asked, if it was not the fact that the Earl of Bandon was Chairman of the Board of Guardians, and that the Board had done everything in their power to prevent the erection of labourers' cottages; and whether the right hon. Gentleman would communicate with the Local Government Board and the Board of Guardians, in order to expedite the erection of these cottages?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was afraid he could not answer the further Question. If the hon. Gentleman would put it on the Paper he would answer it.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—ROSSCARBERY PIER.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been directed to a series of Resolutions, passed by a large and representative meeting of the inhabitants of Rosscarbery, under the presidency of the Very Rev. P. Hill, P.P., V.F., condemning the new pier, and stating that it is, in its present condition, useless for any purpose, and that the repairs lately executed by the Board of Works were more injurious than serviceable to navigation; whether a Resolution, condemning the work as useless, was passed at a meeting held on the 30th April last, and a copy forwarded to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant; whether, moreover, a statement, pointing out the defects of the works, was forwarded on the 6th of February, 1887, to the Fisheries Commission, to Sir Thomas Brady, who, in turn, forwarded it to the Lord Lieutenant on the 11th of November, 1887; and, whether steps will be taken to get the dock levelled to what was originally specified, and that an independent Inspector will be appointed to examine the works as executed, and the value and feasibility of the local remedial suggestions?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I regret that I have been unable to obtain the materials for a complete answer to this Question; but

I can say now that the district engineer of the Board of Works has asked the county surveyor to meet him on the spot and state any objections to the work as they have been carried out. This course secures the independent inspection which the hon. Gentleman desires.

Dr. TANNER asked the hon. Gentleman if he would send down an independent engineer, and not one who had been connected with the erection of the pier in question?

Mr. JACKSON said, he thought the hon. Member would see that the county surveyor who had been asked to meet the officer of the Board of Works was an independent officer, and had no connection with the Board of Works. The county surveyor was responsible to the county for certifying as to the fitness of the works before they were accepted by the county as a charge; and therefore the hon. Gentleman would see that, until they had received a report of that interview, it was unnecessary for him to say more.

Dr. TANNER remarked that the hon. Gentleman had misunderstood him. In the case of the Ballycotton pier the Board of Works sent down an officer to inspect the works who had been connected with the erection of the pier. He wished to avoid such a state of things in this case.

Mr. JACKSON wished to make it clear to the hon. Member that what was required in the first instance was to ascertain whether there was any foundation whatever for the charges that had been made in the Question put by the hon. Member. With a view to eliciting the facts, they had asked the county surveyor to decide whether there was any reason for the complaint or not.

TURKEY (ASIATIC PROVINCES)—ARMENIA.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has seen the report appearing in the morning papers—

> "That the Archbishop of Van, who had quite recently refused to sign a declaration that the Armenians were content, and that there was no necessity for an English Consul, has been ordered to be brought to Constantinople under an escort."

Whether the report is correct; and whether it is true that two Armenian priests have been tortured, and that great anxiety and excitement prevails in Van and through Armenia?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Notice of this Question has been given more than once, and the hon. Gentleman who was to have asked it has not attended in his place. I think it is not desirable that such a Question should be kept standing on the Paper, and it is something like trifling with the House to leave it there. I shall, therefore, answer it now. The particular facts mentioned in the Question have not been reported by any British Consular officer. Arrests, in consequence, it is said, of the discovery of a conspiracy, appear to have taken place in the districts named.

Subsequently,

Dr. TANNER said, it was a mistake to say his Question had been on the Paper for some time. He addressed a Question on the subject to the right hon. Gentleman last month; but as the statement alluded to in the Question had remained uncontradicted, he thought it his duty to bring the matter forward again.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA—SIR F. NAPIER BROOME AND CHIEF JUSTICE ONSLOW.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is a fact that the Committee appointed by the Privy Council to examine into the differences which had arisen between Sir F. Napier Broome, Governor of West Australia, and Chief Justice Onslow, have recommended that although the Chief Justice cannot be exempted from censure, yet his suspension by the Governor must be quashed; and when the Report of the Committee will be made public?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham) (who replied) said: The Committee of the Privy Council reported as to two of the three charges brought before them that the conduct of the Chief Justice did not afford sufficient ground for a charge intended to lead to suspension from office; and as to the third charge, that they had had some hesitation in not recommending the confirmation of the suspension of the Chief Justice; but as no misconduct of a moral character or connected with judicial duties had been imputed to him, they recommended that the suspension be removed. The Report of the Committee, and the Order made by the Queen thereon, were sent to the Colony on the 11th instant, and the purport of it has been telegraphed to the Governor. It will not be proper to publish these documents here until they have reached the Colony.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — POSTAL DELIVERY AT CROOKSTOWN (CO. CORK).

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Postmaster General, Whether any steps have been taken to carry out the proposed earlier and more satisfactory postal delivery at Crookstown and Warrenscourt, in the County of Cork?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I am glad to be in a position to say that arrangements by which Crookstown and Warrenscourt will obtain the desired improved mail service are now so far completed that the new service will commence on the 1st proximo.

PRISONS DEPARTMENT—CONVICT LABOUR AT DOVER—MAT-MAKING.

MR. QUILTER (Suffolk, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is a fact, as stated in *The Daily Chronicle* of the 14th instant, that the 200 convicts, who were brought to Dover under the pretext of constructing the harbour works, are now employed in mat-making for the purpose of finding them employment; and, if so, by whose authority this was done; and, whether it is in accordance with the whole policy of the Prisons Department in recent years?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No, Sir; it is not a fact. No convicts are now, or ever have been, employed at mat-making at the Dover Prison.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES AND INDUSTRIAL ASSURANCE COMPANIES.—A SELECT COMMITTEE.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether considering the fact that there are about 10,000,000 members connected with the Collecting Friendly Societies and Industrial Assurance Companies, and the facts revealed by the late inquiries as to the expenses of management and the stability of these institutions, the Government will appoint a Select Committee to consider whether further legislation is required?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, that a Bill dealing with the subject referred to in the Question had been brought in by the hon. Baronet the Member for London University (Sir John Lubbock.) That Bill, however, went too far, and the Government could not support it. If, however, a Bill were introduced to carry out the reforms which were really necessary the Government would not oppose it. But if the Bill of the hon. Baronet could be committed *pro formâ*, and then re-cast, the Government would be ready to refer it to a Select Committee. If the Bill could not be satisfactorily recast the Government would consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the whole subject.

SCOTLAND — GRANTS IN AID OF LOCAL TAXATION.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What grants the Government propose to give to Scotland in aid of local taxation for the current year; whether the Government grants will continue to be distributed as formerly to lunatic poor, medical relief, and police; whether the grant to roads from Imperial taxation will be continued, or only from local taxation; and, if so, from what sources; and, if he will state the probable amounts estimated as accruing from half the Probate Duty or Horse and Wheel Tax?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that the case stands as follows:—The grants for pauper lunatics, medical relief, and police will continue this year on the old footing. The grant for main roads from Imperial taxation will be discontinued; but in lieu thereof an amount equivalent to the double grant made last year—£70,000—will form a first charge upon the receipts from the new taxes, and from the portion of Probate Duty handed over to the locality. This portion will be this year one-third, and is estimated to produce £156,200. Next year the half will be given, or about £235,000. I estimate that the Horse and Van Taxes will produe £74,000, or thereabouts, in Scotland.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman had yet made up his mind to introduce the Wheel Tax into Scotland, in opposition to the almost unanimous opinion of this side of the House?

Mr. GOSCHEN: I cannot say that there is an unanimous opinion against it—not even in Scotland.

Mr. HUNTER: I said on this side of the House.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I think not.

Mr. HUNTER: Almost.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, that was a matter for later discussion. The case stood thus at present: No final decision had been taken; and it appeared to him it would depend on the application of the sum raised whether it should be introduced into Scotland or not. If some extremely desirable mode of relief of local taxation in general was proposed by the Scotch authorities, he thought that might modify the view that was taken. If, on the other hand, there was no special favourite suggestion for its application, then hon. Members would prefer that it should not be applied at all.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) gave Notice that on the Motion for Adjournment he should ask for further information with respect to the proposal to introduce the Cart and Wheel Tax into Scotland.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—CONSTABLE ALFRED WATSON, B. DIVISION.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If representations can be made to Sir Charles Warren requesting him further to consider his decision in refusing a pension to the family of Constable Alfred Watson, of the B. Division, who was seriously injured and rendered insane from injuries received on duty?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The Chief Commissioner, acting on the advice of the chief surgeon of police, was not satisfied that this man's injuries were received in the execution of duty, and accordingly has not recommended him for a pension. I cannot interfere with the discretion of the Chief Commissioner in such a matter.

Subsequently,

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM asked, whether the House was to understand that this unfortunate man was to be deprived of his pension because of some difference of opinion among the authorities on his case?

Mr. MATTHEWS said that was not so. There was a concurrence of opinion.

THE ROYAL MINT--LEASE OF THE REFINERY TO BARON A. DE ROTHSCHILD.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of Exchequer, If it is true, as reported, that the Refinery of the Mint has been leased to Baron Alfred de Rothschild; and, if so, whether the lease will be laid upon the Table for inspection?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Yes, Sir. Five-and-thirty years ago this building, which is adjacent to but outside the walls of the Mint, was leased to Sir Anthony Rothschild, and the lease was subsequently renewed for periods of years up to 1882. Since then Baron Alfred de Rothschild has held it on an annual tenancy. The rent paid is £510, and appears in the Reports of the Deputy Master. I see no reason for laying a lease on the Table, the existence of which has been notorious for many years. The hon. Member may see it if he wishes.

TORQUAY HARBOUR AND DISTRICT ACT, 1886—TOWN COUNCIL OF COLCHESTER—RELIGIOUS STREET PROCESSIONS.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that in November 1885 the Town Council of Colchester passed a bye-law identical in terms with the 38th Clause of "The Torquay Harbour and District Act, 1886," prohibiting religious processions with music; whether the sanction of the Home Secretary was required before it could take effect; and, whether the then Home Secretary, Sir Richard Cross (now Viscount Cross), refused to sanction it, on the grounds that such prohibition was contrary to the general law of the land; and, if so, whether he will take steps for the due observance and enforcement by the Local Authorities at Torquay of the general law of the land?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; the Town Council of Colchester did pass a bye-law forbidding processions on Saturdays as well as Sundays, and therefore wider than the Torquay clause. By Section 23 of the Municipal Corporation Act, 1882, such a bye-law does not require the sanction of the Secretary of State; but comes into force unless disallowed by Order in Council. The bye-law in question was so disallowed. The Justices at Torquay are acting within their legal powers under an Act of Parliament which was recommended by the Police and Sanitary Regulations Committee after hearing evidence from the locality. This Act is as binding upon me as any other Act of the Legislature, and I have no power to suspend it. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), proposes a Bill to repeal the 38th Section of the Torquay Act, I cannot help expressing a hope that in the meanwhile, and until Parliament has decided, the provisions of the existing Act may be respected by all parties.

WAR OFFICE—ARMY PENSIONS IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there is in existence a War Office Order to the effect that all Army pensioners employed in Government Departments shall receive a halfpenny per day for each year's service, not exceeding in the aggregate 8*d*. per day; whether a man who has served in the Army for 22 years, and in the Post Office for 20 years, is entitled to such superannuation allowance; and, whether such old service man is rightly refused the said allowance, on the ground that his pension from the Army is more than two-thirds of the pay he was receiving from the Post Office?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: The Regulation referred to applies only to appointments made before the 1st of July, 1881, to certain departments of the Army and to the Staff of the Army, a list of which is given in Article 1,151 of the Army Pay Warrant. It has no reference to service in the Post Office.

LOTTERIES—FOREIGN LOTTERIES.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the sale and publishing of proposals for the sale of foreign lottery tickets in this country is not illegal under Statute 4 *Geo.* IV., c. 60; and, if so, whether he will direct the Public Prosecutor to enforce the law against the publishers and proprietors of *The Southwark Standard and South London News* for publishing such proposals on the 5th instant, relating to a drawing of lottery prizes to take place on the 25th instant.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): The sale and publication of the proposals for sale of lottery tickets in this country is illegal. I have not seen the advertisement to which the hon. Member refers; but if he will give me particulars I will bring it to the notice of the proper authorities.

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the Vice President of the Council for Education, Whether he would lay upon the Table a copy of the Petition for reform in the constitution of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, signed by 6,000 members of the College, and addressed to the Lord President of the Privy Council, together with a copy of the statement and contentions in support thereof made to the Lord President by the deputation of members which waited upon him on November 11, 1887; and whether he would state whether that statement was referred to the President and Council of the College for reply; whether any reply was received; and on what grounds the Privy Council had, in the absence of any reply, and without further communication with the members of the College or their representatives, decided to negative their request for such reform.

THE VICE PRESIDENT (SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): There will be no objection to lay on the

Table a copy of the Petition and statement of the members of the Royal College of Surgeons. The statement was referred to the College, and the receipt acknowledged. The Privy Council subsequently decided to strike out the contentious clauses from the draft Charter, and the College have agreed to accept the supplemental Charter on those terms.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked Whether, having regard to the importance of Metropolitan and other interests involved in the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, the Government would arrange to give the House a full opportunity of discussing the Bill on its return to the House from the Committee on Trade.

The FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Yes; it undoubtedly will be the duty of the Government to take care that the House has an opportunity of discussing the Report of this Bill.

MOTION.

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS.—RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the House at its rising this day do adjourn till Thursday, 31st May."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) said, he was surprised at the answer which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), who had just left his place, had given a short time ago to the hon. Member for Kirkcudbright (Mr. Mark Stewart) in regard to what grants the Government propose to give to Scotland in aid of local taxation during the coming year. An opinion prevailed in Scotland that it had been unfairly treated in the matter. The right hon. Gentleman had said that it was proposed to allow Scotland one-third of the Probate Duty, which was calculated at £156,000, and also the proceeds of the Horse and Wheel Tax if it was made to apply to Scotland. Whether that tax should be extended to Scotland was, however, the right hon. Gentleman said, a matter for the Scotch taxpayers to decide. The right hon. Gentleman had been asked by the hon. Member for Fife what was to be done with the money allocated to Scotland, and the right hon. Gentleman said he was unable to say. The same answer was given on the 13th of April, but from that day the Scotch Members had heard nothing further as to how the money was to be distributed. There were two perfectly distinct points connected with the subject to which he wished to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The first had reference to the application of the Horse and Wheel Tax to Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman had stated categorically that it was only to extend to Scotland if the Scotch taxpayers desired to have it. The tax, it was admitted by the right hon. Gentleman, was being created for the purpose of relieving the severity of local burdens, but that was a purpose which only had reference to England. The right hon. Gentleman might be inclined to dispute that position, but he would find that the subject was treated by English Members on the ground that there was a different interest in the local taxation of this country from the taxation in Scotland. Large subventions were to be given to the taxpayers in England in addition to the extra grant from the Probate Duty; but it was hardly to be expected that the Scotch taxpayers would care to have a new tax imposed upon them to meet a demand which they had never made.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! I wish to point out to the hon. and learned Member that he is not entitled to discuss upon this Motion the Horse and Wheel Tax, which is dealt with in a Bill before the House. He may ask the intentions of the Government with respect to it.

MR. BUCHANAN said, of course he would bow at once to the ruling of the Chair. He did not propose to discuss the merits of the Bill which dealt with the Horse and Wheel Tax; but he was anxious to obtain information, and was calling attention to the answer which had been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to a question put to him by the hon. Member for Kirkcudbright. He thought the Scotch people were entitled to know what the sum was that it was proposed to allocate, and how it was to be distributed, so that they might be able to form some judgment as to the nature of the proposals of the Government. He acknowledged that there was every excuse for the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in having delayed to present his scheme for Scotland for the distribution of the money so long as it was uncertain what the amount of money was to be; but he would urge upon him to come to a decision as to the propriety of extending the Horse and Wheel Tax to Scotland. In regard to the other point, they were anxious to know, and he thought they had a right to know, how the money which was to be given to Scotland, although they had not made any great demand for it, was to be distributed. They had been told by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget speech, and the statement had been repeated that night to his hon. Friend the Member for Kircudbright, that the first charge upon the proceeds of Probate Duty, which it was calculated would amount to £156,000, would be a sum of £70,000 for the relief of the main roads, or nearly one-half to the total sum allocated to Scotland.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, that was precisely the sum received in the past year.

Mr. BUCHANAN: Yes, but it was double the grant of previous years, and it was known that the money would go in the proportion of six or seven to one exclusively to the counties. The Scotch people had a much stronger case than the people of England. If the right hon. Gentleman would look to the Return of the local taxation of Scotland for 1885 and 1886, when the sum only amounted to £35,000, the City of Edinburgh obtained £215 in one year and £182 in another year out of that total, while the County of Mid Lothian received £1,900 in the first year and £1,400 in the latter. Nor was that all, because the City of Edinburgh was obliged to pay £2,000 a-year towards the county roads, and were consequently in a much worse position than the counties. Practically, as far as the Scotch Members knew, in regard to the allocation of the money, the counties exclusively would derive advantage. A sum of £70,000 was to be given to the relief of main roads, and he wished to know what was to be done with the remainder of the sum—about £86,000 more or less. As the part already allocated was to go to the counties, he was of opinion that the boroughs had a prior claim upon the bulk of the remainder. There was one part of Scotland which had very strong claims indeed to relief, on the ground of the excessive character of the local rates, and that was the Highland parishes. There could be no doubt that the local rates in those parishes were excessive, and if a considerable sum of money was to be allocated from the Imperial funds in order to meet local taxation, no part of the country had a greater right to participate in it than the Highland parishes. These were the two points which he wished to urge upon the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer—namely, that when the Local Government Bill was before the House for Scotland, the relief given to local taxation should not be confined to the counties; and, secondly, that some relief from the burdens now imposed upon them should be given to the Highland parishes. It must not be forgotten that the sum already allocated would go almost exclusively to the counties.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he wished to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, before he rose to reply to the hon. and learned Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), to two facts. The first was that four out of five of the Scotch Members were prepared to offer every resistance in their power to the Cart and Wheel Tax, which was odious to the people of Scotland. In the second place, he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that the tax on carts and wheels involved the taxation of an important commodity, and would ultimately fall on the general community.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. HUNTER said, he had no wish to go further into the matter, but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would bear in mind that this tax was viewed throughout Scotland as nothing short of an insult to the understanding of the Scotch people.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) said, he did not think that the view which had been expressed by the hon. Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) in regard to the Cart and Wheel Tax was as universal in Scotland as the hon. Member supposed, but he thought it would be well if the proposed tax were fully discussed and looked into. The residents of Scotland differed very materially from those of England, and in the West the burden of local taxation had been enormously increased of late years, owing to the greatly increased Road assessment.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MARK STEWART said, he would not pursue that line of argument, if out of Order, further, but he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would find means of allocating the Probate Duty next year in the manner he had foreshadowed, and that having devoted £70,000 to the relief of the roads, he thought the time had come when the right hon. Gentleman should give some relief in regard to the heavy burden of the poor rate in some other form than at present proposed for England. Of course, they were all pleased to hear that the local taxation of the country was to be relieved to a certain extent, but the country wanted something more than had already been promised, considering that the poor of Scotland were in a very different position from that which they occupied here. He believed that any proposal to allocate a proportion of the proposed rate to the relief of the out-door poor would be met with great favour by a large number of Scotch Members. So far as the Cart and Wheel Tax was concerned, he thought it would be found that it was not so universally condemned as the hon. Member for North Aberdeen supposed.

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) said, he hoped he might be allowed to say, on behalf of himself and his hon. Colleague the Member for West Aberdeen (Dr. Farquharson), that they represented probably the largest constituency in Scotland, and he believed there was no desire in that county to have this tax. He, therefore, hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would put an end to the discussion by excluding Scotland. The subject would be more properly considered when they came to the question of county government in Scotland. Perhaps he might be allowed to take this opportunity, and then it would not be necessary to trouble the House again, of complaining that, as far as Scotland was concerned, they were very improperly represented by the Executive in that House. At that moment there was no one on the Treasury Bench who represented the interests of Scotland. He knew that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was well acquainted with Scotland, and possibly the interests of that country would not suffer on account of the absence of any Representative of the Scotch Executive. He had had the honour that day to present an important Petition in favour of the Parliamentary Elections Returning Officers' Expenses (Scotland) Bill, in which the people of Scotland took very great interest. They had been told several times that ample opportunity would be afforded for discussing that subject, but as yet they had had no such opportunity. He represented a large fishing constituency, and he had presented numerous Petitions praying that the fishermen on the East Coast of Scotland might have their case considered. A large amount of evidence had been taken upon that coast, from which it appeared that strong complaints existed in regard to the three-mile limit, the fishermen on the East Coast considering that they were suffering very great disadvantage. There had also been Petitions requesting that assistance should be given in the way of emigration, in order to relieve these people who could not see their way to obtain a living in the ordinary manner. He had put Questions to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), in order to ascertain what was really being done by the Executive on behalf of this great industry, which was at present in a state of such extreme distress. But no satisfactory reply had been given. He (Mr. Esslemont) hoped it would not be long before they had a Secretary of State for Scotland who was a Member of the Cabinet, so that in some way or other Scotch opinion might be represented in that House in a better manner than it had been hitherto. He could assure the Government that great dissatisfaction was growing up in Scotland that the complaints of the people were not listened to, and that they had no opportunity of bringing their grievances before the House of Commons. He warned the Government that the feeling of discontent which was growing up would not be allayed unless some better opportunity was afforded for representing the views of the Scotch people.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, he wished to say a few words from an English point of view. He wished to know whether the imposition of a Cart and Wheel Tax, so far as the imposition of the Wheel Tax was concerned in England, was under the reconsideration of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer? Since the proposal was made scarcely a day had passed without the right hon. Gentleman having whittled away some portion of his scheme by making exemptions from the tax. Probably the right hon. Gentleman anticipated that by this means he would finally be able to pass this tax; but he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that the sense of injustice was felt by those upon whom the tax was imposed, and would only be aggravated by the unjust exemptions he was making.

Mr. ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said, the concessions which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made in regard to the Cart and Wheel Tax, had produced a very favourable impression in the City of London.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, the hon. Member was not in Order in entering into that question upon the Motion for Adjournment.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) said, he wished to know from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether South Wales would be called upon to pay a Cart and Wheel Tax, and would also continue to pay the toll? He certainly thought that the people of South Wales should be relieved from the burden of one or the other.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I need not say that you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will call me rigidly to Order if, for a moment, I exceed the limits of a reply to the questions which have been put to me. With regard to the last question, several interrogations have been put to my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), and he has said that he will, of course, accept an Amendment to the Local Government Bill for the purpose of abolishing tolls in Wales, if the Cart and Wheel Tax is to apply to Wales. It is out of the question that in Wales the people should be called upon to pay the Cart and Wheel Tax and pay tolls also. As far as the tax relates to England, I have nothing to add to my previous statements. It is not under my reconsideration whether the tax shall be imposed or not. No doubt, there is a great conflict of opinion in regard to the matter; but I am not prepared to withdraw the tax. With regard to the question put to me by the hon. and learned Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), I will first reply to the complaint which has been made that there is no Member on the Treasury Bench representing Scotch affairs. Hon. Members must bear in mind that no one knew that the single wish of the hon. Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall (Mr. Conybeare) would prevail, and that there would be a sitting of the House to-day. A general feeling was expressed to the contrary effect; but the hon. Member for Camborne considered that it was important that we should meet to-day, and therefore the House has met; but the Government could not telegraph to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) to return on the chance of a discussion on Scotch affairs of which no Notice had been given. I have no doubt that my right hon. and learned Friend will regret that he is not present; but hon. Members will say that there was no justification for believing that any Scotch Business would be raised to-day.

Mr. HUNTER said, it was known at 12 o'clock last night.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Before 12 o'clock the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had started for Edinburgh, on the understanding that no question in regard to Scotland would be raised. Although I am not a Scotchman, I am thoroughly acquainted with the particular point which has been raised this afternoon. It would only have been right to have let me know that the question was to be raised, in order that I might have provided myself with proper papers and materials. The hon. and learned Member for West Edinburgh has informed me of several important matters connected with the principle of distribution. I am much obliged to the hon. and learned Member; but, unfortunately, they are so familiar to me that I could almost have thought that the hon. and learned Member while he was speaking was looking over my shoulder at the Minutes I had myself placed on record. It must be apparent to everyone acquainted with the subject that the rates in the Highlands are so excessive that any relief I could give them would be inadequate. With regard to the distribution between town and country, it was because of the necessity of being absolutely equitable that the delay has taken place. I have been in constant conference with my Colleagues at the Scotch Office upon the subject, and gentlemen from the Board of Supervision have been constantly in attendance to advise the Government in regard to the scheme for Scotland. The scheme for Scotland, being different and more complicated than that for England, makes it extremely desirable that every effort should be made to ascertain what is equitable and satisfactory in the way of distribution before submitting this scheme to the House. The delay is due to our desire to examine the question thoroughly, and not to bring in a scheme that would not be entirely satisfactory. The hon. and learned Member for West Edinburgh should remember that the counties have always had £35,000, and, therefore, the only addition in their case will be a second sum of £35,000, making £70,000 in all. It was perfectly certain that the boroughs would have to be considered in reference to the portion which they should receive. But whether it should be given on account and in relief of indoor pauperism, which stands in a different position from indoor pauperism in this country, or whether it should be given in connection with relief of lunatic rates or education rates, are questions which the Government have before them; and I hope that hon. Members from Scotland will see that if there has been delay it is not a drifting delay owing to neglect of their interests, but that it has arisen from the keen desire to meet the necessities of the case in the distribution of the fund, and to deal justly with all the interests concerned. I should not be in Order in speaking of the views of the people of Scotland, as far as I have ascertained them, but hon. Members will remember that the Wheel Tax is bound up also with the Horse Tax. The two questions cannot be separated; and the question is, whether the sum of £74,000, or thereabouts, at which I estimate the produce of the Horse and Wheel Tax in Scotland, should go to Scotland or not. I am aware that in this case the towns take a different view of the question from the counties; but several instances have been brought to the notice of the Government of a large increase in the road tax or highway rates, or whatever they are called in Scotland, so that I do not think there will be that amount of difficulty which some hon. Members seem to imagine. I trust at an early moment after the House resumes I shall be able to put upon the Table a scheme for the distribution of the sums with regard to Scotland. We have already agreed upon the distribution of nearly the whole of the sum, but there are still some points that remain in abeyance.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, there was an understanding that Supply would be taken when the House resumed after the Whitsuntide Recess. He wished, therefore, to call the attention of the Government to the fact that two Returns ordered a few weeks ago, one relating to assaults by the police and the other to County Courts, had not yet been produced. Those Returns ought to be in the hands of hon. Members before the Estimates were proceeded with, because he intended to call attention to those subjects after the Recess. He trusted that some pressure would be placed upon the officials to produce the Returns, and if they were not produced he should take such means as were in his power to delay the Votes.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said, he was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had left the House without stating what course the Government intended to pursue in regard to the Cart and Wheel Tax. He wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman intended in addition to the Wheel Tax, which was a tax upon industry, to persevere with the inquisitorial clauses of his Bill? He should like to ask the Government what was the earliest day upon which they proposed to take the second reading of the Bill. No distinct intimation had yet been made in regard to it. He called certain clauses of the Bill inquisitorial; because it would be found that the measure gave power for the inspection of premises and books, and that made the proposal considerably more objectionable than it was in the original form in which it was presented to the House. He hoped that some Member of Her Majesty's Government sitting on the Front Bench would be able to give an assurance that the Bill would not be proceeded with until full opportunity was afforded for considering its provisions.

MR. SWETENHAM (Carnarvon, &c.) said, he wished to draw attention to a matter which, in the part of the country he had the honour to represent, was of vital importance—namely, the absolute necessity of losing no time in bringing forward as soon as possible after the Recess some measure to remedy the great difficulties which now existed in regard to the recovery of the tithe rent-charge. He had no wish to allude to the matter at length, nor did he think he would be in Order if he did so, nor had he any desire to refer to a Bill which was now passing through "another place." All he desired was to draw attention to the subject, and impress upon the Government the absolute necessity of losing no time in bringing forward some remedial measure. "The gentlemen of England who lived at home at ease" had little knowledge of the difficulties which surrounded the subject in the district in which he lived and which he had the honour to represent. He hoped the House would not separate until the Government gave them some idea of what kind of measure they were likely to introduce upon the subject. They had heard nothing at present upon the matter, and he thought he should not be out of Order in imploring them before the House re-assembled to take into their consideration two points of great importance. One was that there should be some equitable scheme for the redemption of the tithe. That would be some panacea for the agitation which was now troubling an important portion of the United Kingdom, and the agitation itself would be considerably diminished if a good system for the redemption of the tithe were brought forward. He could not help thinking that such a scheme would meet with support from hon. Members on all sides of the House, and for this reason—that if it should ever be thought right to appropriate the tithe to national purposes, some well-considered scheme of redemption would make the money more easily accessible owing to its being thus ear-marked. The next was, whether it would not be possible to equalize the tithe in a parish, because it was felt to be a great hardship that on one side of the turnpike road, where the land was not worth 10*s.* an acre, there should be a tithe of 10*s.* the acre; while, on the other side of the road, land of a much better character, worth 30*s.* or £2 an acre, was only charged 1*s.* or 2*s.* per acre for tithe. This state of things produced an irritating effect upon the farmers of the country, who, under different conditions, would undoubtedly return to their allegiance, and would be found to be a peaceable, orderly, and law-abiding people.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had endeavoured to apologize for the extraordinary absence of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, who represented Scotland in that House; but he (Mr. Anderson) begged to say that the apology of the right hon. Gentleman had not been founded on fact. [*Cries of* "Order!"] He did not make that statement in any offensive sense. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that no Notice had been given that any discussion with regard to Scotch affairs would come on. That was undoubtedly a misstatement, and he wished to call the attention of the Government to this fact, which, he was sure, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not aware of—namely, that the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, in the middle of an important discussion on Scotch Business—namely, emigration, last night left the House.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CLARKE) (Plymouth) said, the discussion was over before the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate left.

Mr. ANDERSON said, that the discussion was not over, and he repeated that it was in the midst of the discussion on emigration that the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate left the House.

Mr. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) rose to a point of Order. He wished to ask if these personal arguments were relevant?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not yet been able to see what they are leading up to.

Mr. ANDERSON said, he did not think it right that Scotland only should be left entirely unrepresented in that House, and that was what his observations were leading to. It was a complaint which the Scotch Members had to make every day. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Yes; every day there was the greatest possible difficulty in obtaining information when the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate was present; and in the middle of the debate upon emigration last night the right hon. and learned Gentleman left the House, and did not return, leaving important Questions which were asked by the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark) and himself unanswered. Not only did the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate not appear, but he believed that the right hon. and learned Gentleman did not even take part in the Division.

Sir EDWARD CLARKE said, his right hon. and learned Friend certainly stayed until the close of the debate, and then left, having paired for the Division.

Mr. ANDERSON said, that might have been the case; but he believed that the right hon. and learned Gentleman took no part in the Division on the Emigration Question. If the hon. and learned Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) would look at the Division List, he did not think he would find the name of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate upon it, nor did the right hon. and learned Gentleman appear in the House subsequent to a few minutes before 8 o'clock. He did not think it was fair that upon an important question of that kind the only single Representative of the Government should retire from the House and leave nobody to answer Questions or give information. Yet, that morning, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer ventured to apologize, and explained the absence of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate on the ground that no Notice had been given that it was intended to discuss Scotch questions on that day. Now, he had come down there that day for the purpose of asking several Questions in regard to the Scotch officials. He knew that the opportunity might arise for discussing it, and he wanted to know when the Government were going to introduce their Bill as to the Scotch Fishery Board? There were various other things upon which he desired to obtain information; but it was impossible to do so. He found, on looking over the Division List, that he was quite right in the assertion he had made, for the name of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate did not appear in it. That justified the complaint he had made that the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had left the House at an early hour. He (Mr. Anderson) looked upon it as an extraordinary instance of the contemptuous manner in which the Government treated Scotch interests, and he thought he was fully justified in what he had said just now, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer's apology for the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate was not founded upon fact. If the right hon. Gentleman had known that the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had gone away to Edinburgh at 8 o'clock in the evening, he would not have attempted to make an apology. The hon. and learned Solicitor General appeared now to be the only Member of the Government who was prepared to deal with Scotch matters. He trusted that the hon. and learned Gentleman would answer the Question when the Bill in regard to the Scotch Fishery Board would be introduced, and whether the Government had decided upon adopting the suggestions which the Scotch Fishery Board made in their Report last year? He also wished to know whether the Government were ready to deal with the question of salmon fishing on the Eastern Coast of Scotland within the three-mile limit? He had put a Question to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate as to whether fishermen who took salmon one mile from low water mark had a right to land the fish? But the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had refused to answer the Question, because he said it was one of law. Nevertheless the question was one of great importance, and he thought the Government were trifling with the House when they failed to have any Representative of the Scotch Executive in attendance.

Mr. ADDISON said, he could not complain that the hon. and learned Member had displayed more warmth on this question than on any other; but he must complain that the hon. and learned Member had been wanting in courtesy and consideration to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, who belonged to the same Profession as himself, and was an eminent member of it. Sitting, as he (Mr. Addison) did, behind the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, he had had the opportunity of knowing the great attention he paid to Scotch Business, and he was very much astonished at the observations which had fallen from the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn (Mr. Anderson). The hon. and learned Member had dealt with a number of questions, which, if he might venture to say so, were of extremely trivial importance. Surely it was absurd to ask the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate in the House of Commons how salmon were to be caught, and where they were to be landed? Such a Question was hardly one which could be seriously put. Of this he was sure, that if the hon. and learned Member had really any serious Questions to put to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, he ought, in common courtesy, to have given Notice to the right hon. and learned Gentleman that he had such intention. Throughout the remarks he had made he had evaded that point, and made no pretence that he had given Notice to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate of his desire to obtain information.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and *agreed to.*

Question put accordingly, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That this House, at its rising this day, do adjourn till Thursday 31st May.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

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EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY FOR INJURIES TO WORKMEN BILL.

(*Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Forwood.*)

[BILL 145.] SECOND READING.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [17th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said, he should not have persisted in moving the adjournment of the debate last night if he had not been anxious to emphasize the protest made by his hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) against the undue haste with which it had been attempted to force an important Bill of this character through a second reading. He regretted very much that he and those who acted with him should have considered it their duty to have taken such a course, inasmuch as it might seem that they were ungrateful both to the occupant of the Chair and the very hard working officials of the House in standing for a short time between them and the holiday they had so justly earned and were so fairly entitled to. However, it was impossible not to feel that two hours and 20 minutes, the time that had been allowed for the discussion of the second reading of a Bill of such importance, was certainly not adequate to expect justice to be done to the provisions of the Bill. He knew it had been said already in the course of the debate that the Bill now before the House was in many respects a decided improvement upon the Employers' Liability Act as it now stood. Generally speaking, he was quite willing to admit that the Bill was in some respects an improvement upon the present law; but viewed from the workmen's point of view, he hoped he might be pardoned if he said that it was not so generally satisfactory to them as the Bill which stood in the name of his hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), and for two very obvious reasons. The Act of 1880 had always, in the opinion of the workmen, possessed two very objectionable features. In the first place it endorsed to some extent the doctrine of common employment as laid down by the Judges, and in the second place it permitted employers and workmen to contract themselves out of the provisions of the Act, or rather he ought to say, it permitted the employers to persuade their workmen, and in many instances to coerce their workmen, into contracting themselves out of the provisions of that Act. Now both of these objectionable features, although he was bound to admit they were in a modified form, were still contained in the Bill now before the House; whereas in the Bill of the hon. Member for Morpeth, both of these objectionable features were conspicuous by their absence. With regard to the question of common employment, he must frankly confess that it was a most difficult problem, and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) might be forgiven for not having attempted to solve it, considering all the difficulties with which it was beset. He was aware that it was exceedingly hard to make an employer responsible to pay compensation for the carelessness and negligence of a fellow workman; but, on the other hand, it was equally hard that a workman should have to suffer and be permanently injured on account of the carelessness and incapacity of an unskilled labourer. On both sides of the question it would be found that there was an equal hardship, and it might well be questioned whether there would be a greater hardship endured by the employer if the doctrine of common employment was abolished than was now endured on the part of the workmen. He frankly confessed that he himself had some hesitation in facing this question of common employment, and he should preserve an open mind upon it. When the Bill came up for discussion in Committee—if it did come before a Committee—in that House, or if he had an opportunity of considering it in detail, he should reserve to himself perfect liberty of action as to the course he should take in reference to the question of common employment. With regard to the other principle of the Bill—namely, that of permitting employers and workmen to make an arrangement by mutual contract, he desired to offer to it his most strenuous and unqualified protest. Either the main principle of the Bill was desirable, or it was not. If they were satisfied in their mind that it was just and equitable that an employer should be made responsible for compensation for an accident that arose from traceable and culpable negligence on his part, or on the part of some one to whom he had entrusted his authority, then he maintained that if they were convinced in their own mind of the soundness of that principle they ought to be prepared to make their legislation uniform in its application. Considering all the mischief that had hitherto arisen from permissible legislation, and notably the legislation in reference to the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1875, together with the knowledge they had gained from experience in the working of the Employers' Liability Act of 1880, he thought they would be well advised if they made the principle of this Bill uniform in its application. But then he was told that it was undesirable to interfere with existing arrangements, and also with what was termed freedom of contract. It ought not to be forgotten, however, that the Act of 1880 interfered with arrangements that were existing at that time, and he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary whether there had been anyone made to suffer by the interference that Act necessitated? The Report of a Select Committee of 1883 showed that that Act had operated in the main to the advantage of both employers and employed. Not a single employer had been unduly harassed by the interference which the provisions of the Act of 1880 entailed. He was willing to admit that the doctrine of freedom of contract sounded very well. Hon. Gentlemen who sat on that side of the House professed to have a great regard for freedom and an anxious desire to preserve freedom of contract. He admitted that that doctrine had a most euphonious sound, but how did it operate in fact. What freedom was there in contract if on the one hand they had wealth and intelligence combined with a power of granting or refusing employment; and, on the other, as was too often the case, they had ignorance and poverty combined with pressing and urgent necessity, compelling the workmen in too many cases, he was sorry to say, even to sell their birthrights for the merest mess of pottage that might be offered to them. To speak of freedom of contract in cases such as that was simply absurd. He might be told that the Government had attempted to deal with such cases; that they had endeavoured to prevent the employers of labour from taking advantage of the poverty of the employed, by declaring that contracts should be void except under certain conditions. But how did they propose to determine whether the conditions were good or otherwise. How did they propose to arrive at such knowledge? How did they propose to arrive at an understanding whether the undertaking of the employer was sufficient to meet the requirements of the case? In Sub-section 4 of Clause 3 it was proposed that if a question arose as to whether an employer had satisfactorily provided for his *employés*, that evidence of a similar undertaking, under similar circumstances, should be admissible as evidence of the adequacy or otherwise of the undertaking. That was to say, that if a question arose as to whether the employer had adequately provided for the requirements of his workmen—say, for instance, in a district like South-West Lancashire, where there were from 28,000 to 30,000 miners, who had been forced, as a condition of being retained, to surrender their rights under the Act of 1880. It would, in that case, be perfectly competent for any one of the South-West Lancashire employers to cite the case of other employers who had taken a similar course with their workmen, and it would be admissible as evidence of the sufficiency of the undertaking made on the part of the employers with their workmen. Now he did not possess any legal knowledge, but he should certainly be very much surprised if any legal Member of that House would rise in his place and declare that Sub-section 4 of Clause 3, as it was now proposed, was in accordance with the law of evidence as it was understood in this country. What Judge could they get in this country who would allow to be used in a case evidence that had been submitted in a similar case, under similar circumstances, at another time. It might be regarded as a sound argument by a lawyer in defending the case of his client, but he ventured to submit to the House that there was no single Court of Justice in the country in which the Judge would allow a reference to a case of that kind to be admitted as evidence. Yet that was what was proposed in Sub-section 4 of Clause 3. It was proposed that evidence of an undertaking under similar circumstances, and in similar employment, should be admissible as evidence of the sufficiency of the undertaking. He maintained that such a proposal as that was most absurd. Then, again, in Sub-section 5 of Clause 3, the proposal made by the Government was, to his mind, equally absurd, if not, indeed, more so. It was proposed that if a dispute arose as to the sufficiency of an undertaking, either in the case of a miner or of an operative in a factory or workshop, an appeal might be made to one of Her Majesty's Secretaries of State, or, in regard to other employments, to the Board of Trade, who should have power to decide whether the undertaking was sufficient or not. The subject, which was really referred to one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State or the Board of Trade, was not merely the nature of a contract. It was proposed to refer for their consideration a fact as to whether any such proposal had been made or not. [Mr. MATTHEWS dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary shook his head. The sub-section said—

> "On the application of a workman in any coal mine, metalliferous mine, factory, or workshop, or of his employer, one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, and on the application of a workman in any other employment, or of his employer, the Board of Trade, may consider and decide whether a contract made or proposed to be made between the workman and his employer whereby the workman deprives himself of any right under this Act, is made, or proposed to be made, on such consideration as in this section mentioned, and if the Secretary of State or Board of Trade decide and certify that the contract is so made, or is proposed to be so made, then not only that contract, but contracts in similar terms with other workmen engaged under the same employer or his successor in business and in a similar employment under similar circumstances, shall, without further proof, be deemed to have been made on such consideration as in this section mentioned."

And then, when the decision had been given by the Secretary of State or by some responsible Minister connected with the Board of Trade, the decision was to be upheld not merely in the case in question, but every other similar case in which the same employers were concerned. No matter whether the case arose in South Wales or in the North of England—it was well known that an employer might be an employer of labour in the North of England and also an employer of labour in South Wales; that he might have collieries both in Northumberland and South Wales—this clause proposed that a decision arrived at in reference to a case which occurred in South Wales could be held to apply to a case which occurred under similar circumstances in the North of England. Such a proposal as that, to his mind, was simply ridiculous, and he hoped that when the Bill came to be considered in detail some steps would be taken to remedy the mischief which might be done by these two sub-sections, or to expunge them entirely from the Bill. With regard to the amount of compensation allowed under the Bill, he would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary whether he really believed that £150 was a sufficient limit to insert in the measure, and whether, having due regard to all the circumstances, it would not be infinitely better to leave the question of the amount entirely in the hands of the Judge, making the fixing of the amount a perfectly free and open question? In that case, the amount awarded might be more or it might be less than £150. They, on that side of the House, representing as they did the working classes, were perfectly willing that the question should be left open to be decided according to all the circumstances of the case. Then, again, with respect to the time of notice of action. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary whether there was really any necessity that the workman should be compelled to serve a notice upon his employer that he intended to bring an action? He entirely concurred in the remarks that were made by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for York (Mr. Lockwood) in the debate which took place last night. He did not see any necessity why notice should be given; and he thought it would be found that in 99 cases out of 100 that the employer was in such close touch with the work that he was perfectly and instantly aware of the smallest accident. He would undoubtedly be made immediately aware of it by those who exercised authority under him, and he did not think it was essential, therefore, that they could insist upon this provision of the Bill that notice should be given. However, he would not trouble the House at that stage with any more lengthened remarks; but he sincerely hoped that the principle of contracting out of the Bill would, after full and proper consideration, be either so modified as to reduce the amount of contracting out to a minimum, or be ultimately expunged from the Bill. For his own part, he should prefer that the power of contracting out of the Act should be entirely withdrawn. He thanked the House for its attention, and must apologize for having detained it so long; but before he sat down he would express a hope that the Government would take into serious consideration the desirability of referring the Bill not to the Committee on Trade, but to the Committee on Law, who were, he thought, more fit and competent to deal with the question. He said that with all the more confidence because he did not happen himself to be a Member of that Committee; but he did think that the legal Members of the House were the best qualified to deal with the question, and he, therefore, hoped the House would see their way to refer the Bill to the Committee on Law instead of the Committee on Trade.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he congratulated the House on the tone and temper with which the Bill had been discussed by those who were, more or less, representatively interested, and upon the absence of Party spirit which had generally characterized the debate. He entertained strong hopes that the Bill might be so shaped as to be satisfactory both to employers and employed. With regard to the question of compensation, he would not then say anything as to what was the proper amount to which it should be limited; but he would ask the hon. Members opposite who objected to any limitation of the amount of compensation to remember that, whatever scale was fixed upon, the compensation would be a burden upon the industry itself. If an employer knew that for an accident, for which he was vicariously responsible, he was liable to have to pay a money penalty, he would provide for it in some way or other, either by insuring or by setting apart a reserve fund to provide for such contingencies. The hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division of Northumberland (Mr. Fenwick) was not ignorant of the fact that the provision of a fund to meet the liabilites under the present Act must be a charge on the industry itself; and in view of these considerations, and also of the fact that the margin out of which profits were made was now extremely small, an undue sum should not be fixed for compensation, as it would diminish the fund out of which wages were to be paid, and would thereby be injurious to the workmen in whose interest the Bill had been introduced. He thought the clause in regard to superintendence would require the careful attention of the Committee to which the Bill was to be referred. He was quite aware of the great difficulty of framing a satisfactory definition; but it was quite obvious that the word "superintendence" might be so construed as to apply to the case of a few workmen employed on a common work, one of whom was placed in the position of a *quasi*-foreman, and, in effect, to do away almost entirely with the doctrine of common employment. When hon. Members talked about the injustice of compensation being obtained in one case and not in another, it must not be lost sight of that the man to whose carelessness the accident was really due went scot-free, and would probably not be allowed by the Trades Union even to be dismissed by the employer who had to pay the penalty. In no part of the House would this matter be considered, he hoped, as if there were any real antagonism between the employers and the employed; if such an idea were entertained anywhere, it was because their mutual interests were not properly understood. As to the power of contracting themselves out of the Act, the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division of Northumberland (Mr. Fenwick) said that about 30,000 miners in South-West Lancashire had been forced to take that course.

MR. FENWICK asked, if it was not the fact that it was made a condition of the engagement of the men in certain collieries that they should surrender all their rights under the Act of 1880?

MR. TOMLINSON said, that so far as he was acquainted with the facts, the men were free to take the privileges of the Act or the benefits of the Permanent Relief Society, and with the obvious fact before them, in the latter alternative, that the cost of litigation was saved, the Permanent Relief Society was largely preferred. In one case, where the employers determined to leave the men absolutely free, the men themselves met together and decided unanimously to request the employers to put them on the Permanent Society. Certainly, they could not be under the Act and have the advantage of the local relief society as well. In one part of Lancashire, very few of the colliers desired to claim to be under the provisions of the Act; though it was quite true that in another part of Lancashire a different view prevailed, but the idea of compulsion was a myth.

MR. FENWICK said, the hon. and learned Gentleman had not answered his question as to whether it was made a condition of the hiring of workmen that they should surrender any claim they had under the Act of 1880?

MR. TOMLINSON said, that in his view it was not a question of conditions of employment. No person could have the benefit of the Permanent Relief Society and still remain under the Act. He wished to disabuse the mind of the hon. Member that it was in the interests of the employer that the maintenance of the Permanent Relief Society was desired. It was both easier and less expensive for the employer to allow the Act to remain in force. But when it was mutually felt that greater advantage resulted from providing against all accidents by a permanent fund than by the uncertain operation of the Act, he considered that in the interest of the workman he should be allowed to enter into contracts excluding the Act.

MR. GULLY (Carlisle) said, he did not intend to enter into the vexed question of common employment. He desired simply to call attention to that part of the Bill which for the first time proposed to extend to seamen and shipowners the provisions of the Employers' Liability Act of 1880. The proposal of the Government was that the Employers' Liability Act should extend to cases of personal injury to seamen in the course of their employment, unless the accident occurred elsewhere than in a port of the United Kingdom, in which case the employer was not to be liable to pay compensation for injury, unless the injury was caused by some defect in the body, machinery, or tackle of the ship at the time when she last proceeded to sea from a port in the United Kingdom, and the default arose from the negligence of the owner or any person entrusted by him with the control of the ship. There were only two criticisms which he desired to offer in regard to that section of the Bill. Of course, it was obvious that a very large class of cases in which personal injury was sustained occurred while the ship was away from a port in the United Kingdom, and therefore the question of the liability of the shipowner for injuries of that kind was a very large question. He should be sorry to see it limited to the extent to which it was limited by this action. He only wished to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) to the point, in the hope that before the Bill went into Committee the scheme might be modified somewhat in favour of the seaman. He had pointed out that the employer was not to be liable for accident which occurred outside a port of the United Kingdom unless there was some defect in the condition of the ship. Now, there was a very large class of cases also in which injury was sustained from the careless loading or overloading of the ship, and such cases were not covered by the section, as it stood, at all. He presumed the intention of the Government was by these words to include cases of careless loading, but that there had been some omission or mistake in the drafting, the proper words not having been used to express their intention. If they did not intend to include cases of careless loading, all he could say was that the clause was much more objectionable than he had thought it was, for that was the class of cases that ought, above all others, to be included in the Act. Either the Government meant it, or they did not. If they did, then he thought that the defects in the section, as it stood, might very easily be altered by adding the words "or loading" after the word condition. Another objection he had to the Bill was that it made it a condition to the liability of the owner for any negligence on his part in permitting a vessel to be in a dangerous condition, causing death or injury to a seaman, that the bad condition of the ship must have existed at the time when the ship last proceeded to sea from a port in the United Kingdom. Say, a vessel was proceeding from London to China or the Cape by way of the Suez Canal; suppose, after she left London well provided with anchors, she anchored during stress of weather and lost all her anchors but one, and that she afterwards put in to Brest or Lisbon, where she might refit and obtain new anchors, but that the captain negligently did not obtain them, and continued his voyage without the proper complement of anchors, and that, as a consequence, meeting with bad weather again, the ship was lost, and her crew were drowned. Under the clause, as it was drawn, the owner would not be liable, and that, he submitted, was not as it should be. The captain, no doubt, was a fellow-servant, but he was the fellow-servant who was vested with the largest authority, and who came nearest to the position of an employer himself, because he was entrusted with the care of all the interests of the employer. Under the section of the Bill as it stood, as he (Mr. Gully) had endeavoured to point out, the greatest negligence of the master, provided it occurred at some place other than a port in the United Kingdom, was negligence for which the owner was not to be held responsible, and that seemed to him altogether contrary to the spirit of the Employers' Liability Act. As a matter of fact, the section said this—"If you, the master, allow your ship to leave the United Kingdom in a defective condition, and if, in consequence of that, injury happens to a seaman, you shall be liable." Well, they scarcely required an Employers' Liability Act for that purpose, for if it was brought to the personal knowledge of an owner that his ship was in a defective condition, or that he had not procured the necessary appliances to work the ship efficiently, he would be liable at Common Law; therefore, the Bill was almost illusory as regarded the liability of the owner of a vessel for that class of accidents. He would suggest that the words of the section should be altered so as to make the owner of a vessel liable for an injury happening to a seaman by reason of the negligence of the master in not providing proper appliances for the safety of the men on board, although that negligence happened outside the United Kingdom, If a master failed to supply a vessel with proper and needful appliances at any place where he had the opportunity of supplying them, and accident took place in consequence, the owner should be held responsible. He admitted that there was an attempt made in the Act to give, to a certain extent, the benefit of the Employers' Liability Act to seamen as regarded accidents in ports of the United Kingdom, and, no doubt, a very large percentage of the accidents which happened to seamen did take place in port during the process of loading and unloading. But while the measure gave some extension of benefit to seamen in respect of that class of accident, he submitted that it entirely failed to deal fairly with seamen in respect of another very large class of accidents which happened outside the ports of the United Kingdom.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he thought that the bulk of the comments which arose on this question might more properly be urged in the discussions in Committee on the Bill; but as the measure, they were told, would be sent to a Grand Committee, and a large number of hon. Members interested in the question would not have seats on that Committee, there was a desire to express opinions during the second reading stage which otherwise might not have been raised at all. There was only one question of principle, so far as he knew, involved in the discussion which would arise on the Motion, and that was the question whether or not contracting out of the Act should be forbidden. That was the whole question upon which there was difference of principle. All the rest, he thought, would turn out to be difference of detail; and he was bound to say that if that question of principle were decided in favour of the view taken by the Government, and which also, by the casting vote of Lord Brassey, was taken by the Select Committee, of which he (Mr. Bradlaugh) was a Member—namely, that there was to be contracting out of the Act, then he thought it was only just for the Government to say that they had tried to frame as fair a Bill as was possible in view of the very difficult questions that arose. ["Oh!"] Well, he thought so, and he would explain why. There was one phrase which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary which he hoped that right hon. Gentleman would modify, if he offered any words in reply. The right hon. Gentleman drew attention to the large number of actions which had arisen in consequence of the Employers' Liability Act of 1880, and he pointed out that only 38 per cent of those actions had succeeded, and that in 42 per cent of the failures the employers had had to pay the costs. Now, he did not wonder that, with all the work the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had to do, he had not been able to have all the evidence taken before the Committee quite so much in his mind as he (Mr. Bradlaugh) had. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) himself had attended every Sitting of the Committee, had been present, he thought, at every minute of its sittings, and had conducted the bulk of the examination-in-chief until they came to that portion of the Bill which dealt with seamen, of which he had no knowledge; and he begged to say that the evidence was conclusive, both from professional witnesses, employers, and employed, that whatever the total number of accidents might be, it was exceedingly small, as a matter of percentage, compared with the large works and large number of men employed, and the matters arising in connection with those works. The percentage of cost in the matter of litigation was small; and nearly every employer, in answer to the question which Sir Thomas—now Lord —Brassey put to everyone, said it was so small as not to be worth reckoning in connection with the business. There was no kind of evidence that litigation had increased to any great extent, or that there was any tendency to an increase. As to the actions which had failed, the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, who put the number down at 42 per cent, had already been reminded by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for York (Mr. Lockwood) that many of them arose on the question of notice. There was one case which had not been referred to in that House, which was before the Courts only a little while ago, and which showed the monstrous character—and he thought he might use that word—of the objections sometimes taken on the part of employers. The name of the case he might mention, as it was not one in which an individual employer was concerned. It was that of "Beckett against the Corporation of Manchester." The man gave notice in proper time, but not to the proper officer. He gave it to the surveyor from whom he was in the habit of receiving his instructions from the Corporation; but that was the wrong officer, and the result was that the man was nonsuited and ruined. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had been exceedingly hurried by the way in which the debate went last night, and, therefore, had not dealt with as many points as he otherwise might have done; but he (Mr. Bradlaugh) trusted that he would say something to-day to show that he recognized on the part of the men the difficulty pointed out as to giving notice. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) quite agreed that in the Bill, as proposed, there was a clause which would meet such a case as that of Beckett if it occurred again, and would provide that the want or insufficiency of notice should not be a bar to the maintenance of an action if the Court before whom the case was tried, or the Court of Appeal, should be of opinion that there was reasonable excuse for the want or insufficiency. He would put this to the Government—if a certain man had a legal right, why should they put upon him a duty and obligation as to notice in making good that right which they did not put on litigants in actions at Common Law? In the case of an ordinary member of the public having a claim for damages in respect of injuries received, he could bring his action at any period within the Statute of Limitations; and in the case of a workman, if he had a right, why did they burden him with restrictions which, as the case referred to proved, at times prevented him from obtaining any remedy? The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary might say—"We have put Subsection 6 to Section 4, to meet every case that can be raised." Well, he did not wish to put the matter unfairly, but he did desire the right hon. Gentleman to appreciate what was passing through the minds of many of those who were arguing against him. The hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) made a strange mistake last night. The hon. Member had put it very strongly when he said that human life was worth more than £150, and that that was all the compensation that the Bill would give. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) did not understand that the Bill limited the amount of damage to be recovered to £150. What the Bill did was to recognize what the Committee felt—namely, that there were a number of cases in which the compensation estimated on a three years' earnings would not be adequate; as, for instance, in the case of a grown man, who had not long escaped from his apprenticeship, and, therefore, was receiving a very low wage. There were cases in which a man would have received a much larger compensation than £150, on the principle of three years' computation if an accident had occurred a week later, when he was receiving a larger wage; but, after all, this question of amount of compensation was purely a matter for Committee. If he were a Member of the Grand Committee, he should try to increase that sum; but, as he said, the matter was clearly one of detail, on which he had no right to detain the House for a longer period than was necessary just to draw attention to the point. He was at variance with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), who had just addressed the House, on one point. He understood the hon. and learned Member to say, first, that there was no inducement held out to the men to contract out of the Act, and, next, that contracting out of the Act was not made a condition of hiring. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) thought that the Committee had had several printed contracts placed before them, in which the men were obliged, as a condition of the hiring, to consent to contracting themselves out of the Act. He had thought they had called half-a-dozen witnesses who produced the contracts from the places in which they were employed. He would not weary the House by going at any length into the question, because this, again, was a matter which they could deal with better when it came before them in Committee. He had thought, however, that the evidence was overwhelming, and that with regard to Lancashire they had had express evidence given by one of the representatives of a Miners' Association to the effect that great pressure was put upon the men to coerce them into contracting themselves out of the benefits of the existing Act, and that this witness estimated that between

28,000 and 30,000 men were treated in this way. The hon. Member asked how these Returns were obtained ? The Returns were obtained from South-West Lancashire, and it was shown that all the colliery firms there, with the exception of that with which the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Blundell) was associated, contracted out of the Act. A number of men produced the conditions of hiring, which were affixed to the pit's mouth, and without signing these conditions contracting himself out of the Act, they were told no man was allowed to descend the pit. It might be said that that was not coercion. He would put what it was from the evidence of Lord Dudley's agent, and would not use his own language, except so far as he aided the witness in examining him. Lord Dudley's agent, when examined before the Committee, urged that contracting ought not to be touched, because the employer and the employed were on equal terms in bargaining and ought to be left free.

MR. TOMLINSON said, that what he had meant to convey was, that in Lancashire the system of the Permanent Relief Society, where it prevailed, was assented to by masters and men.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, his view of the evidence was that a contract laying down certain conditions was drawn up by the solicitor to the employers or their association, and that no man was allowed to go down the pit until he had accepted those conditions. He had put it to the agent of Lord Dudley whether he thought that a man who had no means of subsistence except the sale of his labour, and who had no means of employment save the particular one he was seeking to enter into under the contract, was in as good a position to make a bargain as the employer with whom he contracted, and the witness replied that he thought he was. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) had then put it to the witness that taking a man who had no means of subsistence whatever, save the employment he was seeking, with a wife and children depending on him, whether he thought that the mere consideration of the man entering the employment should be sufficient to relieve the employer of all liability under the Act, and the answer was in the affirmative—that it was right to require a man to contract himself out of the Act, although if he refused he would have to go away and starve. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) remembered the astonishment depicted on the countenance of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Preston when this witness gave his evidence.

MR. TOMLINSON: I said nothing about the condition of things at Dudley. I only spoke about South-West Lancashire.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I thought the hon. and learned Member contended that coercion was a myth.

MR. TOMLINSON: Yes; in South-West Lancashire.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he was in a difficulty here, seemingly, for, with regard to Lancashire, the Committee had the express evidence given by one of the representatives of the miners' associations that great pressure was put upon the men to deprive them of the benefit of the Act; and they also had the statement that, with the exception of one Company—namely, the Company with which the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Blundell) was associated—the whole of the colliery proprietors of South-West Lancashire contracted out of the Act. He had himself produced a printed form of contract which was posted up at the mouth of the pit, and to which the colliers were required to assent before they were allowed to go down the pit. He was only going by the evidence. That might be quite wrong; but the hon. and learned Member for Preston had exercised, as he (Mr. Bradlaugh) had done, considerable latitude of examination, and he was sure, if there had been anything incorrect, they would have had the advantage of the skilled knowledge of the hon. and learned Gentleman in bringing it out. He did not suggest that there was anything but the fullest desire to arrive at the truth, and, having arrived at it, the great desire of every Member of the Committee was to frame the best recommendation they could as to what they all admitted was an exceedingly difficult problem to solve. There were several matters on which the Government had not adopted the recommendation of the Committee, as to special juries and County Courts and so on; but these were pure matters for Committee, and he would not weary the House now by going into them. There was one point, however, which he must deal with, and that was as to insurance societies; and here he found himself in disagreement alike with the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) and the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division of Northumberland (Mr. Fenwick). It was suggested that if the employer could insure himself against risk, he would not be as careful of the lives and limbs of those he employed as he should be. Now, assuming that to be true, what was clear was that the employer could insure himself against that risk whether his men contracted out of the Act or not. They had overwhelming evidence of that, so that the argument of his hon. Friends fell to the ground. But what had operated very much with himself, and, he believed, with other Members of the Committee, was that they found very large bodies of the men were contented with the insurance societies, or provident funds, or whatever else they might be called, now existing, and really wanted them to continue. Scores of thousands of men wanted the insurance societies to continue, and he did not think they were entitled to neglect that fact when they were dealing with something that must be in the nature of a compromise, and that could not be quite decided on the bare line of principle. When they were so deciding matters, they must cut clear whatever damage they might do on either side. When making a compromise, they must try to do the best for all concerned. Great ridicule had been heaped upon the Government by the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), because of the wording of the 3rd section of the Bill, and of some of the sub-sections. While there were one or two verbal Amendments he (Mr. Bradlaugh) would like to suggest in that section, if it should be his fortune to be on the Committee to which the Bill was to be sent, he was bound to say that the Government had tried to meet the difficulty in principle which the Committee would have to contend with. The Employers' Liability Act dealt with a very limited number of accidents indeed. The evidence given before the Select Committee showed that the proportion was so trifling as only to be a very small percentage of the whole of the accidents that occurred; and then the question was whether it was possible to get any reasonable system of insurance in which the payments were anything like reasonable which would cover all kinds of accidents, and would, therefore, leave persons employed in no uncertainty, and whether it would not be doing a really good thing for the men to say to the employers on the one hand—"You have been relieved from your responsibility under the doctrine of common employment as interpreted by the Judges"—a responsibility which, speaking for himself, he (Mr. Bradlaugh) must say he thought they ought to bear, but as to which he admitted a different view might be taken by others—"and, relieving you from that responsibility, we ask you, as a condition of being so relieved, to join with the men in forming such funds as will give them protection, for such payment as is just, not only in the case of accidents for which you may be made properly responsible, but against all accidents whatever happening in the business in which you are commonly engaged." It was true that with reference to some businesses it would be impossible to get that continuity of employment which would enable that to be done; but then, in those cases, the employers would not be released from their responsibility, and he did not, therefore, understand the objection of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham. If this question were again raised, he should be obliged to give the vote he had already given in that Committee, and he did not think the House would do other than the Committee had done. If the Grand Committee decided as the Select Committee did, then he should feel it his duty to try and arrange the best compromise he could for the men and the public generally, on the most satisfactory conditions he could get. Evidence had been brought before the Select Committee on behalf of the Northumberland and Durham miners, and the Report of the London and North-Western Railway Company, to which reference had been made, had been considered; but, with all deference to those who had spoken of it, he would point out that, although it was an excellent Company, the late Mr. Findlay had something of a Napoleonic way of dealing with its servants. They found that, on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway, a different state of things prevailed. Mr. Findlay's attitude was rather that of the Commander of an Army, than that of an employer contracting with men whose labour he was buying. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) believed Mr. Findlay to have been a thoroughly good man, trying to do the best he could for the Company and the servants. He had made inquiries into this subject, since the Committee sat two years ago, putting questions to men in all kinds of employment; and while he agreed that in a good many districts there was a great amount of natural irritation at the harsh measures used by some employers towards their men, he believed the general feeling on the part of the large majority of men was to have some system of insurance, and not to run the risk of a law suit, in which the damages would be largely swallowed up by the lawyers, whenever an accident occurred to them. Then, it was exceedingly difficult to face the additional centralization involved in Sub-section 5 of Section 3; but if they did not do that, what were they to do? The hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division said—"Leave it to be decided by the Court." Yes; but poor people who desired to have the matter settled might be starving and unable to wait for the decision of a Court. A rich employer, with a rich insurance society at his back, could fight the matter out in a Court. Mr. Shaen, a solicitor of many years' experience, retained on behalf of the men, and Mr. Ruegg, who was employed on behalf of the employers, gave evidence on this point before the Committee, and it had seemed to the Committee that it would be an act of the greatest cruelty to leave the Courts to decide these matters.

MR. FENWICK said, he had not said that it should be left to Courts to decide whether a contract was good or not, but what the amount was to be.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, it would be a great pain to him if anything should happen, through his advocacy of the subject in that House, to break or weaken the friendship which for years had existed between himself and men like the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Wansbeck Division. But he must say that he failed to understand the hon. Gentleman's objections. The hon. Member held that, under the Sub-section, that which the Board of Trade might hold to be fair consideration and fair employment in the case of a man in the North of England, would be held fair in the case of another man under the same employer in South Wales, in some other kind of employment; but that was not his (Mr. Bradlaugh's) reading of the measure. If the circumstances of the employment, however, were similar, why should there not be similarity right through?

MR. FENWICK said, that that might be sound argument; but to admit what was done in one part of the country as evidence as to what should be done in another part of the country, was contrary to reason; and he should be very much surprised to see any legal Gentleman rise and defend such a proposition according to the Law of Evidence.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he did not quite know where the Law of Evidence came in. Let them see how the matter stood. No one was to be allowed to contract themselves out of the Act, unless there was a contract in which there was an adequate contribution from the employer; and in the event of any dispute as to the adequacy of the contribution or other matter, before the contract was entered into, or after it was entered into, the employer and the employed might submit the matter to the Home Secretary or the Board of Trade. He thought it was a misfortune if they had to so submit it. It would be better if the employer and employed could elect a few men as a kind of committee who should determine such things. The Board of Trade was not likely to have the time to attend to those matters. The working men's organization on the one hand, and the employers' organization on the other, with their respective legal advisers, ought to be able to frame regulations which might meet with the approval of both; but there was not sufficient unanimity amongst the men in any one county which made it possible for them to accept a committee such as he mentioned. That being so, there must be somebody to determine the different matters which arose, or else they must be left to be determined by the Courts of Law. The Select Committee were of opinion that to leave matters to be determined by the Courts would be ruinous to the men and harassing to the employers. That was not a Bill which was intended to make the man who sold his labour and the man who bought the labour hostile to one another, but it was a Bill which was intended to facilitate what was believed to be a reality in the majority of the cases—namely, a disposition on the part of the employer and employed to arrive at a just state of opinion between one another. The advantage of the Bill in this respect would be very clear. Take the case of the Council of Conciliation of Northumberland. The Committee had evidence that there were some employers who did not do their duty by the Permanent Fund there. They had evidence that in other counties the number of employers who did their duty was very small indeed. Under this Bill, if it became law even as it was, such employers would have no answer at law, because they would not have fulfilled the conditions, and any contract out of the Act they had compelled the men to make would have no effect. He trusted the House would not think he had been too intrusive in making these observations. He had only dealt in the most incomplete fashion with what he considered a great and grave question. The Committee were unanimously of opinion that the Employers' Liability Act of 1880 had done great good, that it had made the relations between employer and employed more peaceful; and it was the opinion of most of the Members of the Committee that it had done something to protect the men's lives, and to save men from injury, although he was not quite so sure of that. He had said that was the opinion of most of the Committee, and it was an opinion which must be considered, because the men were the huge majority of those concerned, and their lives and persons were to them as of great value as the property of the employers could be to them. He congratulated the Government on having made, in the main, an honest endeavour to meet some of the recommendations of the Committee. There were other recommendations which might be pressed in Committee, but he would not weary the House by specifying them now. He would only say, further, that he thought the Government might give way to the generally-expressed wish that the Bill should not be sent to the Grand Committee on Trade, though, personally, he thought this one of the Bills which it would be better not to send to a Grand Committee at all. If he asked for the Bill to be sent to the Committee on Law, it might seem selfish of him, because he happened to be a Member of that Committee. But he avowed that he devoted, in common with the rest of the Select Committee, very many hours to this question—in the examination of witnesses, and in the careful consideration of the evidence—and he should like an opportunity of utilizing the knowledge he so obtained.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said, he was aware hon. Members opposite representing mining and artizan constituencies were better qualified to speak on this subject than he was; but he represented men who got their living on the estuary of the Thames and on the coast of the North Sea, and whose interests were occasionally somewhat indifferently safeguarded by the House, and in their interest he ventured to say a few words. He thought it was a matter of great satisfaction that shipowners had accepted the situation, and supported the proposal to include seamen within the four corners of the Bill. That was all very well as far as it went, but he thought it did not go quite far enough. Like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), who spoke last night, he could not conceive why the Government should protect sailors on the outward and not on the homeward voyage. It seemed to him that in this respect the Government were practically taking what might be called two bites at a cherry, and he hoped the Government would see their way to accept an Amendment upon this point. As time was short, he was particularly anxious not to occupy the time of the House that afternoon; but he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews), who was in charge of the Bill, would not consider that, because he did not make a long speech upon this subject, the interests of the men he represented were of minor importance.

MR. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) said, that although he did not entirely agree with his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), that there was nothing in the Bill which might not be considered in Committee, and that, therefore, there was no need for a discussion on the second reading, he felt constrained to make almost an apology to the House for intervening for a few moments at so inconvenient a time. The apology was one which he was reluctant to urge, because he was entirely averse to any separation in the House of the consideration of Scotch and English interests; but, at the same time, this Bill was one of such extreme importance to his own constituents and to Scotland generally, that he hardly thought it would be desirable no voice should be heard from a Scotch point of view. Although he could not, like the hon. Member for Northampton, pose as an out-and-out champion and defender of this Government Bill, anything he had to say about it would certainly not be in the way of hostile criticism. It was a matter for great congratulation that public opinion, and the opinion of the House on both sides, had so greatly advanced within the last few years upon such an extremely difficult subject as this. There was no doubt that the arguments which were urged against the introduction of the principle contained in the present Employers' Liability Act were strong and serious arguments. There was no doubt that the fears which were entertained that the consequences of that Act would be disastrous were worthy of consideration; although subsequent experience had furnished an answer to the arguments which were then used, and shown that the fears were groundless. The criticisms he desired to make were entirely criticisms of principle, but they might lead to practical results. There were several principles in the Bill which demanded consideration. It had been said that the only principle in the Bill requiring discussion was whether it should be possible to contract out of the Act or not; but he agreed with the general tenor of what was said by the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst), that they could not leave out of view the important question of to what extent the principle of common employment was proposed to be relaxed and of how much further it ought to be relaxed. He agreed with his hon. Friend that the principle of common employment had been too tenderly dealt with in the Bill. There was at least one practical point applying to a great number of cases in which the principle of common employment should be further relaxed than it was, and that was on the subject of contracts. The subject was touched upon in the Bill, but he thought they might deal with it a little more boldly than they had done. No doubt the general principle of common employment was that while a man was responsible to the public for the negligence of his servants, he was not responsible to a fellow-servant of his servant. The justice of the distinction was not self-evident, although it must be more or less grounded upon considerations of equity or else it would not have become part of the Common Law of England. But it was not the Common Law of any other European country, and they had abandoned the principle in the present Employers' Liability Act. If the principle of common employment were sufficient for the justice of the case, there would have been no necessity to alter it, and he presumed it was because it was found to be unjust that it was altered to the extent it was altered. There was a large class of cases which was not met by the alteration of the law, so far as it had hitherto gone, or so far as he maintained it was proposed to go in the Bill. There was a whole series of such cases which occurred in Scotland. There might be two sets of persons employed on a job—say, the construction of a house; there was the plumber and his men, and there was the mason and his men. Now the Scotch Courts had decided that if the mason's man was injured by the plumber's foreman, the injured man had no recourse against the plumber, because he was not the plumber's servant. Furthermore, he had no recourse at Common Law, because it was held that he was engaged in a common employment with the plumber. The man was placed in a dilemma and deprived of any recourse at all. He had received several communications on the subject from Sheriffs, the local judges in Scotland, and, if he felt at liberty, he could quote still higher judicial authority for the opinion that the present law had proved inefficient and illusory. He did not think the contractors' clause of the present Bill would remedy the evil. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) to look at Clause 2 of the Bill, which proposed to a certain extent to extend the liability where there was a contract and sub-contract. He would not read the clause, but he asked the right hon. Gentleman's attention to what was his (Mr. Donald Crawford's) interpretation of it; and that was, that, hedged in with restrictions which were perfectly intelligible and clearly expressed, the liability of the head man was scarcely increased at all. If the plant was supplied by the contractor and it was defective, it must be defective owing to the negligence of some person for whom he was responsible. He (Mr. Donald Crawford) trusted that some such words as the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division of Northumberland (Mr. Fenwick) suggested in regard to contracting out of the Act, would be inserted. When it was found necessary to resort to special legislation of this kind for the protection of labourers against employers, whatever might be said for or against the principle of such special legislation, the presumption was that the legislation was to be compulsory. If they had protective legislation of this kind, and they left it open to the parties to dispense with the provisions, there was an almost irresistible temptation to the employer to compel men to contract out of the Act. They had seen that in the case of the Truck Act, and other matters of the same kind. It was abundantly proved by the evidence read by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton, that it was exceedingly customary, as was the case in the large concern of the London and North-Western Railway Company, to make contracting out of the Act a condition of the hiring. He submitted that that was not a fair position to place men in if they once decided to give them the benefit of special legislation of this kind. Men ought not to be exposed to the necessity of surrendering their daily bread and employment, or else contracting out of that privilege which Parliament had given them. But it was said, "If you do not give them the choice of contracting out of the Act, you destroy a number of wholesome and useful existing arrangements; you destroy the arrangements of insurance with which there is undoubtedly evidence to show many of the men are satisfied, and you will practically put the men in a worse position than they are in at present." Now, even if there were no answer to that, he should say it was a very difficult question to decide, because he thought the preliminary argument in favour of leaving men the privilege granted by Parliament and so highly valued by most of the men was very difficult to get over. But there was another answer, because in the evidence given before the Committee, he found that a great many witnesses of experience and authority said that they saw no reason why the two systems should not stand together. For instance, Mr. Stanley Brown, the manager of the Employers' Insurance Company, said his Company never asked their clients to contract out of the Act; indeed, they rather wished they would not. He (Mr. Donald Crawford) could see no reason why there should not be insurance with the Employers' Liability Act to fall back upon, and he did not think it was at all made out that that would lead to increased litigation. In the opinion of many practical men that would be a perfectly workable system. He had a word or two to say concerning Sub-section 3 of Clause 3. It was a very ambiguous clause. He would be the last person in the world to indulge in mere verbal criticism, for he knew the difficulty of drafting such clauses. The sub-section referred to the case where a workman was insured not only for the class of accidents which fell under the Liability Act, but for all accidents whatever; and it provided that it was to be decided whether the insurance was a sufficient equivalent for the benefits under the Act, all things being taken into account. That might mean two things. It might mean that he was insured for a much larger class of accidents, that in that way he would get a much larger benefit than he would under the Act, although, in the particular class of accidents which fell under the Act, he might get a very much smaller benefit. What he (Mr. Donald Crawford) wanted to know was, whether a man would get as much money for an accident falling under the Employers' Liability Act or not, whether he had contracted out of the Act or not? He would not go into any of the details of the Bill, although there were details which were worthy of criticism. He trusted that the Scotch procedure would not be overlooked. Under the Act of 1880 all cases under the Employers'

Liability Act were sent to the Sheriff Court, and no special direction was given with regard to them. The intention, no doubt, was that they should be dealt with in a summary manner, as in England. The result was very different. There might be appeal from the Sheriff or Sheriff Substitute to the higher Courts, besides which neither party could have a jury trial, except in the superior Courts. These were things which ought to be remedied, and he thought it right to allude to them at this stage.

COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince) said, that the real question that they had to consider was, whether or not a man should contract himself out of the Act, all the other questions being purely matters of detail. A very few accidents arose from fault on the part of the employers. A consideration of the facts of the case led to the conclusion that, as long as the men considered their lives were in actual danger, they would not contract themselves out of the Act. The colliers in particular would by doing so benefit themselves in a pecuniary point of view. It should be borne in mind that the Mines Acts imposed criminal penalties on colliery proprietors if they failed to provide for the safety of the men. In the colliery he owned men had not contracted out of the Act, and that had been to him a source of income of £85 a-year—perhaps the only income that the colliery had produced. But, although the men had not contracted themselves out of the Act, he was certain that so long as there was any danger to their safety, it was best for them to do so.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) said, the remarks he had to make upon this question would not be of a hostile character, and, although the Bill did not meet with his full approbation, he might say of it:—"With all thy faults I love thee still." To those who said that the doctrine of common employment should be abolished altogether, it was very gratifying to find that it was being done away with by small degrees. Prior to the Act of 1880, there existed no law under which a workman could claim compensation for injuries sustained from negligence of their employers, although the right was extended to all other members of the community. The Act of 1880 was a concession on that point, and it was perfectly true that the present Bill made them another concession, and if they lived long enough he believed that in this way the whole system of common employment would be at last got rid of. He then came to the question of contracting out of the Act, which, as a Representative of the workmen, he laid great stress upon. They found fault with the Act of 1880 because it permitted this, and they found the same weakness in the present measure. Some very interesting figures had been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) last night, showing that a large number of workmen had agreed with their employers to contract themselves out of the Act. He did not dispute that a certain number had contracted, or allowed themselves to be contracted, out of the Act; but that this was the result of a mutual agreement never had and never could be proved. The workmen were not free agents in their arrangements with their employers, who could give or withhold the work from them which their necessities required. There could be no freedom of contract where one man held in his hand the material which another must have. There were collieries in other districts than those which had been referred to in Lancashire, where contracting out of the Act was made an absolute condition by the employers; the men could not enter on any other terms. There were three or four collieries where every man working in them were members of the provident fund, which meant that they had contracted themselves out of the Act; on the other hand, there were collieries where the matter was left to the men, and not a single man was a member of the fund. It was true that the Bill, although in a very inadequate degree, attempted to provide power to a workman to sue unless the employer rendered him proper compensation in some form. This was a fair attempt to prevent the workman from being compelled to accept frivolous compensation instead of his right; and, doubtless, this section would be received by the great body of working men with gratitude, were it not for two or three modifications of the most serious character contained in a sub-section of the clause. Section 3 said—

> "That any contract, after the passing of the Act, whereby a workman deprives himself of his right under the Act, shall be void."

If the clause stood thus it would be a good one; but it went on to say—

> "Unless it is made in consideration of some undertaking by the employer as is hereinafter mentioned, and that undertaking has been duly fulfilled."

Sub-section 4 contained the mode of deciding whether an employer had made sufficient provision for such cases in a manner which he and his hon. Friends were compelled strenuously to oppose. It said, if a question arose as to whether the undertaking given by the employer sufficiently completed the requirements of the sub-section, evidence that a similar undertaking had been accepted as sufficient by persons employed under the same circumstances, and in the same class of employment, would be sufficient evidence of the agreement. But, in his opinion, this at once placed the workman at the mercy of the employer; for, he was sorry to say, that an employer might at all times get persons to accept as sufficient, for want of being able to make a better bargain, that which would be very inadequate compensation indeed. It would be remembered that when the Act of 1880 was before the House, a large and influential deputation of employers of labour waited upon the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), then Prime Minister, and offered, if the Government of the day placed a compensation clause in the Bill, to pay cent per cent upon every penny which the workmen might agree to pay to compensate themselves for injuries received; but the right hon. Gentleman and the Government refused—they refused to place a monetary value upon the lives and limbs of workmen, but retained that principle in the Bill as a barrier against the effects of parsimony on the part of employers. The good employer had nothing to fear from the Bill. There were employers, he was glad to admit, who were a law to themselves; but there were some careless and small men whose action towards their workmen was of a very different character, and could not, with safety to their workmen, be left to their own free will. Sub-section 5, in his (Mr. W. Abraham's) opinion, provided a much preferable method of deciding this point by a reference to the Secretary of State; but they found the same objection to the latter part of the sub-section as they did to Sub-section 4. He might be pardoned for using a strong term in reference to this part of the Bill; and he said it was monstrous that one man should be compelled to accept the terms made by another man, when he personally knew nothing of the conditions under which they were made. He was willing to admit that in respect of sub-contracts the Bill was an improvement upon the existing Act, although probably it would not work out to the same extent throughout all trades. But unless great care were taken, the difficulties in the way of the workmen might be increased in the matter of deciding to whom notice of action should be given. There were some difficulties in his way in this respect already, and it must be borne in mind that the multiplicity of employers would make it still more difficult when the question of notice had to be decided. He (Mr. W. Abraham) thought that this principle which was being admitted by degrees might have been carried a little further with advantage in the present Bill. In the case where inexperienced men were employed in contravention of the Act, he said that compensation should be paid to the men who were injured by the contravention of rules which were made for the protection of men's lives. He hoped the Government would give consideration to some of the suggestions which he and his hon. Friends had laid before them, the adoption of which would render the Bill much more acceptable to those whom it was intended to benefit.

Mr. COURTNEY KENNY (York, W.R., Barnsley) said, the House was greatly indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) for the very clear speech in which he introduced this measure; but in all that statement there was nothing which more surprised the House than the statistics as to the litigation which had taken place under the existing Act. They were told that in 38 per cent only of the cases brought under the Act had the claimant recovered compensation—that was to say, that the workmen who sued their masters had failed in 62 cases out of 100. How did those figures compare with the statistics of ordinary County

Court actions? Ordinary plaintiffs in County Courts failed only in two-and-a-half trials out of 100. The figures which the right hon. Gentleman gave the House did not inform them in how many of those cases the workman failed on the merits, and in how many he failed owing to the pitfalls and embarrassments which the Act threw in his way in connection with this matter of notice. There was no doubt that in this respect the Act did cast difficulties in the way of a just and equitable claim, and he regretted that these restrictions were actually increased. It was true that the Bill extended the time within which notice might be given; but there was a remarkable alteration with regard to what happened in case of the death of a workman. Where a workman died the Judge now might excuse the want of notice if he thought there was reason why it should not have been given; but under the Bill the Judge would not be able to accept a reasonable excuse, unless he thought that the defendant had not been embarrassed in his defence by the lack of notice. Now, that clearly placed a new difficulty in the way of the plaintiff; and it was the more unfortunate, because by the 11th section the Common Law remedy of the workman against his employer was in future to be capable of being enforced in the County Court. But, unhappily, the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary saddled the right of action with the unfortunate restrictions of procedure which were engrafted on the old Act; that was to say, notice of claim must be given under the same restrictions as notice of the statutory claim. There was a point about which the right hon. Gentleman was challenged very emphatically last night, on which he gave a very positive, but, as he (Mr. Courtney Kenny) ventured to suggest, a mistaken answer. It was pointed out that in bringing a Common Law case into a County Court the workman would be restricted to the same £150 limit as if he were enforcing his statutory claim; but in his answer to the hon. and learned Member for York (Mr. Lockwood), the right hon. Gentleman denied this. If, however, hon. Members would refer to the 8th section of the Bill, he thought they would find again by a most unfortunate—though he was willing to believe entirely unintentional—divergence from the language of the existing Statute, the limit of £150 was imposed not merely upon the statutory action provided under the Bill, but upon all actions brought under the Common Law against employers for injuries sustained. Now, besides these points, in which the present Bill was actually, if unintentionally, retrogressive, there were several others in which the Bill did not bring forward that measure of reform which the House was entitled to expect. The right hon. Gentleman said the Bill was framed very carefully on the lines of the Report of the Committee which sat two years ago; but the right hon. Gentleman had omitted to refer to one recommendation—namely, that which would give the power of having a Special Jury in a case where an ordinary jury would not constitute a satisfactory tribunal. Another omission was that the Bill contained no words binding on the Crown. He thought there was no reason why the same law should not apply to the men engaged in perilous occupations in the great arsenals and dockyards as was applied to the servants of private employers. A further limitation which he much regretted to see in the Bill—and which he ventured to think was inconsistent with the language which the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had himself used—was the restriction as to the kind of servants who should be able to take advantage of the Act. If a fellow servant was entitled to compensation for the injuries caused by the negligence of employers, he was equally entitled to it whether engaged in manual or non-manual labour; he was entitled even if he were a clerk, agent, or domestic servant, which classes, however, were unhappily excluded from the provisions of this Bill. They had had a very striking illustration this Session of what happened when, having an objectionable rule of law, they, instead of boldly repealing it, attempted to make limitations and exceptions to it. In the Criminal Evidence Bill—in the unanimity with which it had been received by lawyers and the public generally—they saw an evidence of the disgust with which the country had regarded an attempt to introduce limitations and exceptions to an objectionable rule of law instead of taking the simpler course of entirely repealing it. He could not help feeling that as the country came to realize the benefit which had, by general admission on the part of employers and workmen, been obtained from the Act of 1880, they would seek not only to strengthen that Act, as they proposed, by the present measure, but to carry forward the Acts to their logical consequence, make the general law universal, and put the servant in the same relation to his master as all the rest of the world. He (Mr. Courtney Kenny) had been sorry to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary last night attempt to justify our anomalous English law on this subject by reference to the law of America. He (Mr. Courtney Kenny) had for some days last Autumn the opportunity of visiting the Congress Library at Washington, as he wished to refer to statistics gathered in America relating to the labour question; and he was surprised to find the Reports of the State Bureaus unanimous in their praise of the labour legislation of this country. The American Bureaus complained of the risks to which the American labourer was exposed. They complained, for example, that the life of an iron founder in Ohio was some years shorter than that of an English iron founder; and he had been struck by the language of one of these Reports, which summed the whole matter up by saying that whilst the English workman was a mechanic, the American workman was a machine. When the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary told us that the law of America was in harmony with our Common Law on this subject, he (Mr. Courtney Kenny) regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not added to that what Her Majesty's Ambassador at Washington said, as reported in a Blue Book two years ago—namely, that legislation was being pushed forward in the United States of America with the view of getting rid of this unfortunate doctrine and working on the lines adopted in this country. He trusted that we should follow in the steps of Continental countries who had refused to accept the doctrine of common employment, and had required all masters to treat their servants with the same justice as they treated all the world.

Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said, he wished to reply to some observations which had fallen from hon. Members opposite as to the clause relating to seamen. As might be supposed, he, as a naval officer, would always be in sympathy with seamen as a class and as he had no property in ships, it was impossible to suppose that he could speak upon this subject from any motive of self-interest. He desired to offer some observations on the clause, and in offering them his only wish was to do justice to the owners of merchant vessels and the sailors of the Mercantile Marine. He had read the clause relating to seamen very carefully, and also the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and he had listened carefully to the remarks of hon. Members upon the subject. He differed somewhat from some hon. Members on the matter. He, for one, had no objection to the earlier part of the clause, so long as it dealt with ships in ports, and to any personal injury happening to any one on board a ship in an English port. He thought that such a person should come within the scope of the Bill, and that anyone on board a merchant vessel in a foreign port also might very well come under the measure; but the moment a ship left an English or foreign port he thought that people on board should not come under the Bill. He had read the section which said that employers of seamen should not be liable to pay compensation for the injury unless it was caused by defect in the condition of the ship, or the tackle, furniture, apparel, machinery, or other equipments of the ship existing at the time when the ship last proceeded to sea from any port in the United Kingdom. He felt certain that no seaman had had a voice in the drafting of that sub-section, and he did not think that any seaman would have sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary as to this clause. He did not speak of employers of seamen who would wish to shelter themselves from liability, but of those who desired to protect the seamen's lives in the best sense of the word. He believed that if Mr. Plimsoll had been a Member of that House he would not have given his support to this legislation. Let them treat ships in port as factories, if they liked, and not confine their legislation to seamen, but let the Bill apply to everyone engaged in loading or unloading the ship; but if they made this mischievous sub-section to which he had referred part of their law, he maintained that it would embarrass captains of ships unduly, and would make a captain hesitate before sending a man aloft in bad weather, as it might be necessary for the safety of the vessel that he should do. The captain of a vessel might fear that some hidden defect might exist in the ship's rigging, and that an accident might result, and thereby, through hesitation in many cases, it was quite possible that the interests of a ship owner, as well as the safety of the ship and the lives of the men on board, might be jeopardized in a time of danger and difficulty. Seamen understood the risks of their profession, and what they wanted, better than landsmen; and he made bold enough to say that they did not require protection involving such restrictions, and that they did not desire the provisions of this Bill. What he wanted to see, in the interests of seamen and for the preservation of life, was the adoption of proper measures to guard against the vicious practice of over insurance and of undermanning, overloading, and of unseaworthiness, and to guard the seamen against bad provisions and bad accommodation. If they would, by legislation, guard the seamen in these respects, they would do that which the seamen wanted; but to talk about no notice being taken of any defect in the condition of a ship, or the tackle, furniture, apparel, machinery or other equipments of a ship, unless it existed at the time when the ship last proceeded to sea from a port in the United Kingdom, was absurd. When a ship "last proceeded to sea from a port in the United Kingdom," was the time when she was in the very best possible condition. Her running gear was in the best possible condition, whether new or old; but when she left the foreign port on her return journey the gear might be in a condition far from satisfactory. To the gear at that time, however, the Bill would not apply. Then there was a clause at the bottom of the page which gave protection—or supposed protection. It said that if the employer complied with the Regulations made from time to time by the Board of Trade

> "With respect to the ships of the class to which the ship belongs, and where those Regulations have been annexed to the agreement with the ship's crew, the ship and the tackle, furniture, apparel, machinery, or other equipments thereof shall be deemed not to have been defective within the meaning of this section."

That provision, he maintained, opened the door very widely indeed to any amount of jobbery. How could they lay down Board of Trade Regulations for thousands of steamers carrying on different trades? And think what an army of Inspectors would be necessary to prevent the Regulations from being evaded. His own view was that, if they wished to legislate in the interest of seamen as a class, they should do it by an amendment of the Merchant Shipping Act, and not in a Bill which applied merely to workmen on shore. If they wanted the Bill to apply to seamen, then his advice would be to limit it to ships whilst in port or harbour, and not to worry sailors with a lot of unnecessary restrictions.

MR. PICKARD (York, W.R., Normanton) said, he would not take up much of the time of the House. He was in hopes last night, when the adjournment was about to take place, that it would be possible to-day to commence the discussion of the Bill at 2 o'clock, and he was surprised that it had not been possible to do so. He was glad to find that there was a different tone adopted with regard to the Bill to that which was adopted when the measure of 1880 was brought in. They were told in 1880 that if such a Bill as that was passed into law our trade would be driven into other countries, and there would be nothing but bitterness between the employers and the working men. He was satisfied, however, that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department would admit that this class of legislation ran in the direction of trying to take away bitterness between employers and employed. So far as the miners were concerned they were not asking for money value in this Bill, but for legislation which would provide protection for working men. The miners were asking for that which would make their lives safe when they were down in the mine, rather than for something to annoy the employers, to bring about litigation in the Courts, and to destroy the confidence existing between employers and employed. He was glad to find that all arguments founded upon charges of that kind had ceased to be used. There was not much he wished to trouble the House with on this occasion; but he did desire to say this—that so far as the doctrine of common employment was concerned, the men with whom he was associated were totally opposed to it, and were for its total abolition. In so far as contracting out of the Bill was concerned, he could speak positively for the miners of Yorkshire—and he did not desire to speak for the working men of any other county—and could assure the House that they were against contracting out of the legislation, either by insurance or in any other way. The employers were saying they were making no profit, and the old argument used some time ago still existed—namely, that if there was to be an insurance on the part of the workmen it would simply exist at the expense of wages—that the men would simply get less wages. The effect of either contracting or insuring out of the Employers' Liability Act simply would be that the masters would not carry on their businesses in the way they would if they were bound to find fit and safe places for their men to work in. Certain statements had been made to the effect that employers did not force their men to contract out of the Act. Well, when he was in Lancashire in 1880, he found that the workmen there were forced to contract out of the Act. He found that the largest firms in Lancashire—such as Messrs. Knowles—and no one would dispute that they were one of the largest firms—made it a condition of hiring that the men should contract out of the Act. The evidence produced since then all tended to show that, with rare exceptions, the masters in Lancashire forced their labourers out of the Act. He was glad to hear the hon. Member opposite (Colonel Blundell) say that he believed that it was the highest and the best duty of an employer to see that they worked in places and under conditions which gave them the greatest security for life and limb, and he was glad that the hon. Member and many other hon. Members in this House did not fear this Act. The miners of Yorkshire, Northumberland, and Durham were practically content to remain in their present position, and had no desire for the opportunity of contracting out of the Act, either by means of Insurance Companies—who were advertising themselves forward wherever there were working men or employers—who were pestering everyone all over the country, either asking promises or making suggestions that men should insure themselves. What were they to insure for? Why, these appeals were made simply to draw money from the working classes and the employers. Instead of dealing with this insurance question, let the House take the bolder course and leave the Act free. If they must adopt the principle of insurance, let them do it as proposed to be done in Scotland, instead of having Insurance Societies established over all classes and conditions of men. At the same time, he must say he did not believe in the principle of insuring out of any Act condoning neglect. If they were to have an insurance system, why not have a Bill passed into law which would make it compulsory on all classes of workmen and employers, at all classes of works, to insure, and let the insurance cover old age, as well as accidents themselves; and many other questions, which would turn up in Committee, no doubt, would be fully discussed? He was pleased to think that seamen were now put, at all events, on the first round of the ladder; and he was glad to think that the present Government had given the interpretation which had been announced to the clause in the Bill dealing with seamen. He trusted, however, that the provision would have its scope enlarged in Committee. He should like to ask the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) what position sub-contractors would hold under this Bill? He was not a lawyer, and did not pretend to understand the point himself; but he was told that a colliery owner would be in exactly a similar position to a contractor who contracted to build a house—say, for a Member of Parliament—but he (Mr. Pickard) failed to see, in reading the various sub-sections of the clause, that a colliery owner would be held responsible for the action of a sub-contractor. So far as he understood it, it meant this—that a colliery owner let his colliery to a contractor; that contractor sub-let the work to another contractor; and that that sub-contractor would be the only person that could be held responsible under the Bill. He trusted that the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department in his reply would put that matter straight, and tell him whether or not he was right in his conjecture. In Yorkshire, in a great many instances, the men found their own materials to carry on their trade—their picks, shovels, and all their other tools to carry on their work, and were said to be "in charge" of certain "working places." He trusted the question of sub-contracting would be clearly explained, so that they would be alive to the fact that every man in a pit who received an injury in the mine, whether under the contractor or sub-contractor, would receive compensation for injury. He desired, then, to emphasize this point—that when the Bill left this House it should go, not to the Grand Committee on Trade, but to the Grand Committee on Law. He hoped the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State would take that into consideration, and that, so far as he was concerned, the House would have a pledge from him that the Bill should go to the Committee he (Mr. Pickard) suggested. He would conclude his remarks on the measure at this point, because there would be little time left for other hon. Members who might desire to speak before 7 o'clock.

MR. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland) said, he would not detain the House for more than two minutes; but one argument had been used by the hon. and learned Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), and by other hon. Members, to which he thought a very practical answer could be given. He fully reciprocated the views of the hon. and learned Member for Preston when he said that this legislation should be, and was designed, to promote good feeling between masters and men, and should not, in any way, accentuate difficulties or disagreement; but for that reason he (Mr. Paulton) entirely disagreed with the hon. and learned Member as to the question of contracting out of the Act. He thought there could be no question that there was more friction produced by the desire of the employers, in many cases, to make their men contract out of the Act than by anything to the contrary. Take the case of Durham alone. He would not have ventured to intrude even for two minutes on the House if it had not been that this Bill was of the greatest possible importance to his constituents. He could safely say that the view of his constituents, and he believed of all the Durham miners, was against contracting out of the Act. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Normanton Division of York (Mr. Pickard) had said the same thing as to Yorkshire. The hon. and learned Member for Preston had stated that in Lancashire employers and men very largely contracted out of the Act, and that it saved a great deal of litigation, and prevented a great deal of difficulty; but his experience went directly to the contrary. He believed there had not been a single case in Durham under the Act. The men absolutely refused to contract out of it. They had always done so, and yet there had been no litigation whatever. He ventured to say that nowhere was there a better feeling amongst owners and men than there was in Durham. With regard to insurance, it was stated before the Select Committee that in 1878, before the passing of the Act, the contributions towards the Durham Miners Permanent Relief Fund were £39,000 from the men and £5,000 from the masters; and that in 1885—five years after the passing of the Act—the contributions from the men had risen to £61,000, whilst the contributions from the masters had fallen to £4,000. He (Mr. Paulton) thought that was a tolerably strong argument to show that the men want security rather than compensation; but the only point he had risen to emphasize was the fact that to do away with contracting out of the Act would not in any way increase litigation or ill-feeling between owners and men.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, that at that hour he would only refer to a single point, and that was the clause requiring notice to be given, inserted in the Act of 1880, and so unhappily continued in the present Bill. It had been pointed out that this requirement of notice, with all its attendant formalities, was a terrible pitfall to an honest complainant; whilst, on the other hand, it had not been shown that it provided any protection to the employer against bogus complaints. On this point he fortified himself behind the authority of Mr. Ruegg, a barrister of exceptional experience in litigation of this kind, who had usually been instructed on behalf of employers, and not on behalf of the men; and this gentleman, before the Select Committee, expressed a very strong opinion that these requirements were unnecessary. He should like to see the notice done away with altogether. He was quite aware that the Committee which sat last year did not go that length; but it did propose that the absence of notice should not be fatal, if the claimant could satisfy the Court that there was a reasonable excuse for his failure to comply with the requirement of the Act in this respect. Therefore, if they were not to get rid of the notice altogether, that, he submitted, would be a fair compromise. But, unfortunately, the Bill was not confined to carrying out the recommendations of the Select Committee; but it imposed a second condition besides a reasonable excuse on the part of the plaintiff, that other condition that the defendant should not have been prejudiced in his defence. Now, he thought that this second condition might operate very unfairly and oppressively; and he would tell the House, in illustration of this, something which had happened in a particular case. Suppose a man met with a terrible accident, was picked up in a mutilated condition and carried off to hospital, and was unable to move hand or foot for three months; suppose that while he was lying helpless there was no one to give notice on his behalf. There could be no doubt that, in these circumstances, a Court would hold that there was reasonable excuse on the part of the plaintiff. But was such a man to be deprived of all claim to compensation because the defendant came into Court and said that he had been prejudiced because, owing to the absence of notice, he had not been able to trace, and, therefore, unable to call, a witness whom he alleged was a material witness on his behalf? He (Mr. Pickersgill) thought that in such a case as he had described the absolute impossibility of giving notice ought to over-ride the prejudice, if any was suggested by the defendant. But, bad as the requirement of notice was in all cases, it became absolutely monstrous in the cases provided for by the 11th clause of this Bill. What did that clause do? Men had a right existing at Common Law at the present time; but the Bill said that the man who had that Common Law right should in the future be debarred from the opportunity of pursuing his remedy in the course prescribed by the Common Law, and should bring his action only in the manner which was prescribed by this Bill. He was afraid that the requirement of notice would prove a pitfall to many a man who was injured.

MR. ERNEST SPENCER (West Bromwich) said, that as he had the honour to represent a large manufacturing constituency, he desired to express his approval both of the scope and methods of the Bill. He quite agreed that where an employer delegated his authority he should be responsible, and he understood that delegation was one of the chief principles of the Bill. He would, however, prefer to see the delegation defined in a way sufficiently clear to make the Bill work in an unmistakable manner. From the 1st clause, Sub-section (b), one would suppose the employer was only responsible for the *laches* of himself, or some person to whom he had delegated his authority; but Sub-section (c) went much further than that, for it made the employer responsible for the negligence of any person in his service whose orders or directions the workman at the time of the injury was bound to conform to. He was afraid this would prove most confusing, for it clearly abandoned the principle of delegation. For example, take the two cases of a blacksmith and his striker, and a bricklayer and his assistant. In both of those cases the second workman was clearly under the orders of the other, and bound to obey those orders; and yet there was not what could be termed a delegation of authority by the employer except as it were of an involuntary nature, and resulted rather from the customs and necessities of the trade than from any special authority of which the employer had divested himself. He had no wish to detain the House, and upon the question of notice he would simply say he was perfectly in sympathy with working men having every opportunity of bringing their actions under the Bill; but, at the same time, he thought, considering the surrounding circumstances and the migratory habits of many workmen, there should be some notice of action required.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 31st May.

MR. FENWICK said, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury whether he was now in a position to say to what Committee he was prepared to send the Bill—whether it was the Committee on Law, the Committee on Trade, or the Committee of the Whole House?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he stated last night that when the House reassembled after the holidays he would state to what Committee the Government proposed to refer the Bill. He was afraid it would not be possible to take the Bill in Committee of the Whole House with advantage to the measure itself; and he also said that the Government had no prejudice as to which of the two Grand Committees it should be sent. They would endeavour to gather the opinions of hon. Gentlemen who were interested in the question, and the opinion of the House generally, and they would propose such arrangements as they thought, on the whole, would meet the views of those most deeply interested.

MOTIONS.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 8) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Boroughs of Aberystwyth and Leeds, the Hartlepool Joint Hospital District, the Improvement Act District of Lytham, and the Local Government Districts of Normanby, Openshaw, and Oswaldtwistle, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 271.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (POOR LAW) (NO. 7) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Poor Law Amendment Act, 1867," as amended by "The Poor Law Amendment Act, 1868," and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the Parish of Saint Mary Abbotts, Kensington, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 272.]

House adjourned at five minutes after Six o'clock till Thursday 31st May.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 31*st May,* 1888.

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee* — Civil Service Estimates; Class I. — Public Works and Buildings, Vote 7; Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments, Vote 5

Resolutions [May 17] *reported.*

Public Bills — *Ordered — First Reading* — Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Factory* [273].

Committee—Reformatory Schools Act (1866) Amendment [161]—r.p.; Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment [233]—r.p.

Provisional Order Bills—*Second Reading*—Gas and Water* [247]; Gas (No. 1)* [244]; Gas (No. 2)* [245]; Tramways (No. 2)* [242]; Water (No. 2)* [246].

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (IMPRISONMENT OF MR. CONDON).

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following Letter, relating to the Imprisonment of a Member of this House:—

"Mitchelstown,
Co. Cork, Ireland,
Sir, 21st May, 1888.

I have the honor to inform you that Mr. Thos. Condon, M.P., has been tried and convicted of an offence under the 2nd section of 'The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887,' and sentenced on this date to one calendar month's imprisonment without hard labour in the County Gaol at Cork, by a Court of Summary Jurisdiction constituted under the said Act, of which I was Chairman.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
J. B. Irwin,
Residt. Magistrate.

The Right Honble. The Speaker,
House of Commons, London."

QUESTIONS.

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PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND)—ALLEGED REFUSAL OF A PUBLIC HALL AT NEWTOWNARDS TO MR. JOHN DILLON.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, immediately preceding the visit of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) to Newtownards at the end of April, the District Inspector and Head Constable of Police visited the proprietress of the Ulster Hotel, and urged her not to let the hall on her premises (in which the farmers of the district usually hold their meetings) for any meeting at which the hon. Member was to be present; and, whether, on the meeting of the farmers of the district addressed by the hon. Member being held elsewhere, constables were posted at the entrance to the room, and what was the object of this proceeding?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, that the District Inspector at Newtownards answered all the paragraphs of the Question in the negative.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — IMPRISONMENT OF MR. THOMAS MORONEY, OF HERBERTSTOWN, FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, as Thomas Moroney, of Herbertstown, has now been imprisoned since the 21st of January, 1887, for "contempt of Court"—namely, for "refusing to be sworn," and his mental condition is described officially as "indifferent" (Return, No. 110), he will submit the case to the Lord Lieutenant, with a view to the exercise of Her Majesty's clemency?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): As has been already explained in reply to previous Questions, Moroney was committed for refusing to be sworn in the Court of Bankruptcy in reference to certain moneys concealed by him. The Government have no power to interfere in the matter. It has always been, and is still, open to Moroney to obtain his immediate release from prison by submitting himself to be sworn.

MR. J. E. ELLIS asked, if the right hon. Gentleman wished to convey to the House that he had no power to suggest to the Lord Lieutenant to exercise his clemency in the case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that was so.

BURMAH — THE IRRAWADDY FLOTILLA COMPANY AND THE STAMP DUTIES.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company are allowed to issue shipping orders and mates' receipts on bills of lading unstamped; whether the Stamp Laws are strictly enforced against Natives in Burmah; why any exemption is accorded to the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company; and, whether he can now reply as to the Return asked for more than two months since, and on which the Secretary of State promised to consult the Government of India—namely, a Return showing the amounts paid during the past three years by the Government of India to the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company, showing in what respect, at what rates, under what conditions, and for what services such moneys have been paid?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State has received a telegram from the Government of India to the effect that there is no difference in regard to exemption from Stamp Duties between the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company and other firms or persons, European or Native; but the Chief Commissioner reports that the Company are endeavouring to escape the Stamp Duty by substituting mates' receipts for bills of lading. The matter is under the consideration of the Chief Commissioner and the Law Officers. The Stamp Laws are not in full force in Upper Burmah, but exemptions apply to all parties alike. As regards the General Return, I must point out that it involves the close examination of a war expenditure of two years, and has necessarily taken time. But the Secretary of State has reason to believe that the Return is practically completed, and will shortly be sent home.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — LODGING AND MAINTENANCE OF CROWN WITNESSES.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact, as sworn by Cullinane, the Crown witness in the Lisdoonvarna

Moonlighting case, that he and others had been kept in the pay of the police, and housed and maintained in a certain house in or near the Ballybough Road, Dublin ; whether he can state the cost of maintaining such lodging house, and whether it is accounted for under any, and which, head of the Irish Votes; and, whether he will state the number of Crown witneses who have been thus housed and maintained during the last three years, and whether any, and which, of them have been convicted of any, and what, offences?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Deputy Inspector General of Constabulary reports that the Crown witness referred to was housed and maintained for one night at the Crown witness depôt at Clontarf. The cost of maintenance of this house was for the past financial year £161. It is a charge against the Vote for Public Buildings (Ireland). Thirty-one Crown witnesses, together with 17 members of their families, were housed and maintained at different times during the last three years. No records are kept at the witness depôt which would furnish a reply to the concluding portion of the Question.

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER — ST. STEPHEN'S CHAPEL — VISITATION BY MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE AND FRIENDS.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether, seeing that the entrance to the St. Stephen's Chapel is through the Members' Cloak Room, there is any reason why hon. Members and their friends should not have the privilege of visiting and showing to their friends this interesting and beautiful portion of the Parliament House; and, whether he will make arrangements to enable them to do so?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University), in reply, said, that he had been informed by the Home Secretary that, after consultation with the Police Authorities, he saw no objection to Members and their friends passing through the Members' Cloak Room to St. Stephen's Chapel. The same Regulations would be put in force as formerly — namely, that application should be made by Members to Mr. Cole, an officer of the House stationed in the Cloak Room, for the key of the gate leading to the crypt; but as regarded entrance into the crypt, the party would have to be attended by an officer of the House.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY FOR INJURIES TO WORKMEN BILL.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampon) asked, If the Government had decided to what Grand Committee the Employers' Liability Bill should be sent?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, he had not yet been able to consult his Colleagues on the point referred to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND) SUPERVISION OF THE BALLINASLOE BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it was true that the Ballinasloe Board of Guardians had been superseded by the Irish Local Government Board ; and, if so, upon what grounds?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, it was true that the Board of Guardians referred to had been superseded by vice-Guardians appointed by the Local Government Board. Speaking without Notice, he could only say that the Guardians were superseded because they had shown themselves unfit for the discharge of their duties; but if the hon. Gentleman would put a Question on the Paper, he should be happy to get fuller particulars.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—CASES OF ASSAULT ON THE PUBLIC—THE RETURN.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) inquired, When the Return he had asked for, with regard to the number of police assaults in the Metropolis, would be ready for delivery?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam), in reply, said, he hoped it would shortly be laid on the Table; but, having received no Notice of the

Question, he could not definitely state when.

Mr. BRADLAUGH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, whether the Police Vote would be taken before the Return was laid on the Table? It would be impossible to adequately discuss the Vote without the Return.

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, that he could not answer the Question then; but he might be able to do so later in the evening.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that he had given Notice for the Return early before the Recess; and if he did not get an answer, he should delay the Police Vote by every means in his power.

AUSTRALIA—NEW SOUTH WALES—CHINESE IMMIGRANTS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government are now in a position to furnish any further information respecting the negotiations with China relative to the action of the Australian Governments in restricting the immigration of Chinese; has he any objection to lay on the Table of the House a copy of the despatch of the Envoy of China to Lord Salisbury, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the reply of the Prime Ministers of New South Wales and Victoria to that document; is he aware that that correspondence has already been printed and published by the Australasian Governments; and is the correspondence between the Australian Governments and the Home Government conducted through the Agents General of the several Colonies, or direct between the Foreign and Colonial Offices and the Governors of those Colonies?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): The Correspondence on this subject is being printed, and will shortly be presented. In the meantime it is not expedient to publish portions of it. I am not aware that some portions have already been published in Australia, but it is very probable. I am informed that the correspondence with the Australian Governments is conducted in the usual way—that is to say, between the Secretary of State and the Governors.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Mr. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) asked, When the Government proposed to move the Speaker out of the Chair on the Local Government Bill; and, whether they proposed to proceed with the Bill *de die in diem.*

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to ask the House to go into Committee on the Local Government Bill on Thursday next, and when in Committee the Government proposed to proceed with the Bill on Government days—namely, Mondays and Thursdays, subject to the demands of Supply—and also on Tuesdays and Fridays at Morning Sittings.

Mr. HERBERT GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked, when the Government proposed to proceed with the Tithes Bill?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, the Local Government Bill must, for the present, take precedence of all other measures of the Session.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) asked, what the Business would be on Monday, and whether it would include the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill or any other Irish Business?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, the first Order would be the Resolution with regard to Imperial Defence, and the second Order would be the National Defence Bill, which, he presumed, would only occupy two or three minutes. Then advantage would be taken of the occasion to move for the introduction of three Drainage Bills for Ireland relating to the Bann, the Barrow, and the Shannon, which, he thought, were not likely to meet with any opposition from Irish Members, and after that the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill would be taken.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolution [17th May] *reported.*

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he wished to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) to the manner in which the Ballinasloe Board of Guardians had been treated by the Local Government Board in Dublin. The Board of Guardians seemed in some way to have incurred the disapprobation of the Local Government Board, who had declared them incapable of discharging their duties, and had superseded them by paid officials. This was a very serious step for a large Government Department to take, and could only be justified in a case of extreme necessity and on good cause being shown. The action of the Local Government Board might or might not be justifiable in the present case; but it was a strong thing to ask the House to pass a Vote on Account, which, if granted, would enable the Local Government Board to go on without any further Vote until the fag end of the Session, when any practical discussion in regard to the proceedings of the Irish Local Government Board could scarcely be hoped for. Under these circumstances, he would move that the Vote which had just been put from the Chair should be reduced by a sum of £10,000 on account of the Local Government Board in Ireland. It was, however, a Motion which, of course, he should not press if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary could show that there was substantial grounds for the serious action taken by the Local Government Board in reference to the Guardians of the Ballinasloe Union.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£4,205,300," in order to insert "£4,195,300,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That '£4,205,300' stand part of the Resolution."

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.) said, the hon. Gentleman was, no doubt, entirely within his right in raising the question; but he was sorry the hon. Gentleman had not given him Notice of his intention to do so.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that he had had no opportunity.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that if the hon. Gentleman had communicated with him by note he would have been able to come down to the House prepared to deal with the matter; whereas, being unprepared, he was unable to give any information except in the most general way. What had occurred in regard to the Ballinasloe Board of Guardians was this. The Union had been, for a long time, distinguished for disorderly conduct, and remonstrances had been addressed to them by the Local Government Board, but no improvement took place. On the contrary, the Ballinasloe Board repeated their offence, under aggravated circumstances. The hon. Gentleman would be aware that by Statute not only the right, but the duty was conferred on the Local Government Board of seeing that Boards of Guardians discharged their functions; and there was no choice in the present case but to take the step which had been taken. It was with very great reluctance that the Local Government Board had felt themselves obliged to supersede the Ballinasloe Board, and to substitute for them paid Guardians. He would be happy to-morrow to give full and detailed account of all that had taken place, so far as he could within the limits of an answer to a Question; but, at the present moment, he was afraid he could not give the House any more complete information than that which he had given.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was unable to give the House more complete information in regard to the supersession of the Ballinasloe Board of Guardians. He thought the House ought to have something more than vague generalities as to the disagreements which had occurred — some of them attended, he was given to understand, by acts of personal violence. He had, however, been reading newspapers in this country which gave accounts of the proceedings at Vestry meetings and others which were set up as the morals of what local government should be in Ireland. He found that scenes quite as disorderly occurred in some of them as those which had taken place in Ireland. In fact, the Government were in the habit of using the telescope from different ends, and in viewing matters in Ireland and in England they minimized English affairs and magnified whatever might take place in the way of disorder in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had made a very lame excuse for the action of the Local Government Board. He (Mr. E. Harrington) could say, from experience of what the Local Government Board was doing in reference to the Boards of Guardians in Ireland, that it was within his knowledge that the grossest partiality was practised. Wherever there was a popular Board, the Local Government Board were ready to come down on them on the slightest dereliction of duty; whereas grave scandals were not only permitted, but fostered with reference to other Boards which did not represent the popular majority. He might mention the case of a man who had recently received an appointment in connection with the Listowel Union. This man, because he was supposed to belong to the popular Party, had his previous record inquired into, and it was found that some years ago, when he held a public-house licence, he had been convicted for an illegal sale of liquor, and on that account the Irish Board of Guardians refused to ratify the appointment, and by so doing got rid of one whom they looked upon as an opponent. In another case a man held the position of clerk of a Union; he went drunk to the office every day, and there were even more gross charges against him. It was only, however, when he stayed away altogether from his business, that the Local Government Board consented to dismiss him. He maintained that the action of the Board in Ireland was simply an illustration of the way in which the government of that country was carried on generally, and in order to render the job more perfect it was now proposed to place the Parliamentary Under Secretary at the head of the Board. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary shook his head; but he wished to know whether the Licensing Clauses of the Local Government Bill would not have that effect? Was he to understand that by a shake of the head the right hon. Gentleman desired to convey to the House that all idea of placing the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland at the head of the Local Government Board had been abandoned? At the present moment the right hon. Gentleman was himself at the head of the Board, and was responsible for those things which the Irish Members had complained of from time to time. If the Ballinasloe Board of Guardians had been guilty of any misappropriation of funds, or of serious neglect of duty, how was it that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was not able to come down to the House with facts? The right hon. Gentleman had not stated a single charge against the Board, although it was quite possible that, on behalf of the Local Government Board of which he was the head, he had signed the order for superseding the Ballinasloe Board. Nevertheless, although the Local Government Board superseded this Board of Guardians, the Head of the Irish Office was unable to give one tittle of information as to the reason. It was well known to the people of Ireland that the grossest scandals could be carried on in Ireland as long as they were confined to one Party, whereas the slightest slip on the other side was visited with the direst punishment. The right hon. Gentleman had been pleased to say that to-morrow he would give ample information to the House, although he limited the offer by saying "such information as could be conveyed within the limits of an answer to a Question." They knew very well what the character of the answers given by the right hon. Gentleman to Questions was. The right hon. Gentleman invariably attempted to score from the Irish Members every time they asked a Question. Whenever they spoke about the maladministration of Irish affairs, the right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to make them look as ridiculous as possible. The right hon. Gentleman had promised the hon Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) to give detailed information to-morrow; but he (Mr. E. Harrington) failed to see why he had not come down to the House that day in full possession of all the facts of the case. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would give directions for an ample search to be made, so that the House should be informed why these Boards of Guardians had been superseded, and why paid Guardians had been appointed. The appointment of paid Guardians would saddle the unfortunate ratepayers of the Union with the sum of £1,000 a-year. It was all very well to say that the Irish Members were constantly raising imaginary grievances because they were Representatives of a popular Party; but there was this question of £1,000 a-year which the poor people of the locality would have to pay. It was important that the whole facts of the matter should be laid before the House, in order that hon. Members might be able to arrive at a correct and distinct opinion as to whether the Local Government Board had been within their right in superseding the Ballinasloe Board of Guardians.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) said, the hon. Member for East Donegal owed no apology to the House for having raised this question, because there was reason to suspect that the Local Government Board were determined to discredit and discourage Local Boards in Ireland. There were some 276 Boards of Guardians in Ireland, and in no instance had one of them been dissolved until recent years on account of the maladministration of its affairs. A change seemed now to have come over the spirit of the dream of the Local Government Board. Only a very short time ago a Board of Guardians in the county of Wicklow was dissolved because it insisted on the free exercise of its powers. There was no occasion on which an hon. Member rose in that House to maintain that the Irish people were unfit to carry on the local government of their own country when the action of the Boards of Guardians was not cited. A few days ago he had risen in his place in that House to defend a Board of Guardians which he had the honour to represent. On investigating the matter, he found that the Board of Guardians in question managed its business so well that it had reduced the expenditure of the Union per head, and largely reduced the amount of rates imposed on the people. The only thing that could be brought against the Board was that there was a large outstanding debt which it was impossible to collect owing to the state of the country. So long as Members of the National Party had seats in that House it would be their duty to regard with great jealousy the character and the action of the Local Government Board in Ireland in reference to the Boards of Guardians. So far as the Ballinasloe Union was concerned, there had undoubtedly been disgraceful scenes there. He had read of some of them himself, and he regretted them exceedingly; but he protested against the course pursued by the Government. He also regretted the ignorance of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in the matter. If the right hon. Gentleman attended properly to the duties of his Office, he ought to have had at his fingers' ends all the information necessary for the satisfaction of Members who might question him on the subject. Not only was it the duty of the House to regard with jealousy the character of the administration of Irish affairs by the Local Government Board, but it was their duty also to protest against the representatives of the people being superseded and removed in an autocratic manner by an irresponsible Board, at the head of which stood the right hon. Gentlemen himself—a right hon. Gentleman who was supposed to know everything, but who was actually ignorant of the orders given by the Board over which he presided. He was glad that his hon. Friend had raised the question, and he trusted that he would press it to a Division, in order that it might have the effect, at any rate, of imposing some check upon the arbitrary exercise of the power of the Local Government Board. No doubt in the past there were many jobs perpetrated by Local Boards, but at present the Boards of Guardians were performing their duty well. If they were in difficulties it was not their fault, but it was owing to the circumstances of the case. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would take warning and seek some other means of rectifying any error that might arise in the administration of affairs. He (Mr. J. O'Connor) had had some experience of the administration of affairs in Ireland, having been a member of Councils and Boards, and he knew how carefully those who were elected to such responsible positions performed their duty. For that reason he felt it right to support his hon. Friend in resenting the indignity put by the Local Government Board upon the Ballinasloe Union, and he should vote for the Motion his hon. Friend had moved, with a view of impressing upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary the necessity of being firm in the exercise of his powers, and of warning those who were engaged in the administration of the law under him that it was their duty to be careful also. He sincerely hoped that his hon. Friend would carry the Motion to a Division, unless the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary rose again in his place and promised to investigate the matter closely in order to see whether the grievances complained of could be remedied, and whether the people, who were already much overtaxed, should have their money squandered by the appointment of paid officials.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £4,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Extension of Admiralty Buildings."

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) said, he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) would not press this Vote at present, in the absence of a large number of Members who took great interest in the question. He thought it was desirable that the House of Commons should carefully consider the course upon which it was now asked to embark. Last year the House resolved that a Select Committee should be appointed to reconsider the plans and proposals for an Admiralty and War Office, and it was ordered—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee to report whether some or all of the existing buildings of the Admiralty may with advantage be retained." — (3 *Hansard,* [311] 1361.)

That Resolution of the House of Commons was referred to a Committee consisting of 17 Members, and that Committee had now made an extremely lame Report. What did the Report say? It said, in the first place—

"That the want of sufficient space in the Admiralty and War Office, respectively, for all their Departments, has long been a source of inconvenience to the Public Service, and the practice, which has been already frequently condemned by Parliamentary Committees of hiring houses for the purpose of providing the additional accommodation required, is shown to be most unsatisfactory on grounds both of efficiency and economy."

With the exception of the right hon. Gentleman the present First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), there had hardly been any difference of opinion upon this point among successive First Lords of the Admiralty. It was almost universally agreed that it would be desirable, if possible, to unite under one roof the War Office and the Admiralty Departments, not only for purposes of communication, but also because this contiguity would lead to many economies. That opinion was shared by persons who had had considerable experience in the Public Service. The Committee recommended—

"With a view to remedying these evils, the Government in 1882 acquired a site to the west of Charing Cross and Parliament Street—known as the Spring Gardens site—for the purpose of erecting there a new Admiralty and War Office; and in 1884 designs for the proposed buildings, prepared by Messrs. Leeming and Leeming, architects, of Halifax, were, as the result of public competition, selected. The execution of those designs involved the demolition of the present Admiralty, and all the other offices and houses standing on the Spring Gardens site. Upon the land thus cleared Messrs. Leeming and Leeming proposed to erect a lofty stone structure, capable of containing under one roof all the Departments both of the Admiralty and War Office. The edifice was to be of an elaborate and ornate character, and was estimated to cost £700,000. It was further proposed to divide the building into two blocks, one of which should be finished in four years, and the whole within 10 years."

Nevertheless, in paragraph 5 of the Report it would be seen that the Committee came to an entirely different decision, although they did not state the reasons which had induced them to come to a different conclusion. They said—

"It is not necessary for us to express any opinion upon these controversies, because we have come to the conclusion that, apart from any question of architectural merit or demerit, the scheme should be abandoned. We are satisfied that, by making additions to the present Admiralty, all the requirements of that Department may be suitably provided for; that this work, including some repairs and improvements to the existing building, can be done at a moderate cost, and may be completed within two or, at most, three years; that a very large reduction of expense for buildings would thus be secured, and to this must be added, as against the cost of erecting a new War Office, the value, estimated at £266,000, of the portions of the Spring Gardens site which would be preserved, after providing for the suggested additions to the Admiralty, and for the opening of the Mall into Charing Cross. We, therefore, recommend that the entire official staff of the Admiralty and War Office respectively should each, as soon as possible, be placed under one roof; and that the two buildings should be situated at no great distance from each other."

If they were to be under one roof, it was hardly possible that the two buildings could be situated at a distance from each other. It would be necessary that there should be a separate building for each Department, and he failed to see how two separate buildings could be under one roof. That, however, was a matter for the right hon. Gentleman to explain. The Committee went on to say—

> "But we are of opinion that these recommendations can be carried out, and that a great saving of money and time can be secured, by adopting other plans instead of those which have been referred to us for consideration; and we find that the main buildings of the Admiralty may, with advantage, be retained. We further recommend that steps should be at once taken to insure greater economy and efficiency by bringing the clerks of each Department to work together in greater numbers, and in fewer rooms, and that the estimate of accommodation required for the staffs of the two Offices should be based upon such rearrangements."

That was the substance of the Report, and he (Sir Julian Goldsmid) had read all the material points contained in it. He thought hon. Members would see that the information supplied to Parliament was very bald. It was now proposed that the existing Admiralty building should be left standing and that an addition should be built; but this addition would be larger than the existing building. No information was given by the Committee in regard to the War Office. The Admiralty contained, for the purposes of the Department, a space of 28,000 superficial feet, and the addition it was proposed to make to it would cover 70,000 superficial feet. Was there any advantage, from a public point of view, in arriving at this decision? Every First Lord of the Admiralty and every public official had told them, over and over again, that the existing building was entirely unsuited for the purposes to which it was put. The rooms were dark, and the ventilation extremely bad, and altogether the building was wholly unfit for the work of the Department. The result was that Parliament was asked to retain this unsuitable building, which would require very great alteration, and to erect another and a larger building as well. He now came to the point whether the existing building was capable of alteration, and what would be the result of altering it. The late Sir James Pennethorne, in 1855, presented a Report on the main building of the Admiralty with reference to the proposed construction of an attic storey upon it. Sir James Pennethorne was a high authority, and his opinion could be entirely relied upon. In his Report he said—

> "The building may be described as resting altogether upon a timber platform or raft; the first layer consists of 4-inch oak planks, 3 feet wider than the brickwork above, upon which rest oak sleepers about 9 inches by 9 inches. The planks under the external walls are about 5 feet 6 inches below the basement floor, and those under the interior walls about 4 feet by 6 inches, except one of the main cross walls from west to east, near the south end of the building (in the line of an old main sewer), where they are about 11 feet deep. All these timbers that have been seen are sound. All the walls are unusually strong, the external being 4 feet 6 inches thick above the footings, and the work extremely well done. The whole building, therefore, would have been perfectly sound and substantial; but, unfortunately, the timber platform appears to rest upon a bed of river deposit 6 or 7 feet thick, which is soft and full of water, the consequence of which is that it has settled more or less in every part, except the cross wall from west to east before referred to."

It was perfectly obvious that any attempt to alter a building raised on such a platform was likely to cause subsidence in a very short time and other structural disturbance. He had recently consulted one high authority as to whether it would be necessary to excavate far below the present building for the purpose of making the very large addition to the Admiralty which the Committee recommended, and he was told that it would, and that the excavation would cause the water to escape into the hole thus made, and that a considerable quantity of water would be removed from beneath the platform on which the Admiralty was built. If that were so—and he was assured on all hands that it would be the case—the result might be dangerous. The consequence was that for the purpose of keeping a building which only contained 28,000 superficial feet, it would be necessary to make arrangements which were admitted by everyone to be of the most unsatisfactory character. It was said that if the proposal were carried out there would be an economy effected to the amount of £200,000. Now he had always found that calculations in regard to economy were very erroneous. In the first place, the amount of economy must depend greatly on the value of the surplus land. In this case he did not believe that the Government would be able to sell the surplus land—for two reasons. In the first place, a great part of it would consist of back land removed from the main thoroughfares; and, in the second place, the Government would hardly be justified in selling land which they would probably have to repurchase later at advanced terms. That was a still larger question. The Committee told them—in the Report to which he referred—that it was desirable that these two Offices, the Admiralty and the War Office, should be under one roof, or contained in a contiguous building. But in this case there seemed to be a possibility of having the War Office on the other side of Whitehall. Now, it was perfectly obvious that the area on the Admiralty site, as it was called, was amply sufficient for the purposes of both Departments, and it would not be an economy, but an extravagance, to take two sites where only one was necessary. If they were to build a War Office on the other side, instead of effecting an economy to the extent of £160,000, he was afraid that it would be found that the account would stand entirely the other way, and that they would be guilty of the most extravagant and wasteful expenditure which had taken place for a long time. It must not be supposed that in the remarks he was making he was addressing the Committee in support of the plan of Messrs. Leeming. His only desire was to secure the proper utilization of the area already in the possession of the Government. It would be extravagant to utilize it simply for the purposes of the Admiralty, and he believed there were architects in England who were able to prepare a plan by which the site would be devoted to provide suitable accommodation for the two Departments of the Government that were concerned. Of course, the figures submitted by Messrs. Leeming and other architects were erroneous, because they were all based on the assumption that the building would be erected on the existing site. At the time their plans were prepared it was not deemed probable that any attempt would be made to commit the extravagance of covering the site with a building which was only to be used by the Admiralty. The noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) was well aware of the requirements of the Service, and must know that great economy in regard to space could be effected by placing a certain number of clerks in the same room, as was done largely in other Departments. He was of opinion that that principle might be extended much further. All the facts went to show that it was not desirable for the requirements of one Public Department only to cover so large an extent of ground. He could only assume that the object the Committee had in view was to save the old building, which, however, was worth very little for the Public Service. Its retention was hardly desirable, as it probably would not last long. He, therefore, hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would reconsider the matter and submit some new proposal to Parliament. This might be done by the appointment of a Departmental Committee, or in any other way that was deemed desirable. All such a Committee would have to do would be to consider whether it would not be advantageous to do what was originally intended—namely, to utilize the existing site for the purposes of these two great Public Departments. He was satisfied that it would be the most economical course, and he asked the right hon. Gentleman to exercise his ability in accomplishing that object. He had only risen for the purpose of drawing attention to one or two salient points in the matter, because, after this sum of £5,000 had been voted, the Committee would be precluded from raising the question. He, therefore, trusted that, at any rate, the Government would see their way to postponing the matter, and, in order to insure discussion, he would move the rejection of the Vote.

Mr. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he had listened attentively to the speech of the hon. Baronet the Member for South St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid), and, having carefully examined the plans of the proposed buildings, he felt bound to say that he could not concur with the views expressed by the hon. Baronet. On the contrary, he congratulated the Government upon having for once, in the matter of public buildings, done a very wise and prudent thing. The hon. Baronet said that calculations, even of economy, often proved erroneous. That was quite true, especially in the case of public buildings; but it would be very easy indeed to show that the course suggested by the hon. Baronet would not promote economy, because, apparently, his object was to secure that the present Admiralty building should be entirely pulled down. That Admiralty building the hon. Baronet described as paltry and poor; but that was not the opinion of most of those who had been accustomed to see it.

Sir GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): The remark applied to the interior of the building.

Mr. ADDISON said, he had been inside the edifice, and, as far as he knew and could judge, it was a very good building inside. Designed by Adams, it was a building which anybody who looked at it would describe as simple, stately, and effective. They were told that it covered 28,000 square feet, and to threaten with destruction a building which was sufficient for the purposes of the Admiralty, and, looked at from outside, was one of the features of London architecture, would not be true economy. It was proposed to add to the existing building, and anybody who looked at the plans would see that they were simple and effective as far as elevation was concerned. It seemed, however, that there was a natural desire in the Architectural Profession to make a clean sweep of the whole thing, and erect one of those great buildings, such as the Law Courts, of which he had had considerable experience, and of which there were already too many in London. It was suggested that the Government might not be able to sell the surplus land, seeing that it was back land. He was very glad to hear that that was likely to be the case; and he was sure most hon. Members would agree with him when he said that it was very much to the advantage of the public to preserve every open space and piece of surplus land which could be obtained in this particular locality. Instead of being a disadvantage, that was one of the points which, to his mind, told in favour of the new design. It was not desirable to have one of those enormous buildings which they saw about St. James's Park; and what struck him most in favour of the new designs was that they presented a handsome and pleasing elevation which, while not crushing the Horse Guards, admitted some air and some light to get into St. James's Park. It was impossible to look at the space now covered by other Public Offices in the neighbourhood of Whitehall without seeing that it would have been much better to have erected the buildings under some such design as that which was now submitted. He certainly saw no reason why they should pull down the existing Admiralty so long as it was a good and effective building, fully adequate to the performance of the services for which it was required. He would not suggest for a moment that the plans now submitted to the House were opposed to the interests of any particular architect; but, for his own part, he supported them because he objected to the idea of continuing the erection of large, enormous, and often most inconvenient buildings.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, that in rising to enter his protest against the scheme now before the House, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket), who had proposed it, that it was with great regret he found himself unable to support him in any scheme for the improvement of London which he might propose. He had never thought it worth while to make a Party question of any matters affecting the Department. When he held the post of First Commissioner of Works he knew the great danger which arose from treating matters of this kind in a Party spirit, and he believed that that was the reason why so many defects had found their way into our public buildings. He had always endeavoured to obtain the co-operation of those who sat opposite in the many schemes which it fell to him to propose, and he would willingly co-operate with the right hon. Gentleman in any scheme for the improvement of our public buildings. He would also assure the right hon. Gentleman that he was not actuated by any feeling of retrospective regret for the scheme for which he was responsible for dealing with the Admiralty and War Office—a scheme which had the approval of the last Parliament, but which was rejected by the Committee appointed last year. He did not think it necessary to enter into the merits of that scheme. If it were at all necessary, he should be prepared to defend it; but he must admit that it was dead. It was killed by a combination of opponents, some of whom thought it too expensive, while others considered it not expensive enough, and others also objected to the style of architecture of Messrs. Leeming's original building. As he had said, he thought it a good scheme, and he was quite prepared to defend it; but he admitted that it was now dead. He did not think the scheme received quite a fair consideration from the Committee, especially in its financial aspects; but that was past and gone, and it was of no use to revive past controversies. They had now to consider another scheme, and whether the plan now before them was on its own merits a good one, and one which would be a credit to the Government and the Metropolis. Upon that point he had been obliged to come to an adverse opinion. In the first place, he might observe that it came before them without any professional authority whatever. It did not appear to him that there was any professional opinion in favour of it. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman opposite to say whether he could produce a single professional man of high repute who had expressed himself in favour of the scheme. His impression was that the right hon. Gentleman would not find it possible to produce a single authority on architectural questions who would approve of it. There was no one who would say that the scheme was a good one, architecturally or financially, and one that ought to be carried out. It had been condemned by the Institute of Architects, he believed, unanimously, and he had received communications personally from several distinguished architects who declared that the scheme was a thoroughly bad one from every point of view. In the Office of Works there were several gentlemen called surveyors, but really most efficient architects, to whom they owed the post offices which had been erected throughout the country in such places as Birmingham, Manchester, Bradford, and, particularly, the General Post Office in London. Those buildings gave great satisfaction. Among these gentlemen was Mr. Taylor, who had recently erected the addition to the National Gallery, which had given such great satisfaction to the Metropolis. Mr. Taylor was also responsible for remodelling the Royal Mint, which saved the country at least £250,000. He knew better than anyone the requirements of the Departments, and he would sooner take Mr. Taylor's opinion than that of any other professional man. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner whether Mr. Taylor or any other of his staff approved of this scheme, or were responsible for it, and whether it was not a fact that they all united in condemning the proposed extension of the Admiralty as most unwise from a professional point of view? He would go further, and ask whether it was not a fact that the architects themselves, the Messrs. Leeming, who were directed to prepare plans for the extension of the Admiralty, had recommended the adoption of this scheme? Turning to the evidence given before the Committee of last year, he found that Mr. Leeming said—

> "I must emphasize the objection which Mr. Taylor raised to extending the building on the lines of the existing Admiralty. It is not wise to add in the same style to a building already admittedly deficient."

As he had said, Messrs. Leeming were afterwards invited to prepare plans for carrying out the new design; and when young architects were asked to undertake works of that kind it was not natural that they would refuse to do so. But he was satisfied that if Messrs. Leeming were asked whether they considered the scheme one that ought to be carried out, they would reply that it was not one they should recommend. Then, again, he should like to know the opinion of his right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works himself, and whether he thought, on the whole, that the scheme he was now proposing was one which would add dignity to the Metropolis and was a work which ought to be carried out? For his own part, he was always unwilling to obtrude on matters of taste, and he had always submitted the schemes he had laid before the House upon the authority of professional men. He had certainly never obtruded his own views in regard to architectural matters or matters of taste. He would, however, in this instance go further than usual, and express the objections which he entertained to the scheme. He objected to it on three grounds—first, upon administrative grounds; secondly, upon financial grounds; and, thirdly, upon architectural grounds. In regard to the administrative grounds, he objected to the scheme because it precluded from all time to come the possibility of bringing together the Admiralty and the War Office; he objected to it on financial grounds, because he believed it to involve a most wasteful use of the site which the Government had bought at considerable expense in Spring Gardens, and because he felt that, under the plea of economy, it would result in much greater expenditure of public money than if a single building were erected for both Departments. In the third place, he objected to it on architectural grounds, because the addition to the existing Admiralty works, costing nearly £200,000, and adding them to a building which was certainly not worth more than £60,000 or £70,000, was an unwise expenditure of money, inasmuch as it would be a miserable bit of patchwork, perpetuating all the defects of an existing building, and would result in a building which, according to all the best authorities, would be a discredit to the State and to the Metropolis. On the first of these points he might observe that in the last 30 or 40 years it had been the object of nearly everyone concerned with the Admiralty and the War Office to bring these two great Departments together.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): No.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The noble Lord said "No;" but he adhered to the opinion he had expressed. That was certainly the view of the Duke of Somerset, Mr. Corry, Sir John Pakington, Lord Northbrook, and his right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). His right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh was undoubtedly a high authority upon the matter, because he had acquired experience in this respect during a very important naval and military operation—namely, the Egyptian Expedition, and he gave the strongest evidence upon the point before the Committee. He said—

> "In time of peace it is important, officially convenient, and economic that the two Departments should be close together, but in time of war it is absolutely necessary; and the keeping of the two Departments asunder is the cause of weakness, and may be the cause of disaster."

He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) could confirm that from his own experience, although he was not at the Admiralty when any such important expedition as that to Egypt was being carried out. But he was at the Admiralty when a smaller expedition was undertaken, and he was satisfied that the separation of the two Departments, and the want of communication between them, was the cause of wasteful expenditure and want of harmony. He had no hesitation in saying that it was of the utmost importance to bring the two Departments together. The only two Heads of Departments who were of a contrary opinion were the right hon. Gentleman the present First Lord of the Treasury and the noble Lord who sat beside him—the First Lord of the Admiralty. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman the first Lord of the Treasury was a high authority, because he had been employed both at the Admiralty and the War Office; but he was not connected with either of those Departments when an important expedition or military or naval operation was being undertaken. However hon. Members might differ from that point of view, they would, at all events, be of opinion that it was desirable to secure the advantage of the juxtaposition of the two Departments, if it could be obtained without any great expenditure. It was most desirable to accomplish that object, both for administrative and financial purposes. He now came to the financial part of his argument. Without reverting to the scheme of last year, it was absolutely certain that the site which had been purchased by the Government already was amply sufficient for the Admiralty and War Office. It was now certain that the requirements of the two Departments were not so great as they were two years ago, on account of the reduction of staff and the wise plan adopted by the present Government of requiring that the clerks should be collected together in large rooms, instead of being dispersed in smaller rooms. He had endeavoured to persuade the two Departments to adopt that suggestion three years ago, but without success. He was glad to find that the requirements of the two Departments were not what they were three or four years ago, and that a smaller building would suffice for all purposes. There could not be a doubt that for a sum of £600,000 a building could be erected on the present site, without the towers and other defects in Messrs. Leemings' original building, and that the building so erected would be large enough to accommodate both the Admiralty and War Office. He would ask the Committee to look at the financial alternative in the present proposal. They were asked to spend £200,000 or thereabouts in adding to the existing Admiralty; but by doing so the site could not be made available for the War Office also. The surplus land could only be of small amount, and the scheme would necessitate another site being found for the War Office, seeing that it was wholly impossible that the War Office could remain where it was. He thought the Government were quite right in saying that they had not contemplated leaving the War Office where it was. Everybody admitted that it must be moved. It was impossible to retain it on the present site; and, on the other hand, it was necessary to bring together all the Departments that were connected with it. The only alternative site which had been suggested for the War Office was a site in Whitehall, immediately opposite the Admiralty, and it was said in evidence before the Committee last year that to purchase that site would cost about £400,000. He did not believe it would be possible to obtain any site for a War Office at Whitehall lower down at a lower cost than that. He assumed, therefore, that the cost of the site would be £400,000, and it then became necessary to erect the building, which he put down at £340,000. They had thus an ex-expenditure of £200,000 for the extension of the existing Admiralty, £400,000 for the purchase of a site for the War Office, and £340,000 for the erection of the building, making £940,000, as against £600,000, the cost of a single building on the Spring Gardens site—a difference of £340,000. Against this it was hoped to set off the value of the surplus land, if the present proposal were adopted, and this was valued at £160,000. He much doubted whether that sum would ever be realized, either by selling the land or using it for other public buildings; but, even if it were realized, there was still a very considerable margin against the expenditure the Government now proposed. Therefore, it appeared to him that the present scheme fell through, from a financial point of view; and it was absolutely certain, if they assumed that a new site was to be found for the War Office, that the scheme would result in a much greater expenditure than if they utilized the Spring Gardens site for both Departments. He was perfectly convinced that, before long, the Government would come down to Parliament, and ask for additional money; and the total expenditure would be very much greater than if the scheme were restricted to the erection of a single building on the existing site. Of the two alternatives, he was satisfied that the scheme of the Government would land the country in a very large and unnecessary expenditure of money. Where, he thought, the Committee of last year made a great mistake was not so much in rejecting Messrs. Leemings' first plans, as in not considering in what other way the Admiralty site might be utilized for both the Admiralty and War Office. He came now to the architectural question. The Government asked the House to vote a sum of £192,000 for the purpose of adding to a building the true value of which, if new, could not be more than £80,000 or £90,000. It was valued by Mr. Taylor, in his evidence before the Committee last year, at £90,000 if new; but if they took into account the whole superficial base it contained, it would not be worth so much. A new building could be erected if estimated in proportion to its area, and would give the same accommodation for office purposes for the sum of £70,000. Therefore, they were asked to spend £192,000 for a building which would only be worth, if new, £70,000. The present building was a very old one—130 years old, he believed. It had almost all the defects which old buildings possessed; it was badly lighted, it was necessary to burn gas in the passages, and it was ill-ventilated. They were also told by high authority that the foundations of the building were so bad that it was impossible to add another storey to it; any disturbance of the foundations was likely to bring it down to the ground. Apart from that question, it appeared to him most unwise to add to a building admittedly so defective to the great extent now proposed. By adding to the Admiralty in this matter, they would perpetuate all the defects of the existing building, and would practically extend them to the building they were proposing to erect. The attic storey of the Admiralty was useless, and it was proposed to throw it into the upper storey, which was also very low. The Whitehall front of the building was confessedly one of the most hideous and unsightly in London. The Park front was plain, and without any architectural merit. To expend £200,000 in adding to this building and in perpetuating all its defects, was, according to the view of every architect of eminence, an act of the greatest folly, and such as no private person in his senses would perpetrate. It would also, in their view, result in a building of exceedingly bad proportions and very unsightly—one quite unworthy of the site, which was one of the most august and conspicuous in the Metropolis. Among the architects who had been authorized to speak for them in this sense were Mr. Pearson, Mr. Christian, Mr. Blomfield, and Mr. Hardwick—men of high position and eminence in the architectural world. They were united in condemning the proposal of the Government, both from an architectural and from a financial point of view. The hon. secretary of the Institute of Architects had written to say that that Body also condemned the scheme from a financial and architectural point of view. For all these reasons, it appeared to him that it would be most unwise for the Government to go further with the scheme, and he would ask the Committee to pause before committing the country irrevocably to so bad a plan. What he would suggest was, that a small Commission of experts, including some architects of eminence and some financial authorities from the Treasury, should be appointed, who should examine the whole question from a financial and architectural point of view, especially in connection with the War Office. For his own part, he felt confident that when this scheme was thoroughly examined, it would be found that it was as financially unsound as it was architecturally bad, and, if carried out, it would be a discredit to the House as well as to the Metropolis.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, he had listened carefully to the remarks which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, and by his hon. Friend the Member for South St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid), and he had nothing to complain of in the spirit which the subject had been discussed, while he was much obliged for the flattering manner in which he had been referred to personally. What he was asked to do was to drop the Vote altogether and to postpone the settlement of the question until, in the opinion of the hon. Member for South St. Pancras, a small number of experts had been consulted on the matter, or, in the opinion of the right hon. Member for Central Bradford (Mr Shaw Lefevre), until a small Commission had reported what was best to be done. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that no one could have greater respect for anything that fell from him upon this subject than he had, and he was placed in an extremely difficult position in having to oppose any suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman, considering his great experience in such matters. But he would ask the House to bear in mind that this controversy with regard to what was to be done with the great Public Departments had been going on, in an acute sense as to the War Office and the Admiralty, for 20 years or more, and, as regarded public buildings generally, for more than half-a-century. He would ask the House, further, to remember that the subject had been considered by one Commission and Committee after another, and that it had been debated over and over again in the House itself. There was one point, however, upon which all Commissions, and all the opinions expressed by hon. Members who had taken part in the debates, were agreed, and it was that the present state of the accommodation in the War Office and the Admiralty was really scandalous, and that for the purposes of administrative efficiency, as well as of economy, it was absolutely necessary that the various scattered departments of the Admiralty and the War Office respectively should be brought together, while some went so far as to say that all should be under one roof. The hon. Member for South St. Pancras commented upon one passage in the Report of last year in which the Committee recommended that the official staff of the Admiralty and War Office should each, as soon as possible, be placed under one roof, and that the two buildings should be situated at no great distance from each other. There was no mistake in that passage, and if the hon. Baronet would read it attentively he would see that the grammar was perfectly correct. It was only recommended that the official staff of each Department should, as soon as possible, be placed under one roof. The use of the word "respectively" showed that it was each Department that was to be placed under its own roof and not that the two were to be under one roof, although they were to be as near to each other as could be conveniently arranged. What was proposed was to bring all the separate departments of each into one building. He could not go with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford in the sweeping statement he had made that all high authorities had been in favour of placing both Departments under the same roof. The Committee of last year thoroughly threshed out that question by the careful examination and cross-examination of witnesses, and what the evidence came to was this—that whereas some of the authorities were in favour of bringing both Departments under one roof, and others were directly opposed to that suggestion, all were agreed that the two should not be placed at an inconvenient distance from each other. That was the effect of the Report of the Committee of last year. Both the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Member for South St. Pancras asked—"Why on earth do you propose to make this addition to the existing Admiralty, if it is not merely for the purpose of retaining the old building?" and they argued that that would be a very costly and expensive indulgence in one's fancy. Now, hon. Members must not suppose for a moment that the Report of the Committee was founded on any such reason as that. No doubt there was a strong feeling in favour of maintaining the architectural features of the old Admiralty, but that was not the ground on which the recommendation was made at all. He would remind hon. Members why the Committee of last year was appointed, of whom it consisted, and for what purpose it was appointed. A controversy had been going on for many years as to how a new Admiralty and a new War Office were to be provided. It was sufficient, however, to say that in 1885 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford obtained a Vote of £10,000 in the House of Commons as the commencement of the much larger sum of £700,000 which he proposed to apply to the purpose of building a War Office and Admiralty, and bringing them under one roof, on what was known as the Spring Gardens site. The proposed expenditure staggered a great many people. The right hon. Gentleman the present Leader of the House of Commons (Mr. W. H. Smith), being then in Opposition, asked the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), whether he would agree to the appointment of a Committee to reconsider the plans involving so large an expenditure? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby willingly agreed to the appointment in 1886; but the Dissolution soon followed, and prevented the appointment of the Committee until 1887. In that year a Committee was appointed to reconsider the plans for the proposed Admiralty and War Office, and they were further instructed to inquire whether all, or some part, of the existing Admiralty might not with advantage be retained. Who were the Members appointed to serve on that Committee? He found that the names were these—Sir William Harcourt, Lord George Hamilton, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Sclater-Booth, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Colonel Malcolm, Mr. Howell, Mr. Isaacs, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Edward Hardcastle, Mr. William Bright, Mr. Seager Hunt, Mr. William Crossman, Mr. Patrick Joseph Power, Mr. Byrne, and Mr. David Plunket. He thought it might be fairly said that that was a Committee of some authority. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford that nothing could be more fatal to arriving at a sound conclusion than that the matter should be dealt with as a Party question. It had not been in any sense dealt with by the Committee as a Party question, as was evidenced by the fact that two of the strongest supporters of the present First Lord of the Admiralty were the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler). Therefore, hon. Members would fully understand that the matter was not dealt with as a Party question, but in the Committee an honest endeavour was made to see whether there was some more economical and satisfactory way of treating the question than that to which the House was supposed at the time to be committed—namely, the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford. In fact, the ground upon which the Committee rejected that proposal and made a more modest suggestion was that they found that a great saving of time and expense would be effected by the suggested alternative. The original scheme was to cost £700,000, and it was to take 10 years before it was completed.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The War Office part of it.

Mr. PLUNKET said, the scheme which combined the War Office and the Admiralty was, he thought, to take four years for the Admiralty and the remainder of the time for the War Office.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE remarked that the time was afterwards reduced to three years.

Mr. PLUNKET said, it was found that the wants of the Admiralty could be met by additions to the existing building, which could be made for £192,000, and which could be completed within three years. He was advised by Messrs. Leeming, to whom it was his intention to entrust the work, that they would be able to complete the additions to the existing Admiralty within two and a-half years, and the sum it would cost would be £5,000 less than the sum named in the Estimates, or for something like £188,000. Of course they did not mean to set off this sum of £188,000 or £192,000 against the sum of £700,000 for providing both a War Office and Admiralty. But of the £700,000, the proportion allocated to the Admiralty was £380,000, and the new proposal, therefore, involved the saving of £188,000. The right hon. Gentleman had now expressed his belief that his original idea of combining the two offices of the Admiralty and the War Office under one roof on the Spring Gardens site could be carried out for £600,000. He knew that when the matter was before the Committee the right hon. Gentleman made a suggestion of that kind, but the right hon. Gentleman had not been able to put his revised estimates before the Committee in such a way as to induce them to accept them, and seeing that so large a sum had been knocked off the original estimate the Committee were unwilling to rely confidently upon the revised estimate. The right hon. Gentleman said that they would have to build a War Office by-and-bye at a cost of £400,000 for a site, and £340,000 for the building, or £740,000 altogether; but he was prepared to admit that a new War Office could not be provided for a much smaller sum than the right hon. Gentleman named. The view taken by the Committee on this question was, he thought, that given by the First Lord of the Treasury in answer to a question by the right hon. Member for Derby as to whether a very great expense would be incurred in providing a new office upon a new site. The First Lord of the Treasury was asked in Question 1,289—

> "It is proposed upon this space to find room for the War Office as well as the Admiralty, and the most important question I have to ask you is this. Whether you think, having regard to the expediency of utilizing the present Admiralty buildings, there would be any insuperable objection to postponing for further consideration the making of the new War Office?—Answer; No, I do not think there would be any insuperable objection. In the first place, as I understand it, the scheme will only provide for a completed War Office in about 10 years from the present time, whilst it would be practicable, I think, after full consideration, to provide a new War Office, I hope economically, without utilizing this site, or adopting this scheme, even in less time than 10 years, taking a different and distinct site as a place on which the building should be erected if it is found to be absolutely necessary that a new War Office should be erected."

That was, he believed, the view ultimately taken by the Committee, so that when there was an Amendment proposed on the consideration of the Report of the Committee in these words—

> "We think that no commencement should be made with the proposed addition to the Admiralty until the Government has laid before Parliament its proposals for dealing with the War Office."

And when, upon that Amendment, there was a Division, the Amendment itself was supported only by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Swansea Town (Mr. Dillwyn), while among those—eight in number—who voted against it were the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, and the hon. Gentleman the Member for North East Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell). Therefore all these matters came before the Committee before they adopted their Report, and upon the Main Question as between the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford and those who differed from him, when the Division was taken, the numbers were 9 to 3 against the right hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. Plunket) had been challenged to say whether any architect of eminence had approved of the present proposal now submitted to the House, but he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford whether he could call any eminent architect who was altogether in favour of his scheme. Something had been said about the opinion which had been expressed by the Royal Institute of Architects; but, speaking of them with great and sincere respect, he must say that he would not go to them for a favourable or encouraging opinion upon any scheme which might be proposed for this purpose. No doubt they took a high-toned view as to what a public building should be; but they were not likely to approve of any proposal that could have been made. Here was what the Institute of British Architects said on the 2nd of March, 1866, according to *The Times*, as to the scheme of the right hon. Member for Bradford:—

> "A deputation from the Royal Institute of British Architects was received by the First Commissioner of Works (the Earl of Morley). Mr. McVicar Anderson, Hon. Secretary, read a Memorial in which the objections of the Institute to the proposed treatment of the Spring Gardens site were stated, and having dwelt on the inadequacy of the Whitehall thoroughfare at Charing Cross, they went on, apart however from the necessity of thus providing for the exigencies of the traffic, the widening of Whitehall and Charing Cross is essential in view of the erection of a monumental edifice on the western frontage. The unsatisfactory effect of placing lofty structures on the frontages of even wide thoroughfares is strikingly illustrated in Northumberland Avenue, and it is much to be desired that in the present instance a like result should not have to be deplored. To erect a building of great magnitude on the site in question without sufficiently providing, by the widening of Whitehall and Charing Cross, the space which is absolutely essential to the attainment of a satisfactory result—a national monument moreover the principal frontage of which according to the official scheme will remain partially occupied by buildings of an inferior nature, such as shops and a tavern, is in our judgment unworthy of the country."

His (Mr. Plunket's) scheme was not, therefore, to be deemed unsatisfactory merely because it was criticized by architects who had schemes of their own. The name of Mr. Taylor had been mentioned, and he (Mr. Plunket) would gladly join in and emphasize everything that had been said in his commendation; but all the evidence given by that gentleman before the Committee had reference to a comparison between the two schemes—namely, that of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, which was to cost £700,000, and that which was submitted at the present moment; and it must be borne in mind that he and other witnesses were already committed to the former of those schemes, although, no doubt, they gave their evidence honestly. The Government had submitted to the House an elevation which, as far as the exterior decorations were concerned, was not ambitious or pretentious; but everyone would agree that it was satisfactory and agreeable to the eye, and in sympathy and harmony with the surrounding buildings. The Vote he was now asking for was not merely to make an addition to the existing Admiralty, but also to improve it. It was proposed to take out the attic floor, and to use a portion of the space in the roof; and he was assured by eminent architects that when so altered the upper storey would be well adapted for the purposes of the Admiralty. It was said that the scheme of the Government would perpetuate in the new buildings all the defects of the old. That was absolutely inaccurate and not the fact. The architects had undertaken to give a considerable increased height to each of the floors in the new buildings, and not only so, but they had adopted, or would adopt in it, if the Committee agreed to the proposal, every improvement which modern science had invented as to light and air and ventilation and drainage, so that a new building would be supplied in these matters on the best pattern science could now devise. The system of ventilation would in one respect be even a better system than that proposed by the right hon. Member for Central Bradford, because, the height of the building being less in proportion to the size of the Court yards, the ventilation would be better. It was said, and he had seen the statement repeated in the newspapers that morning, that if they did any excavating work, and interfered with the foundations of the existing building, they would bring down the old edifice. It would, however, have been necessary to make excavations even under the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman, because he proposed to preserve all the staff of the Admiralty in the old building for three or four years while providing the foundations for the new building. That, however, was a matter for architects to decide. He did not venture any opinion of his own; but he had that day been assured by Messrs. Leeming that there was no ground whatever for any of the fears that had been expressed. He thought he had now dealt with all the objections which had been raised, and he must apologize to the Committee for the length to which his remarks had extended. He believed that if they were to wait until they had a plan to which they could get all the architects to agree, they would have to wait a very long time, and the scandalous state of things which now existed in some parts of the Admiralty buildings and also in some parts of the War Office would continue; not only so, but they would have to go on paying a sum of no less than £4,400 a-year, which they now paid for the hire of premises for those officials of the Admiralty for whom accommodation could not be found in the existing building, while the Service would still suffer great administrative inconvenience. If the Committee adopted this estimate the work would be commenced at once, and within two and a-half years—he was informed by Messrs. Leeming that it would take about two years and four months—they would be able to complete the building. He trusted that under these circumstances the Committee would agree to the Vote.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said, he looked with a considerable degree of alarm at the proposal now before the House. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Plunket), and other hon. Gentlemen who were Members of the Committee would remember that he had expressed his ideas in the same sense when it came before the Committee of last year. He regarded the present scheme as an absolute perpetuation of the present system under which the affairs of the Admiralty were managed. The Committee last year were at some disadvantage in having no definite set of alternate plans before them, and they found it difficult, therefore, to arrive at a decision. Nevertheless, the Members of the Committee were impressed with the absolute necessity for making some sweeping change in the position in which the clerks and other officials at the Board of Admiralty were placed. Leaving out of view the War Office altogether and dealing with the Admiralty alone, they were asked to give a sum of money nearly equal to one-third of the total amount that would have had to be provided to carry out the designs that were rejected by the Committee last year. He could only say, as a Member of the Committee, that he had gone over the present Admiralty building, and he had had to go there since on matters of public business, and he must say that the difficulty first of finding his way into the place, and, secondly, of finding his way out again, owing to the peculiar arrangement of the different staircases and passages, was something marvellous. It was impossible, without making large structural alterations in the present Admiralty buildings, to make them suitable and convenient for the proper supervision of the staff of clerks employed in them and the economical performance of the work they had to do there. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works had said that a large amount of money was expended every year in order to supply the clerks and other officials with suitable accommodation outside the present Admiralty buildings; but if the designs which were rejected by the Committee last year had been adopted, all the clerks would have been brought under one roof, where they would have been properly supervised, and would have been able to do their duty satisfactorily and economically for the benefit of the country. He spoke with some knowledge upon the matter, having had a long acquaintance with structural alterations, and however lightly architects might think of underpinning, builders did not think lightly of it; at any rate, it was a work which entailed large extra expenditure. There was always danger unless the foundations, in the first place, were absolutely good; and, so far as the foundations of the Admiralty were concerned, they were not only not good, but bad. When once they commenced to touch the foundations they would never know where they were going to end. He had no wish to prolong the debate; but he had expressed these views and the fears he entertained before the Committee upstairs. He still entertained the same fears. They were now asked to vote the sum of £192,000; but if they could get out of it with £250,000 at the end of three years they might consider themselves exceedingly well off. Even then they would simply have perpetuated in a milder degree the scandalous state of things which now existed in regard to the accommodation at the Admiralty Office. He was thoroughly opposed to anything like wasteful expenditure, and he was earnest in his desire to secure economy. He maintained, however, that the best economy, when they found anything structurally bad in a building of this description, was to sweep it away and to erect a new building adequate and suitable to the requirements of the nation. He had no objection to the erection of a grand building—that was to say, grand, not in the sense of external decoration, but in the sense of the useful purpose it was to serve. The plans rejected last year were doubtless grand designs, and the decorative work would, in some respects, be superb. Probably all the decorations involved were not needed for all public offices; but even admitting that the ornamentation was more than necessary, he ventured to assert that it would have been wiser economy in the long run to have adopted those plans with all their accessories than to vote money for a scheme which would have to be supplemented hereafter by other large sums of money. Even when the work was complete, the complaint which had been made from time to time would not be removed. The officials would not be gathered together in large rooms; but one man would be in one room, while another engaged in the same kind of work would be in another room. It was necessary that they should be closely associated together if they were to make the building useful and efficient for its purpose. He supposed that the Vote under discussion would be agreed to; but they might depend upon it that the sum of £192,000 would not be sufficient to cover the whole of the alterations, and they would find, when the building was ready to be handed over, the cost would inevitably have to be supplemented by other large sums, and they would find, in the long run, that it would have been more economical to have provided a new building.

Mr. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth) said, he would ask for the indulgence of the Committee while, as a Member of the Committee to which the question was referred last year, he ventured to state the views which he entertained on the subject. The question really resolved itself into this — Were the designs which had been placed in the Tea Room of the House, or the designs which were first submitted to the Committee, to be carried into effect? As far as his personal predilections were concerned, he went into the Committee with a perfectly open mind. If he had any bias, it was rather in favour of the designs of Messrs. Leeming, which he had seen before, and could not fail to admire. But after the evidence adduced before the Committee day by day, he had come to the conclusion that it would not have been advisable to have adopted the designs which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) advocated. It was pointed out that, coming next to the Horse Guards, the proposed new building would have dwarfed that structure, and the first thing which the right hon. Member for Bradford did was to eliminate the South-Eastern wing of the building in deference to the adverse criticisms made upon it; and thus, at one stroke, to save a sum of no less than £30,000 in the cost of the work. But that was not a sufficient saving, and it was necessary to do more. It was proposed to eliminate the whole of the features of the design above the roof, as also the columns and pilasters of the several facades, and by that means the main features of the design were sacrificed. The cost of the building was thus reduced to £561,000, of which sum £261,000 was allocated to the Admiralty buildings, and the remaining £300,000 to the War Office. But he ventured to say that the whole of the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman opposite founded on that Estimate of £561,000 were absolutely fallacious. The building to which the right hon. Gentleman referred was what might be described as a "bogus" building, because the great charm of Messrs. Leeming's design consisted very much in the features above the roof, its domes, cupolas, and other matters; but it was now proposed to cut down these features as well as the columns and pilasters, and very much of the ornamentation, so that the building would entirely lose its character. Apart, however, from the question of the style of architecture, there were grave doubts on the part of the Committee as to whether the internal corridors would be sufficiently lighted, and whether the other arrangements were quite of the character suited for a large assembly of clerks. On the whole, the Committee failed to be impressed with the opinion that the building would do the work for which it was intended, from an economical and practical point of view. Thereupon the Committee took an early opportunity of viewing the existing Admiralty buildings, in order to ascertain whether it was possible to adapt and retain any portion of the existing structure. He was sorry to find himself at issue on this point with the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell), because he believed the hon. Member to be a practical man, who had claims to be considered an authority in these matters. But he went carefully over the building, and after paying great attention to the whole of the internal arrangements, he came to an exactly opposite conclusion to that of the hon. Member. He thought it would be possible to alter the internal arrangements of the existing Admiralty in such a way as to render it unnecessary to make any great structural alteration; and it would be possible to put together several rooms so as to facilitate the concentration of clerks without any danger to the existing building. Of course, he was prepared to admit, that when they came to deal with foundations like those of the existing Admiralty buildings it would be necessary to proceed with the utmost caution. He knew what it was to deal with large volumes of water in the foundations of buildings. He had had experience of water in foundations, and he knew the expense the getting rid of that water entailed; but he ventured to tell the hon. Member for Bethnal Green that in these days work of that kind was not regarded by practical men as one which ought to appal them or deter them from pushing forward with it. Within the last three or four years the foundations of so important a structure as Waterloo Bridge had been dealt with without any serious difficulty. The old piles on which the Bridge stood were removed while the public were continually using the structure, and absolutely ignorant of the nature of the work in progress. That structure at present stood without the slightest sign of subsidence being shown. If it were possible to deal with such a bridge as that it would be infinitely more easy to overcome any difficulties connected with the foundations of the Admiralty. In Committee they had the evidence of experts as to the cost of carrying out the building designed by Messrs. Leeming, and he ventured to say that the figures given were too low, and that instead of 1*s.* per cubic foot in one case, 1*s.* 2*d.* would be nearer the mark, and in another, instead of 1*s.* 6*d.*, 1*s.* 8*d.* per cubic foot. When they came to consider the case of the alternative scheme they had figures given to them from which it would appear that the cost of the proposed addition to the Admiralty would not be more than 11*d.* per cubic foot. The right hon. Member for Bradford, in the Report he had submitted to the Committee, said that he had cut down the estimates of Messrs. Leeming for the alternative scheme from £700,000 to £561,000, of which £261,000 was the amount allocated to the Admiralty, and £300,000 to the War Office. Taking the alternative scheme of

Messrs. Leeming at 11*d.* per cubic foot, they reached a total of £185,000, and adding £7,500 for under-pinning the existing Admiralty structure they arrived at £192,500. Taking this figure as £192,000, he would ask the Committee to bear with him while he gave another set of figures which he would desire them to accept instead of those of the right hon. Gentleman. The cost of the Admiralty and War Office, instead of being £700,000, on the assumption that the work could be done for 1*s.* 2*d.* a cubic foot instead of 1*s.*, would be enlarged to £820,000. He thought, on the other hand, that it would be possible to proceed with the alternative scheme of the Admiralty extension for 10*d.* per foot cube. One ounce of fact was worth a whole ton of argument, and he had been so staggered by the figures submitted to the Committee that he ventured to ask permission to put himself in the box to give evidence in connection with the Railway Clearing House building in Euston Square, which accommodated 1,400 clerks, as large a number as the Admiralty and War Office combined. Those 1,400 clerks were housed in a building of excellent design, built by Messrs. Cubitt, who were among the first of builders. The right hon. Gentleman added to the item of £192,000 £440,000 for the new War Office site, and £300,000 for the building. To-day the right hon. Gentleman favoured the Committee with another figure—namely, £340,000 for the building. Why he did so he (Mr. Isaacs) did not know, but he failed to find that figure in the draft Report submitted to the Committee. Taking those three items—£192,000 for the extension of the existing Admiralty, £440,000 for the purchase of a new site for the War Office, and £300,000 for the new War Office itself, there would be a total of £932,000. From that total they must take two items representing the value of surplus land—namely, £161,000 for the land in Spring Gardens, and £42,000 for land on the War Office site, making a total of £203,000, and bringing down the estimated cost to £729,000. For that sum they would get, according to the amended plans of Messrs. Leeming, what he called a "bogus" building, and they would land the country in an excess of expenditure amounting to £160,000. He (Mr. Isaacs) read to the Committee a letter he had received from the Architect of the Railway Clearing House Building, intimating that the cost of that structure amounted only to 6*d.* per foot cube. He submitted, therefore, that if it was possible to do this in the case of the Railway Clearing House, it was only reasonable to assume that a suitable building could be erected for the Admiralty extension at 10*d.* per foot cube. The estimate, therefore, would have to be reduced by one-eleventh, and instead of £185,000 it would be brought down to £168,000. The total cost of the two establishments, if they were proceeded with on the basis he had sketched out, would be £705,000, and deducting £705,000 from £820,000, the saving to the country would be £115,000. He had thought it fair to put these considerations before the Committee, inasmuch as he felt particular interest in the subject, and having endeavoured to thrash out the whole of the figures, he thought he was entitled to ask the attention of the Committee for a few minutes while he submitted his views to hon. Members.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that in estimating the cost of the Admiralty and War Offices at £600,000 for the purpose of his argument, he had made no reference to the scheme of Messrs. Leeming.

General GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) said, he objected to this Vote, not on the ground of the cost of the building, but because it did not provide for the War Office and the Admiralty being under one roof. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) had said that that question did not come before the Committee, but since the Committee sat, the country had been assured that the Army was not properly organized. They knew that the work of both the Army and the Navy would be greatly facilitated by being under one roof. He was prepared to vote against the estimate if a Division was challenged, because in his opinion, expenditure that did not tend to efficiency was only money thrown away. It was not a question of what the buildings cost, in the first instance. They would save money by having efficiency, because efficiency was really true economy.

Mr. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) said, he did not wish to prolong the discussion, indeed, he should not have taken part in the debate at all but for the remark of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) that he (Mr. Dillwyn) had proposed an Amendment to the Report last submitted. He did propose an Amendment. He was actuated very much by the argument just addressed to them by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Hammersmith (General Goldsworthy)—namely, that it was very desirable that the work of the two Services of the Army and Navy should be transacted under one roof. He believed that the work of the country would be greatly facilitated thereby, and that the arrangement would prove an economical one. The hon. Baronet the Member for South St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid) and the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) had given good reasons why the Government plan should be rejected. They objected to the inconvenience which would result from it, and they objected to it on account of the danger of making the alterations upon insecure and bad foundations. The foundations of the present building had been found to be very bad; indeed, the evidence given before the Committee went to show that there were no solid foundations. He had seen something of building and of altering old houses, and he thought that when they began to alter old houses they ran a great danger of pulling the houses down altogether. Generally speaking, it was far more satisfactory to pull a building down altogether than to put up new erections on the old foundations. He had only to say further that the challenge which was thrown out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had not been met at all. The right hon. Gentleman challenged the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to show a single architectural authority for the plan they now had before them. He (Mr. Dillwyn) had heard very many objections to the plan, and he hoped they might still hear a little more of the plan from an architect's point of view.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, that as one who had spent many years in the Public Service, he wished to press very earnestly upon the Government one point, which he considered of great importance. He was glad to see that in this building it was proposed to make very large rooms in which a large number of clerks could be employed. He was fully persuaded there would never be efficiency or economy in the Public Service until the system of large rooms was greatly extended. In the plan of the new buildings he saw some large rooms, but he thought the system could be extended a little more. He trusted that the Admiralty and War Office would bear in mind the importance of employing in large rooms all except those few who were obliged from their position to have private rooms.

Mr. WHITMORE (Chelsea) said, he rose to ascertain from the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works whether it was a definite part of the present scheme that the Mall should be extended and opened out to Charing Cross. The point was not clear in the designs, though it was one to which considerable importance was attached by all who took an interest in the amenity of London. He earnestly hoped that this opening would now be made.

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID said, that before they went to a Division there were two or three points he desired to refer to. The hon. Member for the Walworth Division of Newington (Mr. Isaacs) had given convincing proof that the Government were absolutely wrong. The hon. Gentleman had shown that the Railway Clearing House, a large building capable of accommodating 1,400 clerks, had been put up very economically upon a site less than the site of the Admiralty and the proposed additions, and yet he approved of this piece of extravagance. They would have to go elsewhere and obtain a site for the War Office. The proposal amounted to the greatest piece of extravagance he ever heard of, and he quite understood why his right hon. Friend the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) took no notice of it; it was absolutely indefensible. There were some persons who were anxious to have economy at the expense of efficiency, and he ventured to say that the argument which the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works used in support of this proposal—namely, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) was in favour of it, was a little in that direction, because the right hon. Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt), as Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his zeal for economy, sent orders to the Departments as to the amount they were to spend, leaving them to settle how that amount was to be utilized. True economy would prompt them to spend a proper sum for putting the War Office and the Admiralty upon one site. They had the site, but the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works proposed to use it for the Admiralty only. He (Sir Julian Goldsmid) maintained that the proposal was an extravagant one, because the right hon. Gentleman would have to purchase another site whenever he built the War Office. Under these circumstances, he had thought it right to bring this matter before the House of Commons. The hon. Member for the Walworth Division of Newington tried to draw a red herring across the path by telling them a good deal about Messrs. Leeming's building. Probably the hon. Gentleman did not do him the honour to listen to the remarks he made earlier in the debate; but, if he did, he must know he said he knew nothing of Messrs. Leeming, and that he was not speaking in any particular interest. Upon the hon. Gentleman's (Mr. Isaacs') own showing, a suitable building for both War Office and Admiralty could be put up upon this site at a moderate cost, and, therefore, it must be bad economy to use the site for the Admiralty only. He claimed the hon. Member's vote.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that, in answer to his hon. Friend the Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley), he was able to say that they had already in these plans gone far in the direction of having large rooms in which the work could be carried on under proper supervision. But they had not yet had the final Report of the Admiralty as to the reorganization of their staff. If the Board suggested that the system of large rooms should be carried further, he had no doubt the system would be extended. He entirely agreed with the hon. Gentleman as to the advisability of adopting the system as far as possible. With regard to the question of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Whitmore), he could answer, if the proposal now submitted to the Committee were carried out, there would be an opening provided from the Mall to Charing Cross, in the same way as an opening would have been provided if the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had been adopted. The present was really a test Vote. The Department, therefore, now only asked for £5,000; but if the Committee agreed to the Vote, he hoped they would be able to spend and ask for a little more before the end of the year. He earnestly begged the Committee not to prevent them proceeding as soon as possible with the remedy of a defective and almost scandalous state of things.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE asked, whether the plans for the War Office were being proceeded with?

Mr. PLUNKET said, that nothing had been proposed on that subject. The Vote which was now proposed was based on the Report of the Committee of last year.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, it was an important item in the consideration of the whole matter what was to be done with the War Office. If the War Office was to be left where it was, the scheme was not a bad one—it would result in economy—but if the War Office was to be removed, which he believed was an essential part of the scheme, then the scheme was financially bad and unsound.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that if the House of Commons were of opinion that the Government should at once undertake further expense in building a War Office, he would lose no time in making the necessary inquiries.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 144; Noes 85: Majority 59.—(Div. List, No. 116.)

Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments.

(2) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £46,073, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he desired to move the reduction of this Vote by £500, with the view of eliciting something with regard to the policy of the Government in the Soudan. He wanted to know whether we had really and truly abandoned the Soudan. If we had, why was there an officer at Suakin calling himself Governor General? He found that the Governor General there treated the tribes in the vicinity as rebels. He did not see how they could be rebels if we had abandoned the Soudan. He was one of those who by no means asserted that the case for the abandonment of the Soudan was made clear. There was a great deal to be said in favour of either retaining the Soudan, or in making it over to the Italians; though there was also a great deal to be said on general grounds for the abandonment of the Soudan. As a matter of fact, the Egyptian Government had proclaimed that the country had been abandoned. There were many reasons why it should be abandoned. He only hoped it was abandoned for deliberate reasons. He was bound to confess that the measure had been successful, that it had not exposed us to as very great danger as was prophesied, that the defence of the Egyptian frontier was easy as compared with the defence, for instance, of the North-West frontier of India. If we would only avoid those irritating little wars outside Suakin, the abandonment of the Soudan, however much some might regret it, might be regarded as successful; the measure had been fairly successful up to this, and would be successful altogether if we could only make up our minds to keep our hands off the tribes over the frontier. He did not desire, at this moment, to go into the policy of retaining Suakin. There might be reasons—he did not quite see them himself—connected with the Slave Trade why that town and port should be retained; but he did question the policy of involving ourselves in little wars beyond the town. It was patent to all the world that, for the last few months, the Governor General of Suakin had attacked the tribes outside the town, and got the worst of it, putting us in a very ignominous position. There could be no doubt that the Governor General of Suakin had been subsidizing and egging on the tribes—called friendly—to attack other tribes who were treated as unfriendly. The result was that the "unfriendlies" had called Osman Digna to their assistance, and he had attacked us and beaten us. He (Sir George Campbell) could not help thinking that the Governor General had brought these defeats upon himself. The tone in which the Governor General talked of rebels and "friendlies" was not the tone of a man who had made up his mind to confine himself to his own proper dominion of Suakin. His hankering after dominion had brought about the present state of things, and he (Sir George Campbell) wanted to know what the policy of the Government really was with regard to the matter. It was no use saying this was a question for the Egyptian Government. It was patent that we it was who forced the abandonment of the Soudan upon the Egyptians against their will. The Governor General was a distinguished English officer — Colonel Kitchener—and, speaking of those who served under him, that officer had said they were English officers nominated by the English Government. On several late occasions, too, the troops at Suakin had been assisted by the British Fleet. Suakin was held for us; whatever went on, there was our policy, and therefore he might fairly ask the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) to explain what that policy was. He knew that the Foreign Secretary had in "another place" said that Suakin was held to prevent the Slave Trade. But what was the policy with regard to the fighting outside Suakin. How far had we encouraged the raids and petty wars which had gone on for months past? There was another subject which was indirectly connected with this matter, also a subject of great importance. It seemed to him very strange indeed that when we had abandoned that which he might call the natural highway into the interior of Africa—the highway of the great rivers—we should seek to enter the country by another route. We were apparently doing that by means of a new Company called the East African Company. No information whatever had been vouchsafed to Parliament in regard to the formation of that Company. He had seen a newspaper paragraph which stated what had been done, but nothing was known to the general public or to the House of Commons. He wanted to know what were the circumstances under which, and what were the objects for which, a new territorial Company had been established for East Africa? It seemed to him it was very dangerous that the country should be led into these great annexations silently, quietly, without competition, and in the ignorance of the public and of the House of Commons. He understood this East African Company had been established to exercise the rights of dominion. The idea was that the Company was to establish dominion over the great territory which led to the great lakes of Central Africa. It was but fair that hon. Members should demand that the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State should give them some information on this matter. Surely these territories should not be parcelled out without competition. No Department of the Government could give a contract for 100 pairs of boots, without first subjecting it to competition. Yet these great territories were given away quietly, and without the House knowing anything about the matter. He did not desire, at that moment, to question the policy of extending British dominion; he only wished to ascertain what were the facts, and what were the views of Her Majesty's Government, in regard to this matter. Having paid a good deal of attention to the politics of Africa, he would say that a great deal of evil resulted from the haphazard way in which annexation was carried out. Africa was being sandwiched, as it were, amongst the different European States. Germany got a slice, then France got a slice, then we had a slice, then the Portugese got a slice, and then someone else got a slice, and so annexation was going on all through Africa. He could not help thinking it would be much more politic and dignified on the part of this country, if it was to take part in the scramble for Africa, to do so upon some system, that we should come to some arrangement with other countries by which our possessions should be gathered together and be made more compact. By the present accidental sandwiching out of Africa, the basis of very great complications in the future was being laid. At any rate, he hoped the Government would tell them that the policy of chartering this new Company was a deliberate one, and not one forced upon the Government by the pertinacity of the Company. He was aware that up to the present the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had firmly refused to recognize the territorial possessions of what he might call the fighting missionaries and traders, who had established a kind of dominion in the Lake District of South Eastern Africa. He desired to know whether the Government would hold out in this firm course? He hoped the right hon. Baronet would be able to tell the Committee that the Government were not following in the wake of the Commercial Companies—Companies which established dominion over the natives for commercial gain—or even of the missionary enterprizes. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would tell them that the Government had some fixed and decided policy in this matter; that they had resolved whether they were to go forward and take a large share of Africa or not; whether, if they were to take a large share of Africa, they intended to do so deliberately; and whether they themselves were determined to decide what was to be done, and not allow Companies or missionaries to decide for them. In the hope of eliciting some information on this subject, he begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £500.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £45,573, be granted for the said Service."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, his hon. Friend (Sir George Campbell) said he did not complain of the policy of retaining Suakin.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: I said I did not express an opinion upon the subject.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, that he did express an opinion upon it; he thought it was a very absurd policy on our part. It would be remembered that we went there because we entered into an engagement with the Egyptian Government to maintain the remnant of rule on the border of the Red Sea. At that time it was said, as an excuse, that we also went there in order to prevent the Slave Trade. There was nothing more certain than that we had in no sort of way hindered the Slave Trade by retaining Suakin, for the reason that it was very easy to go across the Red

Sea in a few hours from Africa to Asia. The dhows could put in along the coast; they did not require to put in at any particular port; they took the slaves sent down to them, and in the course of the night they crossed to Arabia. That had not been controverted. The Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) fell back on the fact that whether right or wrong, we were pledged to retain Suakin, because we had entered into a promise with the Egytian Government, but he (Mr. Labouchere) would like to know how long this promise was to continue. Were we to retain Suakin for ever? Surely there must be some limit. When the promise was made, Egypt was practically at war with the Soudanese. It was said that now Egypt was at peace with the Soudan. We ought, therefore to come to some understanding with Egypt with regard to the retention of our garrison at Suakin. His hon. Friend said—"While I do not express an opinion upon the retention of Suakin, I do protest against the little wars that go on with the tribes in the neighbourhood." The occurrence of these little wars was one of the reasons why he (Mr. Labouchere) was opposed to the retention of Suakin. In the present state of matters, it must necessarily follow that there would be little wars. One tribe came under our protection, another tribe further off attacked it, and then we sallied forth in order to defend the tribe under our protection, and so, as it always happened in the case of these military frontiers, we found ourselves perpetually engaged in little wars, slaughtering people who, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian said, "are rightly struggling to be free." Then his hon. Friend complained of the establishment of the East African Companies. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman that the Committee ought to know what the Charters to these Companies were. The Charters ought to be laid before the House of Commons before they were granted. Take the case of the Borneo Charter. That was granted, he believed, by a Conservative Ministry; anyhow, a Conservative Ministry had pledged itself so strongly to grant it, that the Liberal Ministry which followed it felt it its duty to fulfil the pledge. At last the matter came up for the consideration of the House. The hon. Gentleman (Sir John Gorst) who was now Under Secretary of State for India raised the question, and he pointed out that by the Charter we did our very best to encourage the Slave Trade. By one of the conditions of the Charter we engaged to return to their masters slaves who took refuge in the offices of the Company. A more monstrous thing was never done, and yet because Parliament had not been permitted to look into the Charter, and because no one in the Public Offices had looked closely into the matter, the Charter existed. Therefore he did most strongly demand that before any pledge or assurance was given on the part of the Government to grant Charters to Companies, the House should have an opportunity of seeing what the Charter was. His hon. Friend (Sir George Campbell) said he was opposed to the system of sandwiching out Africa, but then he proposed what seemed a monstrous proceeding—he proposed that we should take over a large portion of the country as our share. [Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: No.] What the hon. Gentleman said certainly amounted to that. He (Mr. Labouchere) objected to this parcelling out of Africa. The hon. Gentleman suggested that our parcel should be in the South. Heaven knew what it would cost. He earnestly hoped we would not give Charters to East African Companies, or to West African Companies, or to North African Companies, or to South African Companies, and that we would give up the policy of either parcelling out Africa between the European Powers or of taking a very large slice for ourselves. This Vote covered the whole policy of Her Majesty's Government in all parts of the world outside of England. They had not had during the present Session an opportunity of discussing the foreign policy of Her Majesty's Government. Some people had said this ought to be an Irish Session, some had said it ought to be an English Session, but, in the meantime, the Marquess of Salisbury had had absolutely his own way as Minister for Foreign Affairs. No one had had an opportunity of calling the noble Marquess over the coals, and yet——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! An Amendment has been proposed to reduce the Vote in respect of certain proceedings in Africa, and the discussion should be confined to Africa.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Then I will postpone my remarks upon the general foreign policy of the Government.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.) said that the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) did not find fault with the action of Her Majesty's Government with respect to Suakin, but wished to know on what ground it was retained. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), on the other hand, objected altogether to the retention of Suakin, and thought we ought to have retired from Suakin as we had retired from the Upper Nile. There was a certain misapprehension in the minds of the hon. Gentlemen. The British Government did not hold Suakin: it was held by the Egyptian Government, and although it had been said that that was the same thing, there was a very important difference. What Her Majesty's Government were doing was to aid the Government of Egypt to improve the government of that country, and he believed very great success had attended those efforts. Very great praise was due to the Khedive and his Ministers for the policy they were pursuing, and for the reforms they had carried out. Suakin was the only point in the Soudan now held by Egyptian troops, and it was very important it should be so held. It was very important that piratical expeditions should not be made from that point of departure, and it was extremely desirable, both from the point of view of the Egyptian and British Governments, that Suakin should not be made the great nest or chief seat of the Slave Trade. There could be no doubt it would be a great centre and rallying point of the Slave Trade unless it was kept by the Egyptians, and he was sorry to say he believed that at this moment many of the Slave Trade operations were directed from Suakin. The Egyptian officers at Suakin were often able to get intelligence of intended Slave Trade expeditions and to frustrate them. No doubt a good deal went on in spite of our endeavours, but were it not for these endeavours there was every reason to believe that the Slave Trade would flourish much more actively than it did at present. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) asked what we were doing at Suakin. The Egyptians were doing as little as possible. They were obliged, unfortunately, to defend Suakin against the followers of the False Prophet and the Dervishes who came down to the immediate neighbourhood of Suakin. It was very necessary that the place should be both resolutely and economically defended, and owing to the admirable dispositions of Colonel Kitchener, the Governor General, it could now be defended by a very small force. The forts were strong, but it had been necessary to afford the place the assistance of some of Her Majesty's ships. It was quite evident that the Slave Trade could not be prevented in the Red Sea without the assistance of Her Majesty's ships. Ships had been employed in that duty, and advantage had been taken of their presence there to render assistance to the Egyptian troops in the defence of Suakin. It was very desirable that trade should establish itself as freely as possible, and with as little interference as possible. Great steps had been taken in that direction, but the peaceful traders were very much interfered with by the bodies of Dervishes under Osman Digna, who rendered the trade routes exceedingly dangerous, and who rendered the peaceful occupations of the country somewhat perilous. But there were signs of considerable improvement, and he thought that if the present policy pursued at Suakin could be only let alone for a little longer a better state of things might soon be expected in that region. The hon. Member (Sir George Campbell) said, that we had abandoned the great highway of the Nile, but we were trying to open up a new route to the lakes from the Zanzibar Coast. It was easy to talk of the lakes as if they were one small tract, but the Committee would surely not forget that the distances were enormous from the portion of the Nile which was occupied by the Egyptians, and the lake district which might be approached from the Zanzibar Coast. It was quite evident that any commercial or colonizing undertaking on the Zanzibar Coast was a very different matter from the extension of Egyptian rule southwards. The deliberate policy pursued had been to confine the Government of Egypt to the Northern portion of Africa. But there was no reason why the whole of the rest of Africa should be closed to European enterprize. Other nations were not insensible of the value of African markets, and there was no nation in Europe that had not made great exertions to establish its influence in Africa and to extend the trade with that country. He thought there was little hope for the trade of this country except by opening up new markets, and English merchants would justly reproach the Government if they were to refuse to give such encouragement as they could to the multiplication of markets in the great continent of Africa. The portion of Eastern Africa in which the enterprize of certain people was now seeking to push English trade was, perhaps, the most hopeful district North of the Equator with which we were acquainted. It was healthy, suitable for European settlement, and inhabited by tribes immensely superior, intellectually and in point of civilization, to those on the West Coast and those further towards the South. This enterprize had been well considered, and it was hoped that it was destined to open up new fields for English commerce, and that it would be possible to join hands with Emin Pasha, who was so gallantly maintaining himself in the interior. The hon. Gentleman opposite said he did not see why we, the Germans, Belgians, and other nations, should all be carving out slices of Africa for ourselves; but surely it was better that we should make arrangements with other European nations than that we should come into rivalry and possible collision with them; it was better that the spheres of influence in Africa should be directed from different points, and he could not but think that the policy now being pursued was not only convenient and prudent in itself, but one that was most likely to colonize Africa in the best way. The hon. Gentleman had also spoken of the Consul in the Lake District as having been engaged in hostilities. He had, on the second day before the Recess, been asked and replied to a Question on this point—namely, whether the action of the Consul was taken with the consent of Her Majesty's Government or with their encouragement? With regard to the present question, he said it was inaccurate to say that the Consuls in their present positions were engaged in hostilities. They were there without any such intention. They were there to afford such assistance to British interests as they could afford by British authority; but it was only when a European Settlement was being attacked by Arabs, and was in considerable danger, that other action took place. Undoubtedly, it was not the duty of the Consuls to lend themselves to any hostile movement with armed forces. It was not for him to defend the missionaries from the imputation of being militant persons. He believed, however, that there were men carrying on a good work with great courage and at considerable risk, and that they only took up arms in self defence. But there was a great difference between missionaries and the Trading Bodies in that part of Africa, who united in their own defence; and if these had engaged in attacking an Arab stronghold, it might, to some extent, no doubt, have been in retaliation, but it ought to be remembered that it was sometimes necessary for the purpose of defence to anticipate the action of those who threatened attack. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had talked about our slaughtering people who were rightly struggling to be free. He could not consent to be led into a discussion on the old Egyptian controversy, which he had hoped had long been laid at rest. The defence of Suakin by Her Majesty's ships could hardly be called the slaughter of people struggling to be free; and such language was wholly inappropriate to the defence of a garrison attacked by dervishes. He (Sir James Fergusson) said that we were not interfering with any matters in the Soudan; we sanctioned the holding of Suakin for reasons which Parliament had fully approved—namely, the prevention of the Slave Trade on the Red Sea, which would increase and become much more active were it not for the resistance offered by England. As to the remark that it was inexpedient to encourage Trading Companies to settle in Africa, he believed this to be a legitimate form of procedure and well calculated to further the best interests of the country. It was not necessary that British responsibilities should be unduly extended; but he thought it was eminently desirable that where enterprizing merchants were willing to push British trade in Africa, Her Majesty's Government should give them all proper assistance. He did not think that a case had been made out for the reduction of the Vote.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he hoped the case of Mr. Thomas Wilkinson, who had received unfair treatment from the Consular Authorities in Madagascar, whose action had been condemned by the Law Courts of the Mauritius, would not be passed over in silence.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) said, that he must almost be regarded as an ignoramus on questions of this kind; but he could not keep silence under the enunciation of such doctrines as they had just heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson). The right hon. Baronet had said that the object of the Foreign Office was to allow the Egyptians to govern Egypt. That, he (Mr. Picton) thought, was a very simple matter, and one which could be arranged without a heavy expense for the Foreign Office. But then it was urged that the Egyptians would govern Egypt not exactly in the manner we desired, and that a state of things entirely foreign to our interests would arise; to allow the Egyptians to govern Egypt would be to allow them to have whatsoever Governor they pleased, even that violent Patriot whom we had expatriated to Ceylon. But it was expressly to prevent the Egyptians from governing Egypt, except in accordance with our ideas, that our forces were kept in that country. That was a state of things which was entirely unsatisfactory; and he was not inclined to keep up an expensive Foreign Office for the purpose of obtaining such a result. Then they were told that the Egyptians must defend Suakin against the False Prophet; but they were not told against what false prophet. Who was he? There were a large number of false prophets in the world—a good many on the other side of the House as well as on that side. He did not know whether Osman Digna was or was not a false prophet; but they understood that the Mahdi was destroyed, and he did not know whether he had any successor. But if the Egyptians wanted to defend Suakin, by all means let them do so. Why should we be called upon to do it for them? And hon. Members were told that it was necessary to have British vessels at Suakin to protect our trade. He did not know what trade we did at Suakin; and it was quite possible that if this policy was to be pursued we might be compelled to have more vessels than were really necessary, whatever that trade might be. Violence would never open the country to trade. Missionaries had done far more than soldiers to open up African trade. However that might be, he did not think that Africa would be opened up to trade by our extravagant expenditure on military forces in that country. It appeared to him that there had been an utterly reckless waste of human life in this work, and that an unnecessary claim had been made upon the taxpayers of the country in consequence, for which reasons, if the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy went to a Division, he should heartily support him.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had given the Committee as much information as they were entitled to claim. The right hon. Baronet had dealt altogether in generalities. His (Sir George Campbell's) own opinion was that the best course would be to hand over Suakin to the Italians; but, at any rate, he hoped that fighting outside the place would be discouraged. He thought the authorities in Suakin were a good deal to blame for what had occurred there, because they had drawn down upon themselves Osman Digna by that abominable practice of subsidizing one Native Tribe for the purpose of attacking another. He thought that the term False Prophet was entirely misapplied by the right hon. Gentleman, although he rather approved the plan of coming to arrangements with other European nations as to trade stations in Africa. He was unfavourable to our taking a large share of Africa, because he thought we had already enough on our hands; but he thought that, under any circumstances, we should confine ourselves as much as possible to one part of the country. The right hon. Gentleman told them that the only hope for the trade of this country was to conquer new markets. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had said that in order to extend British trade it was necessary to acquire new countries.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: I beg the hon. Baronet's pardon. I am sure I did not use the words or anything like them.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he admitted the right hon. Gentleman did not use the words, but he had justified the policy by assuming that it was only by opening up new markets that we could hope to maintain our trade at its present level. He would not, however, pursue that matter further, but he repeated that the Committee was entitled to ask whether a Charter had been granted to the East African Company; and, if so, what powers and conditions were conferred on the Company, and what territory had been handed over?

MR. LABOUCHERE said, the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) had returned after the Whitsuntide Holiday with some extraordinary notions; he now proposed that we should hand over Suakin to the Italians. But that would be worse than giving it to the Egyptians. He (Mr. Labouchere) said, whatever might be done, let us have nothing whatever to do with it. The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had said that Suakin was retained on account of the Slave Trade. He (Mr. Labouchere) thought Lord Palmerston was the inventor of that system of defending aggression, on the ground that it was necessary for the purpose of preventing the Slave Trade; he kept up a large Squadron on the Coast of Africa, which occasionally picked up a Slave-trader, but the Slave Trade was only a pretext for keeping up the Naval Force in that part of the world. The question, however, was, did we, by aiding and abetting the Egyptians in maintaining themselves in Suakin, really in any sort of way diminish the Slave Trade? [Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: Yes.] The right hon. Gentleman said they did. But had there been a single Slaver taken at Suakin. [Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: Ships have been caught in the neighbourhood.] Exactly; they must have ships cruising about the Red Sea, if they wanted to look after the Slave Trade. But were there no slaves at Cairo and Alexandria? While the Egyptians bought slaves in their own markets, we were to go down to Suakin for the purpose of stopping the Slave Trade there. He said that the whole thing was absurd, and that the fact was we had got into a mess, and did not know how to get out of it. The Military Commander out there was a brave man, and liked to bring his bravery before the British public; he engaged in these little skirmishes, and when the people came down to the seaside, they were immediately fired upon by the ships outside. As he had said, the whole thing was a great piece of absurdity, a gross waste of money, and an outrage upon the country; because our presence at Suakin did not directly or indirectly tend to put down the Slave Traffic. But the right hon. Gentleman had really surprised him by his statement with regard to the Chartered Companies in Africa. The right hon. Gentleman said the noble mission of the Government was to aid and abet merchants in establishing forms of British government in different parts of Africa. What did the right hon. Gentleman mean by that—what were those forms of British government? Did he mean that the merchants were to go out to Africa, and that we were to aid them in establishing there a House of Lords and a House of Commons? It meant that we were to back up these men when they wished not only to trade, but to establish themselves in some dominating position which would compromise us. King Theodore said—"I know all about you. You send missionaries, then you send merchants, and then an army, and when you send an army where is the African King?" Let merchants go into Central Africa by all means; but let them go at their own risk and peril. If they wished to become martyrs, it was their own business; but they must not ask us to support them in establishing some sort of *quasi*-right over the heads of the people of the country. Most assuredly the Committee had a right to know whether this Charter had been given, and, if so, what was the nature of that Charter—if not, whether there was any intention of giving a Charter? He asked the right hon. Gentleman just now whether he would pledge himself to lay any of these Charters before the House of Commons, or make them thoroughly public, so as to give the House an opportunity of expressing its opinion upon them, before the English nation was pledged to maintain them in the form in which they were made by the Foreign Office?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, in dealing first with the remarks of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), he thought he might take up a line directly in opposition to him on the question of the Slave Trade. It was the duty of this country to use its best efforts in the suppression of the Slave Trade, and anything like lukewarmness on the part of the Government would be justly considered by the House and the country as a departure from the established policy of the country. Again, he did not think that the case with regard to Lord Palmerston had been correctly stated by the hon. Gentleman. The House was well aware that a large sum of money was annually expended by the country in maintaining a Naval Force for the suppression of the Slave Trade on the West and East Coasts of Africa, the Persian Gulf, and elsewhere, and if it had not been for that Force, the Slave Trade would have very considerably increased. The hon. Gentleman asked if any slave vessels had been taken in the Red Sea. [Mr. Labouchere: At Suakin?] Certainly not. It was hardly likely that any attempts would be made to carry on the trade at that place, when it was occupied by an Egyptian Governor, with a British vessel lying in the harbour; but vessels had been caught coming out of places along the coast in the neighbourhood of Suakin. It was the opinion of naval officers, and of all those best qualified to judge, that the maintenance of Suakin was absolutely necessary for the prevention of the Slave Trade in the Red Sea, and on that ground he trusted that no considerable section of the Committee would vote for the reduction of the Estimate on that account. With regard to the Charters granted to Companies, the hon. Member spoke as if the position was not within the knowledge of the House. The House was in possession of the terms of the Charter of the Royal Niger Company; it knew the powers with which the Company had been entrusted by Her Majesty's Government; and what he had stated was that the companies had been authorized to make Treaties with the Native Chiefs in Africa, and to carry on trade operations on a large scale, and to carry out the principles of British law and order. He had already told the Committee that they had made something like 200 Treaties with Native Chiefs, and he believed that they had introduced good order and government to the countries over which their Charter extended, and that there was every prospect that in due time they would do great good in that part of the world. It had been said that the Companies imported rum; but, as a matter of fact, the importation of that article was now only a quarter of what it was four years ago. He was asked to state distinctly whether a Charter had been granted to the East African Company. It had not been granted. The Company was only in process of formation, and if a Charter should be granted it would be no less binding than that which had been granted to the Royal Niger Company. It would provide that law and order, as the Government understood it—[*Opposition cheers*]—and he hoped they understood the best form of law and order—should be maintained; the proceedings of the Company, wherever its influence might extend, would be constantly under the direction and review of Her Majesty's Government, so that nothing should be done which would not be creditable to this country.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he was afraid he had put his question with regard to the case of Mr. Wilkinson at Madagascar too briefly, as it appeared to have escaped the right hon. Baronet's attention.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, he must ask the hon. Member's pardon for his question having escaped from his memory. He was unable to give any answer upon the case of Mr. Wilkinson without referring to the Papers; but if the hon. Member would repeat his question to-morrow, he would be glad to give him all the information he had upon the subject.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 55; Noes 103: Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 117.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, the Committee would now allow him to pass from Africa to Europe. Now that we knew what our policy was in Africa, he considered that there was nothing more important than that they should know precisely what was the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Europe. When the Conservatives were last in Office the policy of Lord Salisbury was to support the Turkish Empire, and to expend vast sums of money in aiding and abetting the Turk to remain in Europe. At that time the country was said to be entirely permeated by Jingoism ; but at the General Election it was shown that Lord Salisbury was going entirely in opposition to the views of the country, and the result was that he was ejected from Office. It was well known that there were Gentlemen on that side of the House who were ready to sacrifice everything to retain Lord Salisbury in Office, and therefore it became the duty of hon. Members who did not share his Lordship's opinion with regard to Ireland and other parts to keep special watch, so that the country might thoroughly understand, at least, what he was doing in Europe. Last year, Lord Salisbury had done his very best to involve us in war, in order to maintain Prince Alexander of Bulgaria on his throne. It appeared from the Blue Book on the subject that Lord Salisbury had sent despatches to almost every Government in Europe imploring those Governments to join with him in alliance against Russia, and it was only because those Governments were wiser than Lord Salisbury, that we were not involved in a dangerous and costly war. This year there had been a most suspicious interchange of views between Her Majesty's Government and those Governments calling themselves the Triple Alliance. Europe was divided into three camps, and the three Powers had come to an agreement that if one of them should be attacked by Russia they would prevent France from joining that country. He (Mr. Labouchere) did not ask whether that was right or wrong, but he asked what business was it of ours? With those vast armies maintained on the Continent war was always imminent, and there was always a probability of war some day breaking out. A British Minister's duty was to keep his country free from every pledge that might entangle it in such a war. He remembered about two months ago having brought this question forward ; he did not then receive a satisfactory assurance from the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The right hon. Gentleman, it was true, said that the Government had given no assurance to Italy that if she were to join the Triple Alliance we would come to her aid ; but when he (Mr. Labouchere) asked that what had been done should be presented to Parliament the right hon. Gentleman spoke of negotiation still going on, and he declined to state to Parliament what Lord Salisbury and the Foreign Office were doing. Why did the right hon. Gentleman do that? Certainly it was not on account of Austria, Germany, or Italy, because the negotiations took place between them and the English Government. Was it for the House of Commons that this silence was preserved? He could not conceive that it was so. It was then on account of France and Russia that the right hon. Gentleman was afraid to make public what was being done. Now he objected to our entering into negotiations with two or three Foreign Governments which we were afraid to show to other Governments. Let our policy be open, and let it be clearly a policy of peace, and let us say that if those countries were so foolish as to go to war, we should not join with any of them. We had no business directly or indirectly in an alliance which was practically aimed at France; as was well known, she had lost Alsace and Lorraine, and it was not probable that she would always maintain peace. For his own part, he thought that France had a perfect right, whenever she was strong enough to do so, to seek to re-acquire those Provinces. [Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): No, no!] His hon. Friend who said "No, no!" came from Cornwall, and he (Mr. Labouchere) ventured to say that if we were at war with France, and if France seized Cornwall, the hon. Member would call upon the Government to re-acquire it. One of the great evils of annexation of foreign territory by any Power was that the aggrieved country, unless thoroughly crushed and incapable of making an effort, would seize every opportunity that presented itself to regain the territory it had lost. For his own part, he should be sorry if there were an European war ; but he said if they were to take sides at all, if they were to have sympathy with one or other of the Continental Powers, his sympathy would not be with Germany or Austria; it would be on the side of France, because Alsace and Lorraine belonged to France *de jure*, if not *de facto*, and not to Germany. Now that the negotiations had ceased, he thought the Committee ought to have a distinct and specific understanding of what the negotiations really had been before they passed the Vote. He held that no pledges, if there were pledges, ought to be entered into directly or indirectly with Foreign Governments without as soon as possible submitting them to the House of Commons in order that the House of Commons might form an opinion upon them and accept or protest against them at once. The people of the country were now paying the interest on an immense Debt for having been participators in wars on the Continent, not one of which remotely concerned us. He wanted to understand whether the Prime Minister and his Colleagues were in favour of a system of absolute abnegation with regard to Continental politics; were they in favour of simple non-intervention? The country had always been in favour of non-intervention, and the electors of the country did not understand this reckless interference in foreign affairs, the cost of which they had to bear. They had been told that England must play a great part in Europe. He protested entirely against that doctrine, and maintained that they ought to adopt a policy of non-intervention. Let us always be on the defensive, but do not let us mix ourselves up with the melancholy disputes which rage in Europe every few years. The British Empire did not alone consist of these Islands; it consisted of immense Colonies in Australia, America, and other parts of the world. Did the House suppose that those Colonies would maintain their allegiance and love for this country, because they found that we had made some pledge to go to the aid of Italy if she were attacked? We must be, and we were, a great Power spread over the whole world; and whereas we ought to have an army for defence, if we were attacked we ought to be especially careful not to make pledges with regard to Continental affairs, not only in the interests of the inhabitants of these islands, but of those Colonies which, together with them, constitute the British Empire. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give the Committee some specific information as to what had been done with regard to the Triple Alliance, and that he would say that no pledge had been given on our part, either directly or indirectly, in any war which might arise on the Continent. If the right hon. Gentleman could do that without any *arrière pensée*, and not merely as a diplomatic mode of expression, he, for his part, should be satisfied. He remembered, however, that Lord Salisbury pledged himself on a former occasion that no Treaty had been entered into, but it was entered into; his confidence would be extremely qualified therefore, but he would like to hear what was our precise position with regard to Continental Powers at the present moment.

Mr. W. A. M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell) said, he did not always agree with his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere); but he was entirely in accord with him when he said that if we were to maintain a close and intimate connection for purposes of defence between the Colonies and England, it must be made clear by English Members that our policy was to be one of peace. He agreed that there was no more loyal community in the world than the English speaking Colonists, and, he believed, there were none who would more willingly respond to a call for aid if England were attacked; but they would be quick to see the folly of allowing themselves to be mixed up with quarrels with which they had no concern. So far as the Colonies were concerned, they did not care one button about any dynasty or country in Europe, except so far as it affected themselves. While it would be found that in case of a defensive war, they would be ready to help us to the last farthing, he was quite sure that our relations with them would be imperilled unless it was laid down once for all that our Ministers should not act as if they were merely the Ministers of this particular part of the dominions of the Queen, but that the policy of England was adopted in the interests of the whole Empire. If we did not pay adequate regard to the interests of the whole

Empire, we should run a great risk of the ultimate separation of many English-speaking communities of the British Empire. The principal point to which he desired to direct the attention of the Committee was the action of Her Majesty's Government in the Pacific, and especially with regard to Samoa. There was considerable confusion in the minds of all parties interested as to the position we had taken up with regard to Samoan affairs, during the last six or seven years. The Samoan Islands were in the direct track of mail communication between Canada and the United States and New Zealand, and they were the centre of a large English trade in the Pacific. But English interests in Samoa ought not to be measured only by money or the amount of trade with those islands. To begin with, we discovered the islands, and the officers of our men-of-war made the charts which made it safe for ships of all nations to trade with them, and the London Missionary Society had been there 50 years and had established a Training College from which missionaries were sent to all parts of the Pacific. The domestic affairs of the islands were some seven or eight years ago in confusion, and at that time Sir Arthur Gordon established the late King Malietoa on the Throne. As Her Majesty's Commissioner in the Western Pacific he issued a proclamation in which occurred these words—

> "We have accordingly resolved to resume official relations with the party which has for the last three months held undisputed possession of the seat of Government, and is supported by an overwhelming and increasing majority of the people of Samoa."

That was in 1879, and it was followed by a treaty made with the King and signed by him on the 28th of August of that year. It was denied that the King had signed as King of Samoa. But he (Mr. M'Arthur) said that the first treaty was signed by Sir Arthur Gordon on behalf of the English Government, and by Malietoa on behalf of the Samoan Government. Then followed a convention in September, 1879, between Great Britain, Germany, the United States, and Samoa, which was also signed by Sir Arthur Gordon and King Malietoa, and it would be therefore plain that both the treaty and the convention were entered into by Her Majesty's Government with the King as the *de facto* head of the Samoan Government. In 1884 King Malietoa made a treaty with the German Government under protest, and he (Mr. M'Arthur) would point out that for the last ten years persistent attempts had been made by the German Government to obtain domination over the island. On the 29th of December, 1884, Malietoa wrote a pitiful protest to the German Emperor in the following terms:—

> "Your Majesty, I am writing to your Majesty to make known my distress on account of difficulties which are being caused to me and my Government by gentlemen of your Government who are resident in Samoa. I humble myself and beg to entreat your Majesty to listen to my complaint. The first thing concerning which I wish to make known my complaint, your Majesty, is this; The Treaty made on the 10th of November between the Government of Germany and the Government of Samoa, the means by which that treaty was secured were unjust; for we did not want it, and we were not permitted to deliberate and consider well concerning it. I wrote to the German Consul to give me a copy of that treaty in order that we might understand clearly all the words in the treaty, but he did not reply, as he was unwilling to give me and my Government a copy unless we should first accept it, after which he would deliver up a copy to me and my Government. But the reason of our accepting it and of writing our names (Malietoa and Tapua) was on account of our fear through our being continually threatened. I make known these to your Majesty in order that the treaty may be given up, because there are many sentiments in it which are difficult to us. Therefore, I beseech your Majesty not to receive that treaty. There is another matter concerning which I complain to your Majesty. It is in reference to the difficulties which are being caused at the present time by a gentleman of your Government, Mr. Weber. He is continually endeavouring to produce divisions which will bring about wars and quarrels in Samoa. I have many accounts of his acts which he is doing at the present time in order to cause difficulties in Samoa. He is scheming with certain Samoan Chiefs, and keeps giving them money in order that they may obey his will and bring about insurrection against my Government. I complain to your Majesty on account of the wrong things done by Mr. Weber, in order that you may check that gentleman and prevent him from continuing to cause matters to arise which will lead to the shedding of blood of men of my Government. I trust your Majesty and your Government may prosper.
>
> (Signed) MALIETOA,
> King of Samoa."

Now, following that protest of the Samoan King against the action of the then German Agent in Samoa—an action which was not only undertaken in one individual case, but which had been persisted in for 10 years previous, and which was an action deliberately designed to stir up civil war in Samoa, and so give the German Government an excuse to step in and annex the Island on the pretext of restoring peace —following up that protest to the German Emperor a petition signed by nearly all the Samoan Chiefs was sent to Her Majesty the Queen through Sir William Jervois, the Governor of New Zealand, praying her to annex the Island to Great Britain. The following were the words of this Petition :—

"To their Excellencies the Governor and Chief Assistant Rulers of New Zealand. Your Excellencies, We are the King and Chiefs of Samoa. We write to you to make known our prayer and entreaty to Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain that the will of Her Majesty should extend over our islands, and that it should be entirely at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government whether they should form a separate colony or be connected with your Government in New Zealand.

Our King wrote nearly a year ago offering the sovereignty of these Islands to Her Majesty the Queen and Government of Great Britain, and we have been very anxious for an answer, but no answer has yet reached us. We, therefore, send this entreaty to you in order that you may forward it to Her Majesty the Queen and Government of Great Britain. We earnestly entreat you to assist us by praying Her Majesty to accept our request. We earnestly beg that you will listen to our prayer and render us all possible assistance, for our fear is great on account of the information we have received that our islands are about to be seized by Germany. We greatly love and respectt he Government of Great Britain, because we know that the Government acts justly and protects well the people who are under its rule. We do not want any other Government to take possession of our country. We pray and ask your Excellencies to make known our position by telegram to the Queen and Government of Great Britain. We rely on Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain to take means to prevent Germany taking possession of our islands against the wish of ourselves and our people. We trust that your Excellencies by your aid and your entreaty to Her Majesty the Queen will bring to pass the settling up of Her Majesty's sovereignty in Samoa. May your Excellencies live long.

We are,
(Signed) MALIETOA (King),
TAPUA (Vice-King),
and 52 Chiefs."

Well, the threat referred to was not carried out by the German Government probably in consequence of the remonstrances of the American and British Governments; but in 1885 a further attempt was made by Germany to obtain possession of these Islands. An armed force was landed at Apia, the capital, and the German flag was hoisted. The force that so landed set to work to build a fort, but the English and United States Consuls protested successfully, the troops being re-embarked and the attempt to sieze Samoa being abandoned. But in 1886—in May of that year—another attempt was made by Germany to sieze the sovereignty of these Islands. A German squadron arrived at Apia—a fleet of a foreign power came before the capital of an independent Sovereign with whom that foreign power was in treaty relation. Malietoa complained to the Consuls that the Admiral had not visited him, but had gone to the Chief Tamasese, his rival for the Throne, to try and stir up war. On this occasion again the English and American Consuls protested vehemently and officially against the action of the German Commander, and the following declaration was signed by the three Consuls of Germany, Great Britain, and the United States—

"We, the Consuls of Germany, Great Britain, and the United States of America, hereby give notice that we and our Governments do not and never have recognized in any way Tamasese as King of Samoa, and order all Samoans to return to their homes and remain quiet and peaceable."

That declaration succeeded for the moment in quieting the troubles in Samoa itself, and as a result a Conference was appointed to meet at Washington between representatives of Great Britain, Germany, and the United States, and settle which of them was to be what was called the Mandatory Power in Samoa. Things went smoothly enough in that place until the next year —namely, the year 1887. In the year 1887, on the 19th of August, a German squadron of four or five ships arrived at Apia. The German Consul, Mr. Becker, on the 23rd of August—that was to say, four days after the squadron had arrived, wrote a letter to Malietoa, in which he said—

"I am commanded by the Government of Germany to inform you as follows:—1st. That your people attacked German people on the evening of the day celebrating the anniversary of the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor, the 22nd day of March of the present year. This action has caused great offence and much distress of mind to the Emperor and all the German people. I now inform you to become on friendly terms with the Government of Germany in this wise. You will be quick to punish the above offenders, and do so at once. You will also pay the sum of 1,000 dollars to those who were wounded, and you are to make the most abject apology (to Germany). 2nd. From one year to another year in the past your people have stolen animals and produce from plantations belonging to Germans, and have injured their lands. For four years they have continued this abuse of their lands to the extent of more than 3,000 dollars each year. I now inform you that you are to pay quickly for all this abuse by your people. 3rd. For many years past your Judges have been unable by themselves to protect Germans (among you), and this is the reason your people have been abusing the Germans. I now tell you that it is highly necessary that the Government should be more severe in their trials and judgments in order that they may be able to protect Germans in the future. It is my opinion that there is nothing just or correct in Samoa in all the days that you may have the rule, or while you are at the head of the Government. I send you this letter the morning of the present day. I shall be at Afega on the morning of to-morrow (Wednesday), the 24th of August, at 11 o'clock. I want to hear from you your reply.

May you live,

(Signed) BECKER,

German Consul."

As to the first of the three points mentioned in this letter there certainly was some dispute between a few Germans and Samoans in the month of March, and this dispute arose out of a drinking bout on the occasion of the celebration of the birthday of the German Emperor, and this was only another proof of the disastrous effects of the liquor traffic which the Government of Germany had not taken steps to prevent in Samoa. A German was struck by a bottle thrown by someone, and several Samoans were brought before the Consular Court and charged with having thrown the bottle. It did not appear, however, whether the bottle was thrown by a Samoan or by a fellow countryman of the man struck by it, and every native charged with the offence was acquitted. It was alleged by some English and Natives that the bottle was really thrown by a German sailor. This matter, however, was made the subject of a claim for 1,000 dollars compensation. A heavy demand was also made for compensation — 3,000 dollars a-year for four years—for damage to the plantations of German subjects, without a single item of particulars being given to the Samoan King, and that, notwithstanding that the punishment of offenders had nothing to do with the Samoan King, seeing that the cases were dealt with by the Consular Court. The monstrous demand was made that the Samoan King should pay this sum of 13,000 dollars in cash at a day's notice. The whole trade of the country was carried on in produce, and it was next to impossible for the King, or any resident, whether European or Native, to raise such a sum quickly, there being no bank, and the only circulation being Chilian dollars. The King, therefore, very naturally asked for time, sending the Consul the following reply:—

"Afega, Aug. 23, 1887.

J. Becker, Esq.,

German Consul at Apia, Samoa.

Sir,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this date. It will be clear to you that it will be necessary to me to consult my Government and principal chiefs before replying to the grave charges and heavy demands contained in your communication, and the time within which an answer is required does not enable me to do so. I shall, however, at once convene a meeting for the purpose of dealing with your letter, and will send you a reply on Saturday, 27th inst. I regret that it is impossible for me to comply with your demand for an answer to-morrow evening, and trust that you will be satisfied with a reply on the day named.

(Signed) MALIETOA."

The reply given by the German Consul was simply this—on the next day he landed 700 troops from the squadron and issued the following Proclamation:—

"PROCLAMATION.

TAKE NOTICE.

SAMOANS.

I hereby say to you that Tamasese, King of Aana, is declared from this day, by the Government of Germany, to be King of the whole of Samoa.

(Signed) BECKER,

German Consul, Apia, Aug. 25, 1887."

In this Proclamation, Tamasese was made King, and all Malietoa's followers were made rebels. Now he (Mr. W. A. M'Arthur) wanted to know what earthly right the German Government had to declare anyone to be King of Samoa? The King of Samoa had Treaty relations at the time with us, with the United States, and with Germany. It was possible by this time—Aug., 1887—we had given Mandatory Powers to Germany in regard to Samoan affairs, but surely such Mandatory Powers, if given, did not reach to the extent of allowing Germany to nominate anyone she pleased as King of Samoa, and to take whatever steps she pleased against a man with whom we had Treaty relations and who was our own Ally?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, he had not stated that we had given the German Government the Mandatory Power. He had said that it was proposed in the Conference that one of the Powers should exercise influence on behalf of the rest, but that that proposal was not carried out.

Mr. W. A. M'ARTHUR said, if that proposal was not carried out, it made the case very much the worse. He had understood that Her Majesty's Government had not interfered with Germany because it was agreed at the Conference that Germany was to occupy the position of Mandatory Power in Samoa. If, however, that was not the case, and no such agreement was ever entered into, surely it was a monstrous thing for the English Government to allow this outrage upon the King of Samoa to take place without a word of remonstrance. He did not care a straw whether Germany was a Mandatory power or not. If she was the Mandatory Power, notice of what she intended to do ought to have been given to the British Consul in time to prevent him signing a declaration which was issued by the Representatives of the United States and Great Britian; and which was afterwards repudiated by the Government of England; and if she was not the Mandatory Power, the outrage committed by her should not have been passed without remonstrance. Our Consul in Samoa seemed to be of the same mind as the right hon. Baronet (Sir James Fergusson), because he also thought that Germany had no Mandatory Power, and he, therefore, was a party to the following Proclamation, to which he (Mr. W. A. M'Arthur) had just referred:—

"Proclamation.

Whereas the Government of Germany has this day proclaimed Tamasese King of Samoa.

Now, therefore, we, the undersigned Representatives of the United States of America and Great Britain, hereby give notice that we and our Governments do not and never have recognized Tamasese as King of Samoa, but continue as heretofore to recognize Malietoa.

We advise all Samoans to submit quietly to what they cannot help, not to fight whatever the provocation, but to await peaceably the result of deliberations now in progress which alone can determine the future of Samoa.

Harold March Sewall,
Consul General of the United States of America.
W. H. Wilson,
British Pro-Consul.
Apia, Samoa, Aug. 25, 1887."

He (Mr. W. A. M'Arthur) understood the right hon. Baronet now to say that in his opinion Germany had no Mandatory power over Samoa at that time, and that no Mandatory Power was given to her. He would ask, then, why it was that three weeks or a month ago the right hon. Baronet, in an answer to a Question he (Mr. W. A. M'Arthur) had put to him as to why our Consul was not supported in the Proclamation, said that our Consul issued that Proclamation simply because he was not informed of the result of the negotiations between Great Britain and Germany?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, that as the hon. Member was referring to an answer he (Sir James Fergusson) had given to him in the House, it would perhaps be convenient if, at this point, he were to remind the hon. Member of what that answer was. He had said that instructions had been given to Her Majesty's Representative in Samoa to observe neutrality between the German Government and Malietoa, but as it was necessary that the telegraphic message had to be forwarded by vessel from New Zealand, it did not reach him in time. He had acted on his own responsibility, and did not receive his instructions till afterwards.

Mr. W. A. M'ARTHUR said, he again thought the explanation made the case still worse. If Germany had made up her mind to make an attack on Samoa, did the right hon. Baronet mean to say that she only gave the English Government so short notice that they had no time to notify our Consul on the subject, and give him his instructions in time to prevent his taking action on his responsibility? The German squadron must have left the last port it touched at before arriving at Samoa with instructions to make war upon King Malietoa, and surely there should have been an opportunity given for an English vessel to leave simultaneously bearing information as to the exact position of affairs to the

British Consul. Either Germany had acted in defiance of the feelings of England, or she had refused to give our Government notice in time to inform our Consul of what had taken place, and in either case Germany had acted in disregard of our rights and with great disrespect to this country, with whom she was supposed to be on friendly terms. To continue the narrative of what happened in Samoa. After the force of 700 men had been landed, and after the protest he had read had been written and published by the English and American Consuls, King Malietoa wrote a letter. He had fled to the bush, and information was conveyed to him that if he did not surrender himself the capital would be destroyed and his followers would be attacked. Well, he then wrote the following letter to the English and American Consuls:—

> "I, Malietoa, King of Samoa, write this letter to you as I am now in great distress. When the chief Tamasese and others first commenced the present troubles it was my wish to punish them and put an end to the rebellion that they had raised. Acting, however, on the advice and under the assurances of the then British and American Consuls, I refrained from doing so. I was repeatedly told by the Representatives of the British and American Governments that they would afford me and my Government assistance and protection if I abstained from doing anything that might cause war amongst the Samoan people. Relying upon these promises I did not put down the rebellion. Now I find that war has been made upon me by the Emperor of Germany, and Tamasese has been proclaimed King of Samoa. The German forces and the adherents of Tamasese threaten to make war upon all Samoan people who do not acknowledge Tamasese as King. I am innocent of any wrongful act, and I hereby protest against the action of Germany; but as the German nation is strong and I am weak, I yield to their power to prevent my people being slaughtered. I shall deliver myself up to the German forces to-morrow to prevent bloodshed and out of love to my people. I desire to remind you of the promises so repeatedly made by your Governments, and trust that you will so far redeem them as to cause the lives and liberties of my chiefs and people to be respected. I wish to inform you that I fear that the Germans will compel me—as they are now forcing my people—to sign papers acknowledging Tamasese as King, and if I sign such papers it will only be under compulsion, and to avoid war being made on my people.
>
> MALIETOA,
> King of Samoa."

The immediate result of that appeal from the Monarch who had trusted in the word of the English and American Consuls was this: he surrendered himself next day, was put on board a man-of-war and was deported 8,000 miles away from his own country, to the Cameroons. So far from Her Majesty's Government manifesting any interest in this Monarch, and from carrying out the undertaking given by our Consul, it was actually a fact that only six weeks ago they did not know where the German Government had carried this unfortunate King. He (Mr. W. A. M'Arthur) had already spoken of the extraordinary answer given by the right hon. Baronet as to the repudiation by this country of our Consul's Proclamation; but he believed, so far as he could gather, that the whole action of Germany in Samoa was the result of agreement between Her Majesty's Government and the German Government made at an earlier date than 1887. He was not in the secrets of the Foreign Office and was not likely to be, and therefore he had no certain information; but it certainly did appear to him that the course we had allowed Germany to pursue in Samoa was the result of an agreement entered into deliberately between ourselves and Germany in 1886, or, at any rate, at an earlier date than 1887. At that time there was a great deal of talk outside this House of the somewhat strained relations of this country and Germany on account of our policy in Egypt, and it appeared to him that a deliberate bargain was entered into between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Germany by which this unhappy Monarch was sacrificed for the sake of keeping things straight in Europe. This was not the first time that the interests of our Colonists in Australia had been sacrificed on account of quarrels in Europe with which the Colonies had no connection whatever. They were told the Colonial Conference was consulted upon this question; but the references in the Minutes of Conference were obscure and meagre, and it was not the fact that the delegates were actually apprised of the fact of the German intervention in Samoa. The references in the Minutes were no answer whatever to the question which he had asked, which was, whether the Australian Colonies had been consulted as to whether or not Germany should be the Mandatory Power in Samoa? He did not believe they ever were consulted. There was a very strong feeling on the matter in Australia, and he believed that he would be confirmed in that statement by all who took any interest in Australian affairs, and who watched the progress of these questions. There was a strong feeling in New Zealand on the matter, and in other parts of Australia, against the action we had permitted the German Government to take. He would like to ask another question on this point—namely, when the Mandate was presented to the Conference, and it was agreed that the Commissioners should consider the matter, why was not our Consul at Samoa advised of the opinion of Her Majesty's Government; and why was he allowed, five months afterwards, to publish this Proclamation which he had read pledging the faith of the British Government only to be told, subsequently, that he had acted on his own responsibility and without sufficient information? There was ample time to communicate with him as to the action he should take and the action which was being taken by the Government. He had said that the Australian Colonies had not been consulted. Well, neither did he believe that the American Government was consulted as regarded the abandonment of our Treaty with them, for he found a letter from Mr. Bayard, the American Secretary of State, to Mr. Pendleton, the American Minister in Berlin, in which he expressed regret that a powerful Government like that of Germany had not found it possible to take a more liberal view of the condition of Samoan life and civilization, and the unfortunate condition of the Native King, who, in regarding himself as the rightful ruler, could point in confirmation of his title to a long series of acknowledgments by all the Treaty Powers. The Secretary of State went on to say that, in the opinion of the Government of the United States, the course adopted by Germany could not be regarded as marked by that just consideration which the ancient friendship of the United States and Germany entitled the former to expect, and that the present condition of affairs in the Samoan Islands could not, in view of circumstances under which it was brought about and was still maintained, be regarded by the United States as satisfactory. So that the Government had offended the Australian Colonies, they had offended the American people, they had broken a Treaty entered into with our American Allies, they had sacrificed Malietoa, and for the sake of an advantage—he could not say what advantage, but evidently for the sake of some advantage—because he could not imagine otherwise that any English Government would have been guilty of such wholesale violation of engagements which they had entered into. He could tell the Committee, he thought, the secret of the anxiety of Germany to obtain possession of Samoa. Some years ago a large trade was done with that Island by German traders in guns and liquor. Payment for those articles was made in grants of land. Every grant of land in that country had to be ratified by the King, and the King, finding out how these grants had been obtained, had refused to ratify any of the transfers. Why Germany wished to bring about a change in the government of the country was obvious. They wished to obtain a ratification of these grants of land, and as the King refused his consent, they espoused the cause of the rebel Tamasese, whom they appointed King in place of Malietoa, and to whom they assigned a German Prime Minister, who, of course, dictated the King's policy, being supported by 700 German troops. The legal claims of the German traders to the grants of land would, of course, be recognized, and German influence would develop until eventually the Island was annexed to Germany. So far as he (Mr. W. A. M'Arthur) was concerned, he should prefer that Germany would annex the Island at once. Every threat which might be addressed to English or other European residents in Samoa would be put down to the action or the influence of the Native King, and as having nothing to do with the German Government, whereas the person who would be really pulling the string would be the German Prime Minister, whose influence in the Island at present was absolute. If Australian interests in the Pacific were not to be supported by this country, and if the Government of this country were prepared, for the sake of European quarrels, absolutely to disregard what went on in countries close to our Australian Colonies, he, for one, failed to see any advantage to the Colonies in the Imperial connection. The Australian Colonies had stood a good deal in the past. They had been loyal; they still were loyal—there was no country more loyal on the face of the earth. They had helped us in time of war, and they were, no doubt, ready to do it again; but they, in return, did expect some little recognition of their claims upon us. How long would they continue to be loyal if the Government persisted in such a course as that they had adopted in connection with Samoa? It was a monstrous thing that the interests of all our Australian Colonies should be sacrificed for the sake of some paltry advantage which Her Majesty's Government hoped to obtain in Europe. He did not propose to move a reduction of the Vote, as he did not think it would serve any useful purpose to take a Division upon such a subject as this; but he did wish to enter his earnest protest against what he thought the most scandalous violation of an agreement and solemn pledges, entered into by a Representative of this country with a Native Monarch, against whom we had no cause of complaint that he had ever heard of.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, he had no intention of following the hon. Member for the St. Austell Division of Cornwall (Mr. W. A. M'Arthur) into the case of the Native Potentate he had brought before the Committee. He had listened carefully to the hon. Member's lucid and forcible speech, as, no doubt, the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had done, and he had no doubt that the right hon. Baronet would find in that statement material that required an answer. He had been much interested in the forcible remarks that fell from the hon. Member, at the outset of his speech, as to the feelings of the Colonies on this subject, and the Government might depend upon it that the hon. Member for the St. Austell Division, in his remarks as to the feelings of the Australian Colonies, was representing a vast body of feeling, not only in the Colonies, but also in this country. Those who knew the hon. Member were aware of his close connection with Australia, and it must be obvious to all that his observations, as expressive of the sentiments of Her Majesty's Colonial subjects, were worthy of the most careful consideration. But his (Mr. J. E. Ellis's) purpose in rising this evening was rather to say a few words in endorsement of the observations which had fallen from the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and also in endorsement of the observations which had fallen the evening before the Whitsuntide Recess from the hon. Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), as to the general question of our foreign policy. He thought the Government could have no reason to complain of their desiring to have a clear and explicit declaration of their policy in regard to foreign affairs. During the debate on the Address, the subject was very lightly touched upon, and with that exception, and during the discussion on the Vote on Account, which the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had attempted so peremptorily to close, the House had had absolutely no opportunity this Session of learning from the Government their views on the question of foreign policy. He (Mr. J. E. Ellis) was one of those who was free to confess that he could not forget that the present Prime Minister was Foreign Secretary during a large part of that disastrous period from 1874 to 1880, when a Conservative Administration was in Office and commanding a majority in the House. He was willing to hope, and he believed from some murmurs which reached his ears at that moment, that some occupants of the Benches opposite looked upon the period to which he referred as a disastrous one from the point of view of foreign policy. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] He noticed that the hon. Baronet the Member for London (Sir Robert Fowler) dissented from this view; but he commended to his notice the words of truth and wisdom which had lately been uttered from the Mansion House by the present Lord Mayor of London. He (Mr. J. E. Ellis) was willing to believe that the policy of Her Majesty's Government was now not such as it had been between the years 1874 and 1880 He was free to confess, though sitting on those (the Opposition) Benches, that he was not particularly proud of some of the policy pursued by the Liberal Government between the years 1880 and 1885. He did not believe that their policy in South Africa and Egypt, and still more recently in Burmah, redounded to the credit of this country. One of the earliest votes he had given in Parliament was against what had taken place in Burmah, and he should be quite willing to repeat that vote if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) were in power at this moment and were pursuing a similar policy. He maintained that not only was it necessary to ascertain from Her Majesty's Government a clear and explicit declaration of their policy with regard to foreign affairs, because the noble Marquess the present Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister (the Marquess of Salisbury) was the person who was Foreign Secretary from 1874 to 1880, but there was a special reason for this necessity just now. They had before them at the present time several Bills of a very serious character relating to the National Defences. One of them was set down for discussion on Monday next, and he did venture to assert, without for a moment going into the merits of these Bills, that it was impossible to discuss them or enter into the general discussion which they had had more than once in the House on the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot); it was impossible for them to deal with these matters except as the outcome and result of the declared foreign policy of Her Majesty's Government. They wanted to know what view the Government took of the means of carrying out their policy. He had listened with great pleasure to some words which had fallen from the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) a short time ago, when he had assured them that the Government had not entered into any engagement pledging the action of this country, which was not known to the House, and that the Government were free to deal with events as they arose and as the interests of the country might require. Those, he doubted not, were well-considered words spoken by the right hon. Baronet on behalf of Her Majesty's Government; but he ventured to press the right hon. Baronet a little further, and to ask what was the key-note of their policy with regard to intervention or non-intervention in European affairs? Of course, they were all aware that this great Empire was a member of the European family of nations, and they had no desire to shirk the responsibilities attached to that position. But he ventured to deny emphatically that we ought to consider ourselves situated like the Continental States. That was the distinction he drew. Geographically, and upon other grounds, we occupied a distinct and insular position in the great federation of nations in Europe, and the question he wished to address to the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was whether he agreed with that view? Did the right hon. Baronet consider that though we were a member of the European family, we were not so in the same sense as other European Powers on the Continent? Such a position carried with it grave consequences, and if they had due regard to that fact they would always find themselves upon pretty safe ground. He (Mr. J. E. Ellis) wished to recall to the House some words which were used by the noble Lord the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington) when he issued his Election address in 1880. The noble Lord had used some very striking language. Speaking of the power and influence of this country in March, 1880, the noble Lord had said—

> "They are the result of a gradual but constant progress in the moral and material condition of the people, and consequent progress in the moral and material resources of the country. Every advance in the direction of civil and religious liberty, of self-government, of the freedom of the Press, of trade, and of popular education, has been a step in the growth of the true power of the Empire."

Those were wise words, he ventured to say. He, for one, should stand by the words of the noble Lord which he had just quoted; and he hoped Her Majesty's Government would approve of them, and base their policy on the ideas expressed in them. He looked upon this question of foreign policy as to some extent irrespective of Party. He believed that both Parties in the past in regard to foreign policy had been sinners, and he was quite ready to support the present Government in any efforts they might make to restrain some of their more ardent followers from dangerous proposals and evil courses. He hoped, therefore, they might hear from the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a more distinct and clear note on this subject before the Vote was taken. He thought he might say that the progress the Government would make with some Bills which would come before the House, and to which he had alluded, would be, in some degree, dependent upon the assurance the right hon. Baronet gave the Committee that the Government adhered to a policy of strict peace and non-intervention in Europe.

MR. A. E. PEASE (York) said, that since the Papers relating to King Ja Ja, of Opobo, had been laid upon the Table of the House and presented to Members—he thought at the end of April—he had hoped to find them made matter of discussion; but there had been no opportunity up to the present for discussing the subject and bringing it before the attention of the House and the country, although it affected, as he believed, the honour of this country very deeply. It was only during the last hour or two that he had discovered that he would be in Order in raising the question of King Ja Ja, of Opobo, and especially to bring before the notice of the House the conduct of Consul Johnston on the West Coast of Africa; and, therefore, it was that he desired, to some extent, to claim the indulgence of the Committee whilst he endeavoured to bring the case of the African potentate Ja Ja before the notice of the Committee. He thought he might state, as a preliminary, that for many years past British merchants trading at Opobo and the West Coast of Africa, and having factories near to the State over which King Ja Ja ruled, had complained that that African potentate excluded white men from trading with the interior. From the correspondence that appeared in the Papers laid before the House, it was quite clear that Ja Ja admitted that he had endeavoured to prevent white men from trading without the interference of a middleman with the Natives of the interior. Ja Ja admitted, but, at the same time, it appeared that he had Treaty rights on his side, and he also pleaded that the necessities of the case obliged him to levy duties on exports from the interior, and which passed through the hands of British traders. Ja Ja's plea of necessity amounted to this—that he ruled over a poor country where there was little or no land susceptible of cultivation, and that he existed as a State chiefly by the profits which he, as a middleman, could obtain by selling products from the interior to British merchants on the coast. But Ja Ja had still stronger claims to the position which he held, and they were the Treaties which, from time to time, had been entered into with him by the Representatives of this country; and if the Committee would excuse his quoting from the Papers for a few moments, he should like to allude to some of these Treaties and negotiations entered into by this country with King Ja Ja. On January 4th, 1873, a Commercial Treaty was signed with King Ja Ja. In the first article of that Treaty were the words—

> "In the name of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, we hereby acknowledge Ja Ja King of Opobo, and fully entitled to consideration as such."

In the third article of the Treaty the King undertook to prevent any trading establishment or hulk being set up in or off the Town of Opobo and prevent

> "Any trading vessel to come higher up the river than the White Man's Beach, opposite Hippopotamus Creek."

The Article went on to say—

> "If any trading ship or steamer proceeds further up the river than the creek above mentioned, after having been duly warned to the contrary, the said trading ship or steamer may be seized by King Ja Ja and detained until a fine of a hundred puncheons be paid by the owner to King Ja Ja."

Now, this Treaty was signed by King Ja Ja, John E. Commerell (Commodore), and Charles Livingstone, who was then Consul. He believed that if Sir John Commerell had been in the House at this time, he would, to some extent, at any rate, have sympathised with the view which he (Mr. A. E. Pease) took on this matter, and which he believed was not confined to hon. Members sitting on that (the Opposition) side of the House. Now, at a later date, in 1884, another Treaty was entered into with King Ja Ja, and amongst the articles of that Treaty, which was submitted to King Ja Ja for his signature, was one enumerated No. 6, which contained the following provisions:—

> "The subjects and citizens of all countries may freely carry on trade in every part of the territories of the King and chiefs parties hereto, and may have houses and factories therein."

Now, Ja Ja all through had protested against the principle of Free Trade being carried into his country, and had refused to be a signatory to the Treaty if that clause were included, and it was only when that clause in the Treaty was struck out that he consented to sign the document. That Article was deleted and it then obtained the signature of Ja Ja. Further than that, he (Mr. A. E. Pease) might allude to a letter which appeared on page 29 of these Papers from Consul Hewett to King Ja Ja. In this letter the Consul says—

> "I write, as you request, with reference to the word 'protection' as used in the proposed Treaty, that the Queen does not want to take your country or your markets."

And he went on to say—

> "She undertakes to extend her Gracious favour and protection which will still leave your country under your Government. She has no wish to disturb your rule."

Further on, at a later stage of the correspondence reported here, on instructions being given at the Admiralty to hold an inquiry, the position of King Ja Ja was still further recognized in a letter written to the Admiralty in September of last year. The Foreign Office, writing to the Admiralty, says—

> "It must, however, be borne in mind that Ja Ja refused to agree to Article 6 of this Treaty when it was negotiated, and it may be consequently inferred that he is within his rights in denying free trade to British subjects within his actual territory. That privilege, however, does not warrant him in barring the trade to the inland districts beyond his own jurisdiction, such as Ohombela. To this point the inquiry should be specially addressed."

Well, he (Mr. A. E. Pease) thought the principal point to which the attention of the Committee should be directed was the action of Consul Johnston in connection with this difficulty with the King of Opobo. It was in January, 1886, that Consul Johnston first undertook his duties on that coast, and it was quite evident from the correspondence which had been submitted to the House that this gentleman undertook his duties with a decided animus against the King, because, if they turned to page 34 of the Papers, they would find Consul Johnston writing to the Marquess of Salisbury on January the 15th, the first day he arrived at Bonny on the West Coast of Africa, as follows:—

> "I need not recapitulate the antecedents of Ja Ja; once a slave, then a trader, and lastly, a powerful chief; but I might remind your Lordship that for the last three years the arrogance of this man, who solely owes his existence and wealth to the protection of the British Government, has been sensibly increasing, so that he now affects an independence and an arbitrary rule quite at variance with the several treaties and agreements he has signed with British authorities."

Vice Consul Johnston made that assertion before he had been at the place a day, and when he could not have ascertained by personal observation any of the facts of the case. It was alleged—though of this he (Mr. A. E. Pease) could not speak of his own knowledge—that Vice Consul Johnston boasted, on board the steamship *Calabar*, that on his arrival in this part of the world he would deport King Ja Ja. He (Mr. A. E. Pease) would not allude to the long recriminatory correspondence reported in the Papers submitted to the House, but he wished to refer to the circumstances under which King Ja Ja was deported, first to the Gold Coast and then, he believed, to an Island in the West Indies. After Vice Consul Johnston arrived on the West Coast of Africa, Ja Ja found his position worse than it had ever been under previous Vice Consuls there, through whom he had correspondence with British traders with regard to having uninterrupted concourse with the interior, so that he, King Ja Ja, undertook to send envoys to England to lay his case before Lord Salisbury. The envoys arrived in England on the 26th August, and on the 27th the deputation from Opobo wrote rather a long letter impressing the chief points of the grievances they had come to represent to Lord Salisbury. No notice apparently was taken of that correspondence for some time. The letter was written on August 27; on September 12 Vice Consul Johnston telegraphed to the Foreign Office the telegram which appeared on page 54, which was as follows:—

> "Ask immediate permission remove Ja Ja temporarily Gold Coast. Organizes armed attacks, obstructs water ways markets. Intrigues render this course imperative. Dispatch following explanations. Ask Admiralty telegraph assistance."

This telegram was received on September 12, at 3.55 p.m. Apparently no answer was sent—at any rate there was nothing to show in the Papers submitted to the House that any answer was sent to this telegram asking leave to seize King Ja Ja—but on the same afternoon, although some time had elapsed since the King of Opobo's envoys had arrived in London, a telegram was despatched from the Foreign Office to the deputation as follows:—

> "Sir James Fergusson, on behalf of Lord Salisbury, will receive deputation at Foreign Office to morrow at 2.30."

Now, what he (Mr. A. E. Pease) wanted to impress upon the attention of the Committee was this—that Vice Consul Johnston acted on his own authority in the first instance in seizing King Ja Ja. He did not apparently at any time receive the required sanction of the Foreign Office——

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON was understood to dissent from the statement of the hon. Member.

Mr. A. E. PEASE said, if he was incorrect he desired to withdraw the statement, and would go straight to the case of Vice Consul Johnston's action in the matter, and he thought that it was betrayed in his despatches, which were to be found at page 51 and page 53, that he was prejudiced against King Ja Ja. He said, in a despatch to the Marquess of Salisbury, received on the 1st of December, 1887—

> "Their trade is stopped by the machinations of one of the most grasping, unscrupulous, and overbearing of mushrooms, who ever attempted to throttle the growing commerce of white men with the rich interior."

The despatch, after describing the rich interior, said—

> "Here is the country where white men may hope to settle and enjoy good health, and it is from lands like these that runaway slaves and upstart Kings like Ja Ja are trying to keep us from penetrating lest their ill-gotten gains should be diminished. . . . . . . I can understand the complaints that the merchants make of the lukewarm way in which the British Government support British traders who are no longer content to sit down on the unhealthy fringe of the swampy coast, and trade in a peddling way through middlemen, but who desire to plant their establishments in the rich interior, and avoid the tax on the produce which the middlemen have hitherto imposed. I can understand these complaints; but, at the same time, I feel sure that they are unfounded; that Her Majesty's Government, so far from desiring to support Native Chiefs or usurping middlemen in their claims to close their markets to the white men, will insist uniformly on freedom of trade in all districts under Her Majesty's protection, or within the provisions agreed to at the Berlin Conference."

The most humiliating incident in the conduct of the British Government or their Representatives in dealing with King Ja Ja was the arrest of his Ambassadors on their way home at the instance of the Vice Consul Johnston. He saw with regret that the sanction of the Foreign Office was given to that proceeding, which he was sure would not have been sanctioned in the case of the Ambassadors of any other Power, and was only sanctioned in this case because Ja Ja happened to be a black King. He now came to the most disgraceful of all these proceedings—namely, the seizure and deportation of King Ja Ja himself at a time when he was under the supposed protection of a safe-conduct given to him by our Vice Consul. On page 81 of the Blue Book would be found Vice Consul Johnston's own account of this transaction. The despatch, which was dated the 24th of September, said—

> "When I returned to Opobo I took counsel with Lieutenant and Commander Pelly of H.M.S. *Goshawk*, and then I wrote to Ja Ja inviting him to a meeting on Monday, the 19th September."

When the King was invited to meet the Vice Consul, his suspicions appear to have been aroused as to the treatment he was likely to receive, and he asked for a white man to be sent as a hostage for his safety. The despatch continued—

> "I refused to do this: but advised Ja Ja strongly, and in his own interest, to attend the meeting, at the same time pledging myself that, whether he accepted or rejected my terms, no force should be put upon him to prevent his leaving the Court if he refused to submit to my proposal."

He did not know what Mr. Johnston's idea of "no force" might be, or of an honourable pledge given to a Native; but he would quote his own account of the proceeding by which he entrapped the King. He said—

> "Punctually, at 11, I entered the Court with the Commander and officers of H.M.S. *Goshawk*, and read aloud to Ja Ja an Ultimatum, of which a copy is inclosed. I gave him one hour for consideration; but before 10 minutes were over he sent to say he accepted my terms. In half-an-hour he had surrendered himself to Captain Pelly, and by noon he was placed safely on board H.M.S. *Goshawk*. His large following of people was simply stupified at their King's surrender, and, for a short time, refused to disperse. When, however, they saw him proceeding quietly on board the *Goshawk*, under the escort of Captain Pelly, they began to realize the situation, and all of them quietly entered their canoes and paddled back to the town. Throughout all these transactions no force whatever was used, although it was made patent to all present that the *Goshawk* was ready for action, and would instantly bring

her guns into play if the crowd of Natives attempted any violent intervention."

He (Mr. A. E. Pease) must now trouble the Committee with a few words from the Ultimatum, which, in his opinion, was a monstrous and wicked document. The Vice Consul said—

> "I have been instructed by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to inform you that the Government of Her Majesty the Queen has decided that you are to leave Opobo immediately, and accompany me to Accra in the British Colony of the Gold Coast."

Now, the Vice Consul had not the slightest authority for such a statement as that, which was practically untrue, and the word "falsehood" was not too strong to apply to it. Let the Committee recollect the pledge given to the King that there should be no force used, and compare it with the following paragraph of the Ultimatum :—

> "In the hope that you will see the absolute necessity of complying with the orders of the British Government, I have been instructed to invite you to surrender yourself to me in a peaceable manner, as, indeed, you would naturally do, if you were confident of your innocence of having in any way wronged British subjects or committed breaches of Treaty obligations. But should you be so misguided as to refuse to submit to the orders of the British Government it will be taken as an admission that you are guilty of the charges brought against you. I shall then proceed to use an armed force, which will mercilessly crush any resistance you may offer. You will be deposed, and tried for your misdeeds, as a common malefactor; your property will be confiscated, and your country brought to ruin by the stoppage of trade. Should you attempt to evade me by escaping into the interior you will be declared an outlaw, a reward will be offered for your capture, which will be sufficiently large to tempt the greed of your treacherous followers, and your bitter enemies among the surrounding tribes, hitherto held in restraint by the British Government, will be free to avenge on you old grievances. No man ever stood in a more critical position than you are in at the present moment, King Ja Ja. But you are still able to choose. Surrender to Accra, and you may count on receiving every consideration at my hands, and of being justly dealt with. But refuse to do so, and you leave this Court a ruined man for ever, cut off from your people and your children. I give you one hour to consider, and you will give me your answer here. If you consent to accompany me to Accra, you will be placed on board H.M.S. *Goshawk*, and I will give you 24 hours to make your preparations."

He thought such proceedings as this towards a black King on the West Coast of Africa did not redound to the credit of the country or those at the head of affairs. He looked upon the whole of them as concerning the national honour and discreditable to the country; and, considering the manner in which the King had been entrapped—an example which ought not to have been set by the English nation—he had felt it his duty to bring these scandalous proceedings before the attention of the Committee and the country also.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.) said, before other hon. Members addressed the Committee he thought that he ought to reply to the various remarks that had been made on this portion of the Estimate. The Committee would, he believed, feel that he had some slight reason for complaint that matters of such importance should be introduced at a moment's notice, because his experience of the House of Commons at the present time, and in days gone by, was that really important cases should be brought forward upon Notice, especially when they were raised upon Estimates to which they did not properly belong. He believed the Committee would recognize that the question of the conduct of a Consul would properly arise upon the Consular Vote; and one hon. Member who desired to call attention to an incident relating to the Consular Service had, on his (Sir James Fergusson's) pointing out that fact, said that he would deal with it when the Consular Vote came forward. Therefore, if he should deal with the case brought forward by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. A. E. Pease) in an imperfect manner, he hoped that it would be in the mind of the Committee that he was replying at a moment's notice. It was, of course, his duty to have knowledge of the proceedings at the Foreign Office for the last two or three years, and he hoped he should be able to satisfy the Committee that the conduct of the Consul in question had not been so bad as the hon. Gentleman had stated, and that Her Majesty's Government had had reason for supporting him in the certainly extreme course he had adopted with regard to King Ja Ja. The hon. Member had begun by saying that he would admit at once that King Ja Ja had stopped European trade in the interior of his dominions, and he said he had the excuse of poverty for doing so. But Rob Roy had, he believed, the same excuse for levying contributions on the highway at one time, although, when the country began to be regularly governed, that excuse was not admitted. [An hon. MEMBER: No, no!] At all events, poverty had not been admitted as an excuse for unlawful transactions at any time. He could not go into all the particulars of the case, but believed he should be able to give the Committee a sufficient account of it. The hon. Member had quoted a Treaty made with King Ja Ja by Consul Livingstone and Admiral (then Commodore) Commerell, whose absence they all regretted. By that Treaty, undoubtedly, Ja Ja gave free access to the Opobo markets, and probably the arrangement was the best that could be made at the time. The Committee would remember that they were endeavouring to win over the tribes to legitimate trading; and it was therefore expedient, in the early stages of such an effort, that certain Chiefs should be selected as middlemen, through whom the trade with the interior should be conducted. Ja Ja was permitted to make certain charges upon goods passing through by the Treaty of 1873; but he had not limited himself to those charges, and he had made others which he had no right to make. Those charges were declared by Lord Rosebery to amount to a violation of the Treaty, and he also decided that the King had forfeited his rights. Lord Rosebery accordingly considered that our relations with Ja Ja were limited to the Treaty of 1884, which bound him to act under the advice of Her Majesty's Consul. That was quite sufficient for the purposes of Her Majesty's Government, whose intention was to establish free trade in the interior. He might remind the Committee that the British Government were under considerable liabilities to other nations with regard to maintaining freedom of commerce with the interior. They were bound at the Congress at Berlin to establish free commerce for all nations; and he would like to ask the hon. Gentleman if he supposed that if we had permitted Ja Ja to bar the trade of British merchants the French and the Germans would have submitted to his interference? Would they have paid any regard to his pleading that he was a poor man, and had to make money as he could? He rather thought they would not admit that as a reason for denying them freedom of trade with the interior. It was quite true that Consul Livingstone and Commodore Commerell had made an arrangement with the King; but it was absolutely absurd to suppose that a Native would be allowed for all time to cut off communication with the interior; such a claim would be monstrous. Why, if we made a Treaty with a great Power, we could terminate it on giving six or twelve months' notice, and was it reasonable to suppose that we could not terminate a Treaty with King Ja Ja? The Treaty, then, had been terminated by Lord Rosebery by reason of the conditions having been broken; and that, he (Sir James Fergusson) ventured to think, was an answer to the question of the hon. Gentleman opposite. The hon. Gentleman said that if Admiral Commerell were present, he would, no doubt, sympathize with Ja Ja. He believed that many naval officers who had been on the coast would sympathize with him as a man who had been misled, and got himself into serious difficulties. He was a savage with qualities which made him popular, and probably if he had not listened to bad advice he would have remained undisturbed. Unfortunately, he received such advice; he would not listen to the warnings given by the Consul and by Her Majesty's Government, and he had declared his intention of not allowing trade with inland markets, unless it passed through his hands. Was not Ja Ja fairly warned? Could he be allowed to act in defiance of a Treaty and the Protectorate which we had established? Had he not entered into an agreement on board one of Her Majesty's ships to give free access to the upper markets, and did he not repudiate that agreement afterwards? As to the suggestion that the agreement was made under pressure, undoubtedly Her Majesty's Government would not have permitted him to stop the trade up the river; but when he had made the agreement he was bound to allow free trade up the river, and when Consul Johnston went up to open the markets he was resisted by Ja Ja's men, pelted, and threatened with sticks and firearms, and he was forced to return. The hon. Member had referred to a mission from the King; but when the son of Ja Ja was received at the Foreign Office, there was no knowledge at that Office of the outrage which had been committed upon our Representative, and had it been known Ja Ja's messengers would not have been received in the manner in which they were received. But when the facts were known, what would have been said in this country if we had submitted to having our Consul insulted and driven back? It would have been said that the Government had shown disregard of British trade, and British *prestige* would have gone down on the coast of Africa. The hon. Member had said that the action of Consul Johnston was treacherous. But what treachery was there in telling Ja Ja that he was required to go on board a British ship to answer for his offences? On board he was told that on account of his failure to fulfil his engagement, and on account of the attack made upon the Consul by his orders, he was to be removed to Accra to meet an inquiry; he was told that he was free to go away; but that if he went, and if there were any attempt to resist the authority of the Consul, undoubtedly hostilities would be resorted to. What should have been the conduct of Her Majesty's Representative when he received orders, not only from Lord Salisbury alone, but also from Lord Rosebery, that he was to open up free trade by the river? Was it not the duty of the British Consul to assert the dignity and authority of the Power which he represented? Well, having summoned Ja Ja on board ship, the Consul told him that he would have to go to Accra to answer the charge against him, and that if he failed to do so he would be treated as an enemy. That was what the hon. Member called treachery; but he (Sir James Fergusson) called it plain dealing. The Consul had not promised one thing and done another. The hon. Member said also that Consul Johnston told a falsehood in saying that he had been instructed by the Secretary of State to inform the King that Her Majesty's Government had decided that he was to leave Opobo, and accompany him to Accra in the British Colony on the Gold Coast. It was true that he had not received such instructions; but he thought that he had—[*Ironical cheers.*]—and he had some ground for that supposition, for his instructions might well be supposed to have given him such power. Hon. Members would see that a telegram of the 12th of September contained the words—"Your proposals are approved." That message really referred to another matter; but it had crossed on the way another message from the Consul. The hon. Member had read the Papers very carefully; but he had not been able to see that the despatch might very well be considered by Mr. Johnston to be a sanction on the part of Her Majesty's Government of his direction to the King to accompany him to Accra. But the act of Consul Johnston was in full accord with the well-understood practice in these matters, as it would be seen by a despatch from Lord Salisbury of the 24th of November, in which he reviewed the whole transaction, and formally ratified his acts. The hon. Member said that Ja Ja would not have been treated in this way if he were not black. No doubt, Ja Ja was black; and if he had not been a savage and in a savage country he would have been in different circumstances; but there were also other black people in Africa. Ja Ja had not been particularly gentle in his dealings with coloured people, and in these Papers it would be seen that a case of great atrocity was recorded against him soon after he was established by Admiral Commerell. He thought he had said enough to show the Committee that Her Majesty's Government, in sanctioning the act of Consul Johnston, had done so because he had shown a strong regard for British interests and asserted British authority in a not unbecoming manner. Successive Governments had warned Ja Ja that he was acting contrary to the Treaty which had been made with him, and that the British Government could not permit him to interfere permanently with free trade to the interior. The carrying out of the agreement that there should be free trade was resisted, the Consul being threatened and driven back by Ja Ja's Chiefs and men.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) said, there was no evidence in the Papers that Ja Ja was responsible for the acts of these men.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, he did not know what evidence the hon. Member wanted. There was not the slightest doubt that the men some of whose names were given were Ja Ja's men, and the action was only in conformity with his previous conduct in having first made an agreement and then repudiated it. Consul Johnston, following up the declaration of Lord Rosebery, and acting in conformity with the views of Her Majesty's Government, insisted on free trade with the interior. The hon. Member had not gone into the later stages of the affair; but he (Sir James Fergusson) wished to say that Lord Salisbury had decided that the inquiry into Ja Ja's conduct should take place, not before any Consular officer, who might be supposed to be committed to a definite line hostile to Ja Ja, but that it should be undertaken by a high naval authority—namely, the Naval Commander on the coast, who had always been supposed to hold the balance between the Consular officers, the traders, and the Natives. Admiral Sir Walter Hunt-Grubbe was considered likely to be more impartial and trusted by all parties, including the Natives than any other officer on the coast. The Committee would not, of course, suppose that the inquiry was conducted with all the forms of the Court of Queen's Bench in London; but it was conducted in a fair manner by the Admiral, who was satisfied that the main charge against Ja Ja had been proved, and, indeed, it was admitted by himself. It was, therefore, deemed advisable that Ja Ja should be removed for a time, at any rate, from the coast of Africa, where his influence was extraordinary, because it was one of those curious superstitious influences occasionally exercised by a negro over his fellows. The place where Ja Ja was to reside was St. Vincent, where the old Government House had been prepared for his reception; he would be treated with consideration, and not like a criminal, and when a settled form of government had been established in this region—he hoped before long—there would be no reason why he should not be permitted to return. If the British authority was not to be despised on the coast of Africa, it was absolutely necessary that such breaches of Treaty and such insults as had been offered to the Consul by Ja Ja should not be passed over. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had expressed great distrust of Lord Salisbury's foreign policy, and was very anxious to elicit a specific declaration that the Government would not interfere in Continental affairs. As the hon. Member had stated that he should in no circumstances have confidence in the present Government, he was afraid, whatever declaration he (Sir James Fergusson) might be authorized to make, that he could hardly hope to secure the approval or confidence of the hon. Member. But these were grave matters, and he wished he could say that the hon. Member had dealt with them with adequate seriousness. They had often doubts of the hon. Member's motives. He (Sir James Fergusson) did not ascribe motives; but he thought that those who heard the speech of the hon. Gentleman must think that he had treated these grave matters in a tone of great levity. The hon. Gentleman went so far as to say that if there were a war between France and Germany, his sympathies would be with the Power that wished to regain Alsace and Lorraine. Those who had seriously to consider these matters looked upon a breach of the peace and a state of war between Powers of stupendous strength and enormous resources as an evil to themselves and to all other nations—an evil so terrible that they could not bring themselves lightly to talk of a breach of the peace and all the horrors of war on the Continent of Europe, and the consequent disturbance of credit and commerce all over the world. He was not going to fall into the temptation of lightly making declarations on important subjects. The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis) had quoted a declaration which he made in the earlier part of the Session on the subject, to the effect that he (Sir James Fergusson) had told the House that Her Majesty's Government had contracted no engagement for material action that was not known to Parliament. But he had also told the Committee, in the present month, that Her Majesty's Government had made no fresh engagement since the previous declaration, and that their policy remained the same. He thought that those assurances, which were accepted by the House earlier in the Session, might suffice now, unless the hon. Member's object was not so much to elicit information as to place the Government in a difficulty. It might be a small thing for the hon. Member to place the Government in a difficulty; but it would be a very serious thing to impair the influence which the Government might possess for good in the world. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Yes; he hoped that the peace of the world counted for something with hon. Gentlemen opposite. We were a great Power, and he hoped that we were respected, and that some confidence was placed in the Government by other Powers. But respect could not be felt, and confidence could not be placed in them, if they made rash declarations in reference to subjects of importance with regard to the great affairs of the world, to which affairs this country could not be indifferent, inasmuch as they were solemnly pledged to them by Treaties. In the beginning of the Session he (Sir James Fergusson) told the House that the engagements and the purposes of Her Majesty's Government were within the scope of the Treaties with other nations that were known to Parliament. He thought the House knew that there were solemn engagements to which they were parties, and therefore it could not be said that we were not concerned in the affairs of Europe. The hon. Member, and an hon. Member who followed him, had talked about the interest which Her Majesty's Government possessed in other parts of the world, and said that they ought not to be limited by Europe in their sympathies and interests. He apprehended it was the sense of the world-wide interests which the country possessed which ought to make Her Majesty's Government very careful not to make rash declarations, and that ought to make them not indifferent to the peace of the world. He would like to know how long they would retain their Colonial Empire if they had not friends in the world? An isolated position could only be maintained by an enormous expenditure on material forces. The hon. Member for the St. Austell Division of Cornwall (Mr. W. A. M'Arthur), in referring to the Samoan question, had said that the Ministry of the country should not concern themselves with European dynasties, but consider the interests of the whole of the Empire. The Colonies and our Indian Empire must naturally be of the first consideration to Her Majesty's Government; but certainly, although their affairs ought to be more prominently in their minds than those of any dynasty of Europe, it would not be for them to dictate to this country as to what its policy should be. He could well believe that there were British subjects in Samoa of the highest standing and respectability who might have suffered by what had occurred, and as far as Her Majesty's Government could control events their interests should not be neglected, and our representations to any friendly Power allied with us he was sure would command attention. He might say that the Treaty rights of this country and of British subjects were intended to be, and would be, protected. The hon. Member had referred to a guarantee which he said had been given to Malietoa. Her Majesty's Government never guaranteed any rights to that King. The hon. Gentleman said they had broken their Treaty with Samoa. They had recognized that King, and he had bound himself to govern in conformity with the usual principles of good government; but he (Sir James Fergusson) utterly denied that there was any agreement entered into with him in any way by Her Majesty's Government which bound them to offer to interfere or defend him against any Foreign Power. There were Treaties entered into with Germany, the United States, and France; but in none of these was this country bound to protect Malietoa against any other country. He was sure the House would recognize that it was not proper for us—for Her Majesty's Government at least—to comment here upon the conduct of another Government. All Governments were subject to criticism—Her Majesty's Government had been subject to criticism themselves. The German Government had a quarrel with Malietoa. They considered they had been insulted on a certain occasion—he believed on the birthday of the Emperor—by the subjects of Malietoa, and they demanded a complete apology and redress in the form of compensation for outrages committed on German subjects; and, not receiving the reparation they considered necessary, they deported Malietoa. Now there was nothing in the Agreements or the Treaties entered into by Her Majesty's Government with Malietoa which made it incumbent upon them to protect him against Germany.

MR. W. A. M'ARTHUR said, the right hon. Baronet would forgive him for interrupting him; but it might have the effect of rendering it unnecessary for him (Mr. W. A. M'Arthur) to make a speech afterwards. He desired to say that his complaint was this—that the English Government had entered into a Convention not only with Malietoa, but with the United States and Germany also, and that that Convention was broken, because Malietoa could not do an impossibility and find a large sum of money at a few hours' notice, the result being that he was deported without a word of remonstrance from Her Majesty's Government.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, that that Convention and the Treaties which were entered into were for the good government of Samoa, and for the safety of Europeans in that country. It must be remembered that the following of the two rival Chiefs claiming Sovereignty in Samoa were about equal in numbers, and it certainly was not incumbent upon Her Majesty's Government to guarantee the maintenance of the Sovereignty of Malietoa against Germany. When the hon. Member (Mr. W. A. M'Arthur) asserted now, as he had done on previous occasions, that there was some sort of derogation from the dignity of Her Majesty's Government in their not receiving an intimation of the intention of the German Government to require reparation from Malietoa in time to communicate with their Consuls, the Committee should consider how impossible it was for a Power, which thought it necessary to demand reparation from a Native Chief, to wait until directions bearing upon the matter were sent in course of post by Foreign Governments to their Agents abroad before taking action. It must be manifest to the Committee that if acts of war were justifiable, it was impossible for a Government who contemplated them to wait until they had warned all their friends that they found it necessary to undertake them before they commenced operations. He denied that in the removal of Malietoa from Samoa there was any breach of agreement, or any departure from engagements contracted by Her Majesty's Government. He thought that this country would have to take a great deal on its hands if it were to declare that it would protect against all the consequences of foreign war every Native State, or every State in the world with which it had a Treaty. Her Majesty's Government, he trusted, would always be faithful to their engagements. They would never shrink from any duty which they had undertaken; and, while in this case he held that they would have gone considerably beyond their duty if they had asserted any such right as the hon. Member had seemed to attribute to them, he trusted that they would never be slow to fulfil their engagements in any part of the world, where they really existed, in a manner befitting the Government of a great Power.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said, it was not easy to take part briefly in a debate of this kind, on account of its wide range; but he wished to say a few words on one or two of the points raised. With regard to the most important point, that of the general relation of the European Powers to one another at this time, and the action of Her Majesty's Government therein, he thought the Committee would receive with satisfaction the assurance which he had taken down from the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, when he said—

> "The engagements and liabilities of Her Majesty's Government amongst European Powers at large were strictly limited to engagements already known to Parliament."

He (Mr. Bryce) thought they were justified by the manner of the Under Secretary in taking those words in the full and liberal sense in which they seemed to have been used; and, taking them in that sense, he thought they must be a cause of considerable satisfaction to the Committee, and that the evening had not been misspent in eliciting such a declaration.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: I beg to say that the words I used to-night are precisely the same I used on two previous occasions.

Mr. BRYCE said, that although the right hon. Baronet had used some similar words on former occasions, he had qualified his words on those occasions by contexts, which contexts had, to a considerable extent, impaired the breadth, and therefore the value, of his declaration. He (Mr. Bryce) thought that he had to-night a stronger and more explicit declaration than they had ever before had from the right hon. Gentleman. The discussion had wandered from Europe to the West African case of Opobo, and from Opobo to Samoa and the affairs of King Malietoa. He did not propose to enter at length into these matters. They were not matters brought before the Committee with formal Notice; therefore the right hon. Baronet opposite might fairly say that he was not able to give as complete an answer as he might have done if he had had Notice of the intention of hon. Members to raise these questions in the usual way. But, taking the statement of the hon. Member for the St. Austell Division of Cornwall and the answer given by the right hon. Baronet opposite, it did not appear that Her Majesty's Government had played an altogether satisfactory part in this matter. It was perfectly true that no Treaty could be pointed to under which Her Majesty's Government were bound to protect King Malietoa against Germany; but it was plain that Treaties were entered into by this country, Germany, and the United States with Malietoa, the effect of which was destroyed by the single action of Germany. As had been stated in the course of the discussion, without that being contradicted by the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, King Malietoa had relied upon our support, and had been, to a large extent, guided in the course he had taken by the assurances of support which he had received from our Representative in Samoa. It could not be supposed that Malietoa was a practised diplomatist and scrutinized Treaties with the carefulness which would be displayed by the right hon. Baronet himself; and, no doubt, he thought from our attitude that whilst he did not do anything to infringe the Treaties with two other Powers we would intercede for him in any difficulties he experienced, and protect him from harsh treatment. That expectation had, however, been ruthlessly disappointed. It seemed to him (Mr. Bryce) that Malietoa had been harshly treated, and that, to no small extent, because of the reliance he placed in the benevolent intentions of Her Majesty's Government; and he could not help thinking that, under these circumstances, we had played no very dignified part in allowing this unhappy King to be deported, absolutely addressing no remonstrance whatever to the German Government in regard to what had taken place. No doubt, there was a reason why the Government should not remonstrate with Germany, even if they thought the action of that country somewhat harsh. The hands of Her Majesty's Government were not clean. It would be easy for Germany to retort that Her Majesty's Government had given equally harsh and probably more unjust treatment to King Ja Ja. We had not heard Germany's side of the Samoa case, so he did not wish to speak very positively regarding it. We had heard the case made by the Under Secretary in justification of the deposition and deportation of Ja Ja; and a lame case it was. He would not go into earlier matters relating to Opobo; but he thought the story of Ja Ja's deposition was one which was not to the credit of England. He would not consider the terms of the Treaty, nor how far Ja Ja had kept those terms—although a good case might be made out on that point, because the one person in England who might be taken as thoroughly knowing the facts, and who, unfortunately, had lately ceased to be a Member of the House, was of opinion that Ja Ja had been hardly dealt with; but he submitted that unless some better defence could be made of the treatment of King Ja Ja than that which they had heard from the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the Committee must conclude that the fairness and consideration in dealing with Native races which ought to characterize this country had not, on this occasion, been observed, and that the great power which the British Navy exercised had been misused and the reputation of Britons for honest dealing lowered. He could not help speaking with some warmth of a matter of this kind, because it seemed to him that the stronger a country like England was, the more anxious she should be to deal in a straightforward and fair way with such weak races as those of the African Coast; and, for that reason, he could not help hoping that the opinion of the Committee would be strongly expressed, and expressed in such a way as to induce the Government to reconsider the case of King Ja Ja, and give him justice.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) said, that if he had been astonished at the conduct of Consul Johnston, he was much more astonished to hear the statement made on behalf of the Government to-night. What he wished to point out, however, was the unfair way in which the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had misrepresented the facts of the case. First, in reference to the Treaty made by Commodore Commerell and Mr. Livingstone with King Ja Ja. In that Treaty King Ja Ja's right to the whole of the Opobo River markets was acknowledged, and he was permitted to prevent any trading establishment or hulk in or off the town of Opobo, or any trading vessel to come higher up the river than the White Man's Beach or Hippopotamus Creek. If any ship proceeded higher up the river than the Creek, after having been duly warned to the contrary, it was to be seized by King Ja Ja, and detained until a fine of 100 puncheons was paid by the owners. The right hon. Baronet seemed to think that the Treaty of 1884 opened up the Opobo River to all commerce; but that was a complete misunderstanding of the case. Possibly that was the intention of Consul Hewett, when he made the Treaty with King Ja Ja. King Ja Ja, however, although a black, seemed to have some knowledge of the way in which Treaties were made and kept, for he seemed to have demanded from the Consul a definition of the word "protection" contained in the Treaty. Consul Hewett, in reply, said—

> "I write, as you request, with reference to the word 'protection,' as used in the proposed Treaty with the Queen. The Queen does not want to take your country or your markets, but at the same time is anxious that no other Natives should take them. She has no wish to disturb your rule, although she is anxious to see your country get up as well as the countries of the other tribes with whom her people have been for so long trading."

That was giving Ja Ja to understand that his country was to be left to him, and that the markets and the whole condition of things was to remain as before, but that, to prevent France or Germany coming and taking the country, this country took Opobo under her protection. The right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs said it had been proved over and over again that King Ja Ja had broken his Treaties; but when he (Dr. Clark) had asked the right hon. Baronet to point out an instance in which this had occurred, the right hon. Baronet said that they would be found in the Blue Book.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: I beg pardon. I said I would not go behind the late Secretary of State, who said that King Ja Ja had broken the Treaties. That will be found in the Correspondence with Lord Rosebery on the 16th of June, 1886.

Dr. CLARK said, he was not referring to two years ago, but to last year. He was referring to a charge made by the right hon. Baronet against Ja Ja, when he said that Consul Johnston had stones and sticks and mud thrown at him, and was prevented from going up the river. Did the right hon. Baronet hold Ja Ja responsible for that? If he would refer to Consul Johnston's Correspondence, he would find that King Ja Ja had no hand in it. The decision of the Judge that the Government themselves appointed falsified the statement of the Government made in the House to-night. The words of the authority to whom the subject was referred were these—

> "It is distinctly proved, your flat denial to the contrary notwithstanding, that on the occasion of Acting Consul Johnston's visit to Azumena Creek, when his progress was barred by a boom placed across the Creek, that your men were there at the time, and, although they took no active part in obstructing the Consul, they were the reverse of friendly, jeering and laughing at him and those with him. Those who had assaulted Consul Johnston and his party shouted out that they did so by your orders. Your canoes were passing through an opening left apparently for your purposes only."

That was one of the paragraphs of the decision sent to King Ja Ja. King Ja Ja denied the truth of the statements contained in this paragraph—there were two tribes of Natives quarrelling and fighting in the interior, and the difficulties encountered were owing to that circumstance, King Ja Ja's men having nothing to do with them. The Admiral who gave the decision said that Ja Ja's men were not throwing stones, although they were laughing and jeering. That was what King Ja Ja was found guilty of—of having subjects who laughed and jeered at the Consul, and of the fact that the party who assaulted the Consul shouted out that they did so by his orders. Then those who assaulted the Consul were not Ja Ja's men, and he (Dr. Clark) thought it unfair that, when their own Judge brought in Ja Ja not guilty of this outrage, the Under Secretary should charge him with it in debate in that House. The facts of the case were that half-a-dozen English merchants wanted to bull the trade, and give a low price to Ja Ja. One man refused to bull, and worked the market alone with Ja Ja, and got all the trade, and Consul Johnston became the tool of the other five firms and went to force the boom. It was not true that the Natives refused to trade. Why should they? They were all glad to trade. There was any amount of competition, and all that was wanted was that a few English firms should not be allowed to swindle Ja Ja. Ja Ja was opposed to these firms, and the Acting Consul took their part, and invited the unfortunate King to come and talk to him in a friendly fashion—he invited him to come on board a British vessel, and then informed him that if he did not agree to the terms submitted to him he would be shot down with his people. They had deported this unfortunate Monarch and sent him to the West Indian Islands. This matter would be returned to again when the salary of Acting Consul Johnston was under consideration. With regard to the case of King Malietoa, there was one thing the right hon. Baronet had forgotten, and that was the Proclamation issued by the British and American Consuls. He did not know whether the right hon. Baronet had seen it; but, according to the official action of the British as well as the American Consul, this country still looked upon Malietoa as King of Samoa. The Proclamation issued, and signed by our own Consul and the Consul of the United States, was in these terms—

"PROCLAMATION.

"Whereas the Government of Germany has this day proclaimed Tamasese King of Samoa.

"Now, therefore, we, the undersigned Representatives of the United States of America and Great Britain, hereby give notice that we and our Governments do not, and never have, recognized Tamasese as King of Samoa, but continue as heretofore to recognize Malietoa.

"We advise all Samoans to submit quietly to what they cannot help, not to fight, whatever the provocation, but to await peaceably the result of deliberations now in progress, which alone can determine the future of Samoa.

HAROLD MARSH SEWALL,
Consul General of the United States of America,
W. H. WILSON,
British Pro-Consul.

"Apia, Samoa, August 25, 1887."

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he did not wish to detain the Committee, but he wished to say just one word in regard to King Ja Ja. He could not but think that King Ja Ja had received from Consul Johnston very harsh treatment. He was glad to see the right hon. and learned Member for East Denbighshire (Mr. Osborne Morgan) in his place, because he thought he was a Member of the Government of 1880, and would, perhaps, be able to say something with regard to their action in the matter, although he himself was not officially connected with this subject in that Government. The right hon. and learned Gentleman would correct him if he (Sir Robert Fowler) was wrong; but he was rather inclined to believe that the Government of 1880 had not a very favourable opinion of King Ja Ja, and there could be no doubt, as his right hon. Friend the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had said, that Lord Rosebery, in the last Government, had written a very strong despatch on the affairs of King Ja Ja, and therefore he thought the present Government had only been acting on the views of those who went before them. It was only natural that Consul Johnston should think, in the course he was taking, that he was supported by successive Governments on both sides of the House. In spite of that, however, he (Sir Robert Fowler) could not but think that the course Consul Johnston had taken had been a very harsh one—it was a very harsh course towards one who had been for many years an Ally of the British Government, and whose security had been guaranteed by British officers who had been in command on the coast. Consul Johnston's conduct would be open to investigation later on, when they came to consider the Consuls' salaries; and, although that question was not now before them, he must say that he thought it might be a harsh thing to cut down the salary of a gentleman representing British interests in a distant and one of the most pestilential parts of the world it was possible to conceive, in consequence of what had been done; but the matter was one for discussion. All he (Sir Robert Fowler) wished to say was, that Consul Johnston was guilty of a very harsh measure, and to express a hope that in any course the Government took in the future they would give every consideration to the case of the unfortunate Potentate Ja Ja.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) said, he did not intend to delay the Estimate for any length of time, but merely wished to bear testimony to the impartial and moderate statement of the case of Malietoa, set forth by the hon. Member for the St. Austell Division of Cornwall (Mr. W. A. M'Arthur). He (Mr. Henniker Heaton) was in Australia when this occurrence took place, and he, therefore, was in a position to state that the hon. Member's account set forth accurately the facts of the case. But it should be borne in mind that there was a scramble going on at that time for the various Islands of the Pacific. Seeing how badly Samoa had been treated by Germany, the British Government might with wisdom have taken a different course from that which they had adopted; and when history came to deal with the scramble for these Pacific Islands, the action of England with regard to Samoa, as in the case of New Guinea—in connection with which Germany also played an important part—would not appear in a very favourable light. The point on which he (Mr. Henniker Heaton) wished more particularly to confirm the statement of the hon. Member for the St. Austell Division of Cornwall was as to the way in which the Australian Colonies had been treated. Every step which we had taken in regard to these Islands had been taken without consulting these Colonies in the way in which he thought they ought to be consulted when important matters of this kind arose. He would have an opportunity later on, under the Colonial Office Vote, of referring to these matters, and he would content himself now with merely saying that the present position of this country in relation to the Australian Colonies on subjects of this kind was one which deserved immediate consideration. He protested against great annexations being permitted in the Pacific without consulting the Australian Colonies, and must declare that, unless a different course of action was pursued than that to which attention had been called to-night, we should very soon part company with the Australian Colonies, although he very much regretted that he should have to make any such announcement. He had nothing to add to what had already been said, and would only again repeat his belief that a large portion of the inhabitants of Australia were of opinion that this country had acted very badly towards King Malietoa in this matter.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) said, he felt it necessary to make some reply to the challenge which had been thrown out by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Henniker Heaton). He could only say that during the time Earl Granville was at the Colonial Office and he (Mr. Osborne Morgan) was acting under him, on every question in which any of the Australian Colonies were in the slightest degree interested, they made a point of consulting the wishes of that Colony. He defied the hon. Member to point to a single instance where they had failed to do so.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: Might I point out——

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The subject is not appropriate to this Vote.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, he should like to take the sense of the Committee upon the course taken by the Government in relation to King Ja Ja. He did not think a more important question had been brought before the Committee or the House for some time. He did not wish to occupy the time of the Committee by going into the Consular question, as that would be discussed fully when it arose; but he desired to treat of the course taken by Her Majesty's Government in regard to King Ja Ja. What the right hon. Baronet had said, as he understood it, was this—that King Ja Ja was a kind of Rob Roy, that was to say a freebooter; but the right hon. Baronet forgot that this King had a solemnly signed Treaty with Her Majesty's Government. This poor man's only offence was that he desired to abide by that Treaty. He was not allowed to do that, however. The right hon. Baronet said that King Ja Ja had committed breaches of the Treaty, and it was said that Lord Rosebery had admitted that. Well, suppose Lord Rosebery had admitted it, did the King by that course deserve the treatment which he had received? Was it for a moment to be tolerated that a King—a petty King if they liked, but still a King—because he had committed a breach of Treaty, was to be taken out of the country and banished to some wretched island a long way from his friends? That was what he desired to emphasize by taking a Division upon this question, and he thought it his duty to do this in order to give those hon. Members who desired to do so an opportunity of expressing their dissent from such a course as that being pursued. He looked upon the course which the Government had adopted with great aversion, as he knew it to be one which they would never have adopted with regard to any Power which could assert itself. When a Treaty was broken by any first or second-rate Power no such course as this was adopted. The King broke a Treaty, was entrapped on board a man-of-war, and was compelled to sign an abrogation of a Treaty under pressure, and was then taken out of the country altogether. He was sorry to hear that any English Government attempted to justify such a course of action as that. So far from the right hon. Baronet the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs being taken by surprise in this matter, he (Mr. Anderson) did not think any such thing had happened. Strong representations as to the action of the Government had come, not only from the Opposition, but also from the other side of the House. He had heard with some pleasure the statement of the hon. Baronet the Member for London (Sir Robert Fowler), who evidently disapproved of the course which had been taken; and he (Mr. Anderson) had every reason to believe that they would have heard similar expressions of disapproval from the gallant Admiral whose name had been very frequently mentioned in the course of this debate (Admiral Commerell) if he had been any longer in the House. They all regretted the absence of the gallant Admiral at this moment — the Government had the very keenest reason for regretting his absence. He (Mr. Anderson) could not help thinking that the gallant Admiral would think that the Treaty he had signed on behalf of Her Majesty's Government had been broken, and that it had been followed up by reprehensible conduct on the part of Her Majesty's Government. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £500.

THE CHAIRMAN: That was the amount of the reduction last moved, and the hon. and learned Member, therefore, must move another.

MR. ANDERSON: I would move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £45,073, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 62; Noes 111: Majority 49.—(Div. List, No. 118.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that when the right hon. Gentleman (Sir James Fergusson) was speaking just now, he reminded him of one of those abject Roman Senators who were ready to regard their Emperor as a god. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to imagine that Lord Salisbury was so wise and so experienced a statesman—[*Ministerial cheers*]—that so long as he condescended to take into his hands the conduct of our foreign affairs Parliament was to abdicate its duties, and that, in fact, anyone who ventured to ask even a question as to what was taking place between our Foreign Office and foreign countries was guilty of unbecoming levity. He perfectly understood the cheers which rose from the other side when he mentioned the eminent wisdom of Lord Salisbury. Hon. Gentlemen were perfectly justified in entertaining that opinion; but it might surprise them to know that many Members on the Opposition side, and a very considerable number of people outside, did not share their estimate of Lord Salisbury. Hon. Members sitting round him considered it to be the duty of Members on the Opposition side to inquire as often as they possibly could into the acts of his Lordship in regard to foreign countries. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) said that our engagements and liabilities were limited to those already known to Parliament. An hon. Friend of his (Mr. Labouchere) had said that the right hon. Gentleman was more specific upon this occasion than he had been on previous occasions, inasmuch as he had not made any of those limitations he had made on other occasions. But if our engagements and liabilities were limited to those already known, why was the right hon. Gentleman not prepared to produce the Correspondence which had taken place? Most unquestionably there was correspondence; most unquestionably there were negotiations. In fact, the right hon. Gentleman admitted it, because, on a previous occasion, he said that negotiations were going on, but he would not produce the Correspondence. He (Mr. Labouchere) presumed that the negotiations were now over, and still the right hon. Gentleman declined to produce the Correspondence. *Quasi*-official organs of Austria and Germany, which probably had the opportunity which hon. Members had not had of seeing something of the negotiations, took a directly contrary view to that which was stated by the right hon. Gentleman. They considered that we had given pledges; they did not consider that we had limited our engagements and liabilities to those already known to Parliament; they held there were more; and surely if there was this difference of opinion between the right hon. Gentleman speaking in Parliament and the organs of the Austrian and German Governments speaking to the people of their respective countries, hon. Members of the House ought to have the Correspondence before them, in order to form their own conclusions, whether or not there had been these limitations to the existing Treaties. He could not understand why the right hon. Gentleman would not let them see the Correspondence. Let it be remembered that the negotiations were undertaken with three Governments on the Continent, and that they were carefully kept away from two other Governments on the Continent, although we were on terms of amity with all the five Governments. There must be some reason why the right hon. Gentleman would not produce the Correspondence, and the reason was offered that the right hon. Gentleman did not dare to produce it, because he was afraid of the public opinion which would rise in this country, or because he was afraid of the public opinion which would rise in France and in Russia. The right hon. Gentleman was indignant with him (Mr. Labouchere) because he had ventured to say that in the event of war between France and Germany his (Mr. Labouchere's) sympathies would be on the side of France. His sympathies would be on the side of France; but he did not ask that the right hon. Gentleman's sympathies should be on that side. On the contrary, he knew perfectly well the right hon. Gentleman's sympathies, and the sympathy of all his Colleagues, would be against Republican France, and in favour of Monarchical Germany. Lately the right hon. Gentleman and Her Majesty's Government had inflicted what he might term a deliberate insult upon France. As the Committee was aware, in 1889 there was to be a Universal Exhibition in France. This Exhibition happened to be fixed for the same year which was the centenary of the taking of the Bastille; and because of that the right hon. Gentleman said that although we were represented at the Exhibition when there was an Emperor in France, we were not to be represented officially on the present occasion by a Royal Commission. When they discussed that a little while ago the right hon. Gentleman put the matter upon the ground that a difference of opinion existed in France in regard to the advantage to the country of the taking of the Bastille. He (Mr. Labouchere) would like to know who entertained any doubt that the taking of the Bastille was an unmixed blessing to the people of France? Did the Bonapartists? The Bonapartists certainly did not. Did the Orleanists? Certainly they did not. Did the Republicans? Most assuredly they did not. The fact was that the right hon. Gentleman would have, in order to find this difference of opinion, to run about the Faubourg St. Germain, where possibly he might find some fossils ready to deny the advantages to the country of the taking of the Bastille. He (Mr. Labouchere) thought there was hardly a man in France who would say that the taking of the Bastille was not one of the most glorious events in French history. It was quite distinct from some atrocities which took place in the French Revolution. Burke, Pitt, and Fox, gloried in the taking of the Bastille, and regarded it as a great advantage to the human race. The right hon. Gentleman was bound to tell them from whence he derived the information that we ought not to take part in the forthcoming Exhibition, because it happened to be fixed for the year which was the centenary of the taking of the Bastille. Let him say from whom he derived the information that there was a difference of opinion in France in regard to the result of the taking of the Bastille. He (Mr. Labouchere) had always understood that we derived the public opinion of the country from the Government of the country. In this particular case, the Government of the country were the authors and projectors of this Exhibition, and they had coupled it with the taking of the Bastille; and yet, notwithstanding, the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues absolutely ignored the Government of France, and went back and said there was a difference of opinion existing in the country in regard to the event to be commemorated. But the right hon. Gentleman did not go so far as the Hungarian Prime Minister, who, encouraged, no doubt, by the attitude of Her Majesty's Government, denounced France the other day on account of having an Exhibition the same year as the centenary of the taking of the Bastille, and he said that he did not believe that Hungarian goods would be safe in France. The right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues had joined in that Boycotting of France, and it seemed to him (Mr. Labouchere) perfectly monstrous that the right hon. Gentleman should get up in his place and say—"We do not wish to interfere in any sort of way in the internal affairs of other countries, but wish to be at peace and amity with the whole of the world, and we hope and desire that peace will continue in Europe," and should at the same time inflict this uncalled-for insult on the French nation, who ought to be more than any other nation in Europe our friends and allies. He hoped the Committee would receive some clear indication from the right hon. Gentleman as to from whom he derived the information that there was a difference of opinion in France as to the benefit to the country of the taking of the Bastille.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he wished to put it to the Committee whether it was at all desirable that the debate which had been raised by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) should be continued? The hon. Gentleman had made the statement that it was the desire and intention of Her Majesty's Government to Boycott the Government of France. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) wished to state most explicitly that that was a sentiment which had found no expression whatever in France itself. The French Government was a friendly Government in every sense of the word, and they had received the expressions of opinion which Her Majesty's Government in regard to the forthcoming Exhibition had thought it right to make with perfect amity and good feeling. There had been no remonstrances of any kind whatever, and he protested against language being used in the House which would tend to raise unfriendly feeling between this country and the Government of France, with which Her Majesty's Government desired to remain on the most friendly and cordial terms. The hon. Gentleman had thought it right to refer to a remark which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) with regard to the course pursued by the Government respecting the peace of Europe. The Government had nothing whatever to add to, or to retract from, the statement they had made. Throughout the whole of the negotiations the aim of the Government had been to maintain the peace of Europe and the peace of the world. The aim of the Government was to respect the Treaties by which this country was bound, and which had been communicated to the House of Commons, and which were known to the House of Commons. They had not added to the obligations of the country, and they held that it would be most unpatriotic either to excite hostile feeling between Germany and France by any such language as the hon. Gentleman had thought it right to indulge in to-night, or to do anything which would tend to impair that peace which it was the greatest interest of this country, and which he believed to be the greatest interest of Europe to preserve. There were undoubtedly dangers abroad in Europe; but any man who had really the interests of humanity at heart would hesitate to increase those dangers by the use of any language which would tend to bring about the greatest calamity which could befall the human race—a great war between two powerful nations. He strongly deprecated the language which the hon. Gentleman had thought it right to use in regard to both France and Germany. They were both friends; they were both allies of this country; they were countries with whom Her Majesty's Government desired and hoped to remain on terms of perfect amity, and any effort they could make to maintain peace between those two great Empires it would be the duty and the pleasure of any Government holding Office in this country to make.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) said, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) protested against the language of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), on the ground that it was likely to raise unfriendly feeling in France. He would like to ask what was more likely to raise unfriendly feeling in France than the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in respect to the courteous invitation addressed to them by the French Government to take part in the forthcoming Exhibition? Let him point out to the Committee that the ground on which the Government based its churlish refusal to accept the invitation was not that given officially by the French Government for the holding of the Exhibition. He was bound to admit that the beginning of the whole of this business was to be traced to the last Liberal Government of this country. Lord Rosebery set a very bad example, for, instead of accepting the invitation, he instructed his Ambassador to find out whether it was the fact that the Exhibition was meant to celebrate the French Revolution, and then to find out whether any official documents could be found bearing out such an intention. Since then a distinct invitation had been addressed to Lord Salisbury in which not one word was said about the French Revolution; and, therefore, on Lord Salisbury and his Government alone rested the responsibility of the refusal, and with it all the consequences which that refusal might have upon the friendly feeling between France and this country. What had the Government done? The invitation of France had been addressed to all the other countries. The Continental despotisms had refused the invitation; the one free country in the world which was fit to rank with this country, the kindred people on the other side of the Atlantic, had accepted the invitation. He happened to be in Washington only a short time since, when the Senate of the United States passed a Resolution granting a large sum in aid of the American contribution to the Exhibition—he believed that sum amounted to between 250,000 and 300,000 dollars. He complained that the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues, instead of ranging themselves with the free Republic of the United States, had ranged themselves with the Continental despots of Europe. Before he sat down, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) a question with reference to one item in the account. The Committee would observe that year after year enormous sums were voted for the clerks not only of this Department, but of all Departments; and he thought it was a scandal to the Committee that it should submit year after year to the enormous exactions on the part of the bureaucracy which really governed this country. In this case there was a Permanent Under Secretary of State, receiving a salary of £1,500, and he believed that gentleman was paid an allowance for receiving affidavits in regard to the distribution of the Secret Service Money. There was an Assistant Under Secretary receiving £1,500 a-year; there was another Under Secretary receiving £1,500 a-year; there was a Chief Clerk who was paid £1,250; and there were five clerks getting £1,000 a-year each. The question he wished to ask had reference to the salary of the gentleman who was called Chief Clerk. He dared say the point had been explained before, and if he was putting a question which had already been answered the responsibility must rest with those who prepared the Estimates, and who had not prepared them in a way which was intelligible to hon. Members. The Chief Clerk received £1,250 a-year, but at the foot of the Estimate there was a note to the effect that he also received nearly £800 a-year for compensation on abolition of Foreign Office Agencies, provided in Class VI. He (Mr. Robertson) had looked through Class VI., and he did not find any explanation of what Foreign Office Agencies were. Perhaps the right hon.

Gentleman would explain what it was, and why it was that the Government continued to pay the Chief Clerk this enormous sum in addition to his regular salary?

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, that now they had got the details of this Vote, he should like to ask why the Permanent Under Secretary to the Foreign Office should be in receipt of £300 in connection with the Secret Service Fund? The Secret Service Fund was distributed by the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office, the Home Office, and, of course, a large portion of it went to Ireland. They did not find that the Permanent Under Secretary for Ireland, or the Permanent Under Secretary to the Colonial Office, or the Permanent Under Secretary to the Home Office received any allowance for their share in the administration of the Secret Service Fund. All that the Permanent Under Secretary to the Foreign Office did in connection with the Fund was to receive certain affidavits or papers from diplomatic officers as to the amount of money they had issued in connection with their secret and not always very presentable services. He supposed that an hour or two hours in the year would be quite sufficient for all the work that this worthy official had to do for his £300. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, who drew from the Foreign Office if he was in want of more money for Secret Service in Ireland, had a great deal more to do in the way of instructing detective officers than all the staffs of the Ambassadors abroad put together, and what justification there could be for this charge of £300 he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) could not understand. Then, again, if hon. Members would look at page 109 of the Estimates they would see that the present Foreign Secretary had a Private Secretary with £300 a-year. But the present Foreign Secretary was also Prime Minister, and on the very same page there was a further entry showing that the Private Secretary to the Prime Minister received £400 a-year. Besides the Private Secretary to the Prime Minister there was an Assistant Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, and he was paid £250 a-year. Perhaps the right hon. Baronet would offer some explanation as to the arrangement respecting these Private Secretaries. There was another point upon which he had a few observations to make. There was, he believed, some nine, 10, or 12 legal appointments in the gift of the Foreign Office. They were abroad, principally in countries where Consular jurisdiction was exercised. He was informed that these appointments were given away on the recommendation of Members of the House of Commons, or other influential persons. The question he wanted to ask was, what was the gauge of qualification, or what circumstances were looked into in order to test the fitness of the men appointed to these places? He mentioned this, because at present he had before his mind the case of the appointment of a gentleman who was certainly nominally a barrister, because he had been called to the Bar, but who, he did not think, had ever been in a Court of Law in his life, and who certainly never heard an action proved. This gentleman was appointed to be a Judge in a very important city in the East with about £1,000 a-year. This was one example of the style of appointment which was made by the Foreign Office in places where Consular jurisdiction existed. Many men appointed possessed qualifications of the most meagre description for the posts they occupied. Was there any standard of qualification required; was it necessary that a man should show that he had been called to the Bar a certain number of years; was it necessary that he should show that he had had any practice, or was it a mere question of favouritism? Was it the fact that political supporters were recompensed by the appointment of relatives or friends to posts for which, in most cases, they were absolutely unfit?

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, that perhaps it would be convenient, before the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) replied, that he (Mr. Conybeare) should refer to the question of the French Exhibition. Still, if the right hon. Gentleman preferred to answer hon. Gentlemen now, he (Mr. Conybeare) would postpone his observations. He was bound to say that the action of Her Majesty's Government, in reference to the proposed French Exhibition of next year, was the most Pecksniffian proceeding of all the Pecksniffian proceedings on the part of the Government.

He did not know what reason or explanation Her Majesty's Government proposed to give; certainly the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had not condescended to give any reason at all. The probability was that if they pressed the Government they would get two or three reasons assigned; but, at present, no reason at all likely to enhance the position of this country in the opinion of civilized countries, which they were assured by the Government and their supporters was their one aim and ambition, had been assigned for the conduct of the Government. This was simply a question of carrying out a series of Exhibitions which had taken place in France periodically. He (Mr. Conybeare), at any rate, remembered the French Exhibition of 1867; there was an Exhibition in 1878; and now, in the natural sequence and order of things, came an Exhibition in the year 1889. It, no doubt, happened to be a coincidence that 1889 was the centenary of the taking of the Bastille, and the Government chose to make this an excuse for directly insulting and affronting our neighbours across the Channel by refusing to do what, he believed, we had never refused to do before—namely, to take such measures as we wished with the view of having this country properly and adequately represented at the Exhibition. Now, he did not base his arguement for interrogating the Government on this point, merely on the question of the insult or otherwise which appeared to be, and which, as he and his hon. Friends contended, was, by the action of the Government offered to our neighbours in France. But he reminded Her Majesty's Government, and especially the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), who, he noticed, having fired his exceedingly potent shot, had retired from his place, that the proceeding of the Government might have a serious effect upon our trade. We had heard Her Majesty's Government more than once already that evening dilate with excessive eloquence upon the great interests of this mighty Empire, and of the duty of looking to the trade interests of this country. Therefore, he asked them to consider seriously whether it was not possible that we should be, by this foolish proceeding of refusing to have anything to do with the Exhibition of 1889, doing considerable injury to the trade of this country? He should have thought we had already done enough in that direction this Session by imposing the Wine Duties, which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had argued were more than likely to result in reciprocal duties being imposed in France. It was perfectly well known that, even supposing that a nation like the French chose to associate this great international affair with a particular epoch of their own history, its primary intention and object was to bring together the exhibits of all nations of the earth, and that it was by bringing together in friendly rivalry the commercial princes of the world, and inducing the great manufacturers of this country, as well as of all other countries, to place themselves side by side, and to emulate one another in the beauty and excellence of their exhibits, that we must look for success in the competition which was so prevalent among all the nations of the earth. It was on this account that he urged the Committee to consider carefully whether we were not really doing far more harm to ourselves in the matter of trade alone than we possibly did injury to the French by any petty and wretched jealousy or political feeling which seemed to have been imported into this matter, if we continued to refuse to take our proper position, and share, as a great nation, in the forthcoming International Exhibition. His hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had ventured to assert, to the great indignation of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), that in this proceeding the Government had Boycotted the French. If that were so, it was a very unfair proceeding, because there appeared to be some ground for asserting that the French themselves were not very much supported by other countries in the world; and if we were to take the opportunity, when one country was standing more or less isolated, to kick or otherwise insult her, it certainly did not square with our ideas of fair play or international comity. But if it was the case that the Government had in this way deliberately Boycotted the French, it did not seem to him that it was at all inconsistent with their general policy, or even with their private practice, because the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, who was so eloquent in denouncing the hon. Member for Northampton for suggesting that he (Mr. W. H. Smith) was capable, as a Member of the Government, of Boycotting France, was himself guilty of Boycotting his poorer neighbours on his own estate at Henley. He (Mr. Conybeare) maintained that that was an attempt to deprive the country of its proper position in connection with the proposed International Exhibition, and that at this moment it was exceedingly foolish and exceedingly out of place, because we were ourselves now—or, at least, a great many of the people of the country were—preparing to celebrate, on a large scale, a great triumph and a great feat of arms and a great moral victory in the history of our country. He referred to the proposed demonstration later on in the year in respect to the defeat of the "Invincible Armada." If we chose to celebrate in this fashion a great historical event, he wanted to know why we should Boycott the French because they chose to celebrate in their fashion an equally great and an equally glorious event in their history; an event, too, not altogether unimportant to us, inasmuch as all the modern liberty which we now enjoyed dated from the destruction of the Bastille in 1789. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members opposite laughed; but he supposed that the real fact was that they did not know enough about their history to prevent them falling into the confusion of mind which seemed to have settled down on the Front Treasury Bench; because it was perfectly evident that if the motive which had been assigned for this most extraordinary action on the part of Her Majesty's Government were a true one, and they refused to have anything to do with the proposed Exhibition because of the events which succeeded the Revolution of 1789; they were mixing up the events which took place a few years after 1789 with what happened in that year itself. There was nothing whatever that the greatest purist in political matters could object to in the events which took place in 1789—there was the destruction of the Bastille, which he did not think even hon. Gentlemen opposite really disapproved of. All the legislation which took place after the razing of the Bastille in 1789 was legislation of the most beneficial kind, and it was not until France had been surrounded by enemies, it was not until she had been goaded into fury by attacks made by Tories of this country, and by the despots of other countries in Europe, that any atrocities took place, that any of those massacres which sent a thrill of horror through every civilized country in the world, occurred. Those massacres, however, had nothing whatever to do with the glorious Revolution which took place in 1789, and it was the merest humbug to object to taking our part—which as a nation we were entitled to take—in the celebration of the year 1789, simply because, in the year 1791 or 1793, other matters took place which had nothing whatever to do with the year 1789. He supposed that the real reason of the refusal was that this Government, with the most pharisaical and canting spirit, desired to dissociate itself from anything which savoured in the very least of Republicanism. He supposed they would have their day; but they who had the advantage of sharing, at any rate, the hon. Gentleman's views—all those who believed in Republicanism—hoped, one of these days, to have an opportunity of celebrating in this country a festival of Republicanism. [*Laughter.*] That seemed a ridiculous suggestion to hon. Gentlemen opposite; but he did not suppose their historical studies had carried them so far back as to cause them to have any knowledge of the glorious Revolution of 1688.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I beg that the hon. Gentleman will be a little less discursive, and that he will keep to the question before the Committee.

MR. CONYBEARE said, it was quite true that the interruptions from hon. Gentlemen opposite had led him a great deal away from his text, but now the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had returned to his place, he would just like to refer to one argument which the right hon. Gentleman used. The right hon. Gentleman complained in a frantic, irate tone that hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House were raising unfriendly feelings in France, and that they were sowing discord between this country and France and other civilized countries in Europe. It was nothing of the kind; their argument was that the Government by their action had not only lowered this country considerably in the estimation of France and of other countries, but that by deliberately offering what they considered to be an insult to the dignity of France, they had gone very much further in the direction of raising unfriendly feelings towards ourselves in France than other hon. Members could do by any amount of debating in the House. It was just as absurd to argue that they, by the attitude they were taking in this matter, were in danger of sowing seeds of discord between ourselves and France, as it would be for the right hon. Gentleman to argue that, because they were constantly in that House raising their voices against the coercive tyranny of the Government in Ireland, they were tending to cause separation or alienation between Ireland and this country. He sincerely hoped that if his hon. Friend proposed to press this matter to a Division they would be able to show that, at any rate, there were in the House more than a few who were determined not to allow an insult of this kind to pass without entering their protest against it, and who were sufficiently anxious for the dignity of the country, and sufficiently anxious to protect the trade interests of the country, to insist that both one and the other were being wilfully thrown away and endangered by this foolish action on the part of the Government.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said, that before the Committee passed the Vote which he ventured to hope the Committee would now proceed to do, he would like to say one word in regard to the remarks which had just fallen from his hon. Friends below the Gangway. Without entering into the Question whether the Government had been well advised or not in the action they had taken in regard to the French Exhibition, he might say, having observed as far as possible how the matter was received in France, that he had not observed any display of indignation in France, and that if there was any ill-feeling existing between this country and France, which he hoped was not the case, no part of that ill-feeling was in the least due to any action of the Government in this particular matter. He further desired to say that he did not think the general feeling in any part of this House, or in any Party in the country, was that Her Majesty's Government had shown undue partizanship in any question arising between the Powers of Europe, or had shown any unfriendliness towards any one of the great Powers. It would be a serious matter for this country if, at a moment like this, when the situation was full of tension, we were to forfeit the position of conciliatory detachment it held in the councils of Europe by the display of any unfriendliness towards any one of the different Powers. Without agreeing in many respects with the policy which the Government had taken up, he thought they might acquit them of any charge of that kind, and he believed the Government desired, as far as possible, to be on friendly terms with the French Government.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON said, that the hon. and learned Member for Dundee (Mr. E. Robertson) had asked him to explain the extra receipts of the Chief Clerk. The Chief Clerk received a sum as compensation for the abolition of his office as one of the Foreign Office Agents. He remembered that in a debate which took place many years ago, Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell strongly defended these Agencies; but in later years opinions changed, and in 1878, he thought, they were abolished, and superannuation allowances were given to the holders of the offices on a somewhat lower scale than was usually given to public servants on abolition of their appointments. Then, as to the addition to the salary of the Permanent Under Secretary in respect to his duties in connection with the Secret Service Fund, the matter had been very often discussed in the House. As a matter of fact, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), in 1871, stated, in reply to a similar question, that it was necessary to have a responsible official to discharge these duties connected with the Fund. The allowance then was £500 a-year, but an arrangement was made that on the accession of a new incumbent to the office, it should be reduced to £300, at which sum it now stood. The hon. Gentleman the Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had referred to certain legal appointments in the gift of the Foreign Office. The matter did not properly arise on this Vote; but he could say, speaking only for the present time, that very great care was taken in the selection of the men to fill these appointments. He could not say what was done in former times; but those only were now appointed who were properly qualified to discharge the duties of the office.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that the question asked was, why the Permanent Secretary of the Foreign Office should receive £300 a-year in respect to the distribution of the Secret Service Fund, while other officials also charged with that distribution had nothing?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, that similar officials in other Departments had no Secret Service Fund to distribute.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that it had been given in evidence before the Public Accounts Committee that the officials of the Irish Office, the Colonial Office, and other Public Offices had to do with this distribution.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that the Home Office had certainly to do with the Secret Service Fund, and they had had explanations given why it was increased last year.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, that there was no officer in the Public Service who was charged with the same responsible duties in respect to the Secret Service Fund as the Permanent Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

Mr. BRADLAUGH asked, if the right hon. Gentleman meant to say that this official regulated the distribution of the Secret Service Fund?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, that the gentleman did nothing of the kind; but his duties were such as to necessitate special remuneration. The fact had been recognized by successive Governments, although, as he had said, the salary had been reduced.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that the fact of the salary having been supported by previous Governments was no answer at all. The question was, was there any duty done for this payment? And the answer of the Government was that the official was charged with no kind of duty in the distribution of the money. If that was so, he ought not to receive the £300 a-year.

Mr. LABOUCHERE thought he could explain the matter. This money was originally paid out of the Secret Service Money itself, but eventually it came before the notice of a Committee, and then it was considered desirable to charge the amount on the Estimates. As a matter of fact, the right hon. Gentleman (Sir James Fergusson) would excuse him for saying that the Permanent Under Secretary had really nothing to do with the Fund. The Secret Service Money was paid abroad at the different Embassies, and the accounts were sent to the Foreign Office. Perhaps there was some little auditing on the part of the Under Secretary; but really he had not so much to do with the Fund as the officials of the Home Office, and of other Departments.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, that the hon. Member was well informed upon the subject. This payment was begun in 1824, and it was made by percentage from the Secret Service Money, and it never appeared on the Foreign Office Vote until 1870, when, at the instance of the late Mr. Rylands, it was inserted in the Estimates.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, there could be no doubt in the mind of anyone, after reading the evidence given before the Public Accounts Committee, that there could not be three days' work for anybody in the Foreign Office in connection with the Secret Service Fund. The thing was a gross job, and therefore he ventured to move the reduction of the Vote by £300.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £45,773, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 43; Noes 126: Majority 81. (Div. List, No. 119.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. W. H. SMITH rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and *agreed to.*

Original Question put accordingly, and *agreed to.*

It being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report the Resolutions to the House.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS ACT (1866) AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Mr. Dugdale, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Curzon, Mr. Dixon, Mr. Mark Stewart.*)

[BILL 161.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (29 & 30 Vict. c. 117, s. 14. Youthful offenders may be sent to certified reformatory school without the imposition of a term of imprisonment).

On the Motion of Mr. DUGDALE, the following Amendment made:—In line 12, leave out "who," and insert "is."

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, he would suggest to the hon. Member for the Nuneaton Division of Warwickshire (Mr. Dugdale) that Progress should be now reported. He had no wish to take up a position of opposition to the Bill; but he had to make some reference to the schools at Dublin and at Bandon, and did not quite know how they would be affected by the Bill, though he feared it was not all plain sailing. Possibly, an agreement would be arrived at; but he was unprepared to discuss the points he wished to raise, as he did not expect the Bill would be reached.

MR. DUGDALE (Warwickshire, Nuneaton) said, he was quite willing that further progress with the Bill should be postponed till Monday.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL [*Lords*].—[BILL 233.]

(*Mr. Mundella.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Consent of local authority generally required to provisional order for supply of electricity).

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he did not know whether there was any objection to the Amendment of which he had given Notice; but, at any rate, he thought it was not desirable that the Bill should pass without discussion. They had not heard the final opinion of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), and he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) was not in his place, for he was an authority on the subject of electric lighting, though the Bill was in good hands in charge of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella). The Amendment he had to propose, in the form of an addition to the clause, was of an innocent character, and he hoped it would be accepted. It was a simple matter, and, if it did no good, would certainly do no harm. In the first place, he proposed that when a Local Authority applied for a licence for an area under its jurisdiction, the Board of Trade should grant the application, unless there were special reasons against it, and these should be stated by the Board of Trade in a special report. The object was to make it clear that only special reasons justified a refusal by the Board. He remembered that in the last discussion great jealousy was evinced on the part of promoters of Companies against Local Authorities grasping the lighting for themselves; but, right or wrong, he thought that a Local Authority should act on the opinion of the ratepayers, and supply its own water and lighting, when such was desired. Again, he wished to provide, by his Amendment, that the grant of a licence to any Company or person should not be a bar to the granting of another licence within the same area. He was aware that he might be told that as the law existed there was, in fact, no prohibition to the granting of a licence where another existed within the same area; but his Amendment amounted to a clear declaration that under no circumstances should the existence of one licence be an obstacle to the granting of another. He might instance, to illustrate his intention, the case of railways. So far as the absolute law was concerned, the passing by Parliament of an Act authorizing gave no claim against the construction of another line; but the practice was very different to that in the United States, where any responsible persons wishing to construct a line were permitted to do so, the existence of a competing railway being no obstacle. He did not object to the period being allowed to the Company for a licence under the Bill; his objection was to there being allowed to grow up in regard to electric lighting, as in practice there had been allowed in the case of railways, any sort of monopoly. Electricity was in its infancy—a growing science—and a few years might produce immense changes; electric lighting might become cheaper, and new methods might be discovered, and it would be a great misfortune if the absence of a specific legal declaration should give to the existence of one licence a claim as against the granting of another. It would be observed thathe attached as a condition that the consent of the Local Authority should be given, for he was far from wishing that any new Company should, without that consent, have authority to dig up the public roads and streets. He invited the opinion of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade, and regretted that the Committee had not the assistance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, at end, to add the words:—"When a local authority duly applies for a licence for an area within its jurisdiction, such licence shall be granted by the Board of Trade, unless the Board of Trade are of opinion that special reasons exist why such licence should not be granted; and in such case they shall make a special Report stating the grounds of their refusal. The grant of a licence to any Company or person shall not in any way hinder or restrict the granting of a licence to the local authority or to any other Company or person, with the consent of the local authority, within the same area."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol W.) said, that the assent of the Government was confined to the Bill as it stood, because it appeared to be a useful extension of the powers under the Act of 1882, and might, perhaps, tend to public advantage. They must oppose the Amendment, the first part of which was wholly unnecessary, while the second part might be very mischievous indeed, defeating the very object for which the Bill was promoted.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, as the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy had alluded to the absence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), he might say his right hon. Friend entirely approved of the Bill as it stood, and objected to the addition. His (Mr. Mundella's) own experience at the Board of Trade had convinced him that restrictions imposed by the Act of 1882 prevented the development of electric lighting, and this short amending Bill, which had passed the House of Lords, would, it was hoped, give to electric lighting that chance of development which it had in other countries, to which we were far behind. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who introduced the Bill of 1882, had given his complete assent to the extension of time to 42 years, and in the other House Lord Herschell had expressed his entire approval. As the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade had said, the first part of the Amendment was absolutely unnecessary, for the Act of 1882, and this amending Bill, conferred no monopoly whatever; and, with respect to the second part, it would act very mischievously, and operate against the intention of the Bill, and in reference to Provisional Orders would not work at all. He hoped, therefore, the hon. Member would not put an obstacle in the way of a very useful measure by pressing his Amendment.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he was somewhat alarmed at the statement that the second part of his Amendment would prove mischievous. He had anticipated that it might be said to be surplusage; but when told that it was mischievous, he began to think there was something in it. He hoped the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade would explain in what respect it would be mischievous. Did it merely declare the law as existing, or did it alter it?

MR. MUNDELLA said, the Amendment might be held to throw doubt on Provisional Orders and promote unrestricted competition, and the opinion of the best authorities were against it.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked what opinion the right hon. Gentleman quoted, and where in the existing law could be found a declaration that no monopoly should be created?

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) moved that the Chairman do report Progress.

Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

WALTHAM ABBEY GUNPOWDER FACTORY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Brodrick, Bill to exclude unauthorised persons from certain lands to be used for the purposes of the Royal Gunpowder Factory at Waltham Abbey, in the parish of Waltham Holy Cross, in the county of Essex; to stop up a certain footpath thereon; and for other purposes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Brodrick and Mr. Secretary Stanhope.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 273.]

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC [SALARIES &c.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of the Consolidated Fund, of the salary and pension of any additional Judge that may be appointed under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for the better regulation of Railway and Canal Traffic and for other purposes, and the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the salaries of the Commissioners, officers, clerks, and messengers appointed under the said Act, and of all expenses of the Railway and Canal Commission, and also of remuneration to any person appointed by the Board of Trade for communicating with Railway Companies with respect to charges complained of in pursuance of the said Act."

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 1*st June*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee*—Civil Service Estimates; Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments, Votes 6 & 7

Private Bill (*by Order*)—*Considered as amended*—London and St. Katharine and East and West India Docks.

Provisional Order Bills—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Local Government (No. 9)* [274]; Local Government (No. 10)* [275]; Local Government (No. 11)* [276].

Second Reading—Local Government (Port)* [259]; Local Government (Highways)* [258]; Local Government (No. 5)* [219]; Local Government (No. 6)* [251]; Local Government (No. 7)* [272].

QUESTIONS.

BRITISH GUIANA—CONSTRUCTION OF A RAILWAY FROM GUACIPATI TO THE ORINOCO.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government are aware of the fact that the contractors have despatched, or are about to despatch, plant to Guacipati, so as to commence from there the construction of the railway to the Orinoco, notwithstanding the Proclamation of Her Majesty's Government, dated December 31, 1887?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): No such information has reached the Foreign Office.

BRITISH GUIANA—PROTECTION OF INDIANS.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether by an Order of the Court of Policy of Demerara, dated February 3, 1820, George Bagot, esquire, was appointed Protector of the Indians for the Rivers Essequibo, Mazaruni, and Cuyuni; and, whether he is aware of the earliest date at which this jurisdiction was superseded by the appointment of a Governor by the United States of Venezuela; and, if not, whether he will make inquiries on the subject?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry de Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Such records of British Guiana for the year 1820 as are deposited in this country have been examined, and do not contain any mention of the Order of the Court of Policy referred to in the hon. Member's Question. No appointment of a Governor by Venezuela could supersede the jurisdiction of an officer appointed by the Government of British Guiana.

BRITISH GUIANA—DETENTION OF MR. M'TURK.

Mr. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign

Affairs, Whether the Government are prepared to lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the Instructions given to Mr. M'Turk with reference to his despatch to the Yurnari Territory; and, whether the Government are now prepared to state what course they propose to take in consequence of the illegal arrest of, and subsequent treatment received by, Mr. M'Turk, while acting as a Colonial Representative in territory claimed by Her Majesty's Government as forming part of the Colony of British Guiana by the Royal Proclamation, dated December 31, 1887?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government are not prepared at present to give any further Papers. In the present state of relations between Venezuela and this country, I am not prepared to state what action, if any, may be taken by Her Majesty's Government in consequence of the temporary detention of Mr. M'Turk at Guacipati, and the refusal of the officer of the Venezuelan Government, who assumes to exercise authority in that part of the disputed territory, to permit him to leave the territory by the way by which he entered it.

POST OFFICE—LOSSES OF LETTERS IN THE NEW CROSS DISTRICT.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Postmaster General, Whether continual losses of letters have been during the past 18 months reported to him in the New Cross District; whether 42 such cases have within 17 days been reported to the Department by one individual; and, whether the number of letters reported missing in the New Cross District during the past 18 months has been exceedingly high?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that prior to November last year many complaints were received of the loss of letters intended for delivery in the New Cross District; but that between November and the beginning of last month the losses were but few. The fact is as stated in the second paragraph of the hon. Member's Question; but, except in the case of letters for one individual, the losses of letters in the New Cross District have not been exceedingly high.

METROPOLITAN PARISHES—VESTRY MEETING IN THE PARISH OF ST. GILES-IN-THE-FIELDS.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the fact that, on the occasion of a Vestry meeting being held in the parish of St. Giles-in-the-Fields on the morning of May 31, a body of police, under the control of an Inspector and sergeant, were concealed and kept in reserve in the vaults under the parish church of St. Giles-in-the-Fields; and, if so, for what purpose, and by whose orders or authority, were they so placed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that on the day in question application was made by the Vestry clerk for the services of a few police to preserve order in the event of an anticipated disturbance taking place. An Inspector, a sergeant, and six constables were accordingly, in accordance with usual practice, ordered by the Superintendent to be in readiness in the immediate vicinity of the church and Vestry Hall to prevent any breach of the peace. At the invitation of one of the officials of the Vestry the Inspector permitted his party to sit down in the vault. Their services were not called for.

MR. CONYBEARE inquired, whether it was necessary to call in the aid of police at the Vestry meetings in London?

MR. MATTHEWS: I cannot speak with certainty as to Vestry meetings; but there is nothing uncommon in the attendance of police at a large gathering of any kind.

MR. CONYBEARE further desired to know whether they would be sent to meetings of Boards of Guardians to suppress them as in Ireland?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

EAST INDIA (CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS).

MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he can promise that the Correspondence regarding the Indian Contagious Diseases Act, &c., and the

Despatch from the Secretary of State on the same subject, both of which were ordered to be printed some time ago, shall be distributed to Members before Tuesday, June 5, in time for the discussion on that subject on that day?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Correspondence was laid on the Table by me on the 10th of May, the Secretary of State's Despatch showing the action taken by Her Majesty's Government on the 17th of May. The latter will, I am told, be distributed on Monday; the former not till after Tuesday, the 5th of June. The Secretary of State has no control over the printing of these Papers.

ARMY (SMALL ARMS)—REMOVAL OF MANUFACTORY FROM SPARKBROOK, BIRMINGHAM, TO ENFIELD.

MR. DUGDALE (Warwickshire, Nuneaton) (for Mr. MUNTZ) (Warwickshire, Tamworth) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he can state why the gun-manufacturing plant recently perfected at Sparkbrook is being removed to Enfield; whether he is aware that the price of coal at Enfield is 15*s*. per ton, as compared with 5*s*. per ton at Sparkbrook; whether the wages of skilled gunmakers at Sparkbrook are much less than at Enfield; whether he will cause a statement to be prepared and laid upon the Table of the House at the earliest possible date, of the total amount expended at Enfield in each year during the past 10 years, showing the sums expended on salaries, wages, material, coal, and miscellaneous; the number of arms of all descriptions manufactured in each year, also those repaired; and, whether, in view of the greater safety in case of an invasion afforded by an inland site like Sparkbrook as compared with Enfield, and in the interests of economy, he will order the removal of machinery from Sparkbrook to be stopped at once, in order that the removal of machinery from Enfield to Sparkbrook may be fully considered?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Some of the plant at Sparkbrook has been removed to Enfield to facilitate the production of the new magazine rifle, and under the arrangement made when Sparkbrook was purchased that the Government manufacturing establishments were not to be increased. There is not the slightest intention of shutting up Sparkbrook, which will also be required as it has hitherto been. The object has been to restrict the output of rifles from the Government establishments, and to put out as many as we can to private contract. Of these a very large proportion will be made in Birmingham. The action recently taken, and the reasons for it, appear to be thoroughly misunderstood in Birmingham; and I would suggest that a small deputation should see me on an early day, when I am sure that all misconceptions can be removed, and, at any rate, a frank interchange of opinion can take place. I am aware that the price of coal and the rate of wages are both somewhat higher at Enfield than at Birmingham. The wages are, roughly, 10 per cent; the coal is so different in quality that the difference in true cost is difficult to state. If we were free to choose a new place for the manufacture of small arms, it is probable that Birmingham would be preferred to Enfield. But an establishment already exists at Enfield, and could not be transferred without enormous cost to the country, and, what is almost worse, great delay. As regards the statistics asked for by my hon. Friend, he will find that they are already published yearly. If he will speak to me, I will consider with him whether any further information is required.

METROPOLIS — THE FATAL FIRE IN EDGWARE ROAD.

MR. SEAGER HUNT (Marylebone, W.), who had the following Question upon the Paper:—"To ask the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether there was undue delay in the arrival of fire escapes at the premises of Messrs. Garrould (in the Edgware Road) on the morning of Wednesday, the 30th of May; and, if so, will he be good enough to state the cause of the delay?" said: Although I gave Notice to the Metropolitan Board of Works of my intention to ask this Question, I fail to see a single representative of the Board present to-day, and therefore I suppose I must postpone the Question.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (CHANCERY DIVISION)—APPOINTMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL JUDGE.

MR. WARMINGTON (Monmouth, W.) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he intends, on behalf of the Government, to move the Resolution for the appointment of an additional Judge to be attached to the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, which before the Whitsuntide Vacation stood in his name; and, if not, whether he will communicate with the Lord Chancellor with the view of ascertaining whether some means can be adopted by transfer to the Queen's Bench Division of the said Court of those actions which by the Judicature Acts are not specially assigned to the Chancery Division, to relieve the list of actions and matters now awaiting trial and hearing in the said Chancery Division?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight), in reply, said, that whether this Resolution was brought forward must depend upon the progress of Public Business. Upon the second part of the hon. Member's question he would communicate with the Lord Chancellor with a view to see what could be done.

LOTTERY ACTS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to the great increase during the past few years in the practice of gambling by means of lotteries, varying in amount from many thousands of pounds to a few shillings, which are promoted for *quasi*-charitable as well as for openly speculative purposes, by Political Associations of all shades of Party; by Religious Bodies, Catholic as well as Protestant; by newspaper proprietors, incorporated and individual; by small tradesmen, and by private individuals; and, whether it is true that the various Governments have rarely enforced the Lottery Law except against petty offenders?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am not aware that there has been within the past few years a great increase in the practice of gambling by means of lotteries. Lotteries vary much in their character. Many of them are promoted for really charitable purposes, and hardly serve as an encouragement to gambling. It belongs to the Local Authorities rather than to the Government to institute prosecutions in cases which fall within the mischief aimed at by the Lottery Acts. Successive Governments have called the attention of the Local Authorities to offences against these Acts, and in grave cases have taken action themselves.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the periodical lottery announced by advertisement in *The Blackburn Weekly Express* and *The Blackburn Evening Express* as a "Weekly Competition for £10 in money;" and, whether he will take any action in the matter? The hon. Gentleman also asked whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that the prosecution of the Church lottery promoters took place on Thursday; whether it was shown that 300,000 tickets had been sold in that case; and, whether a fine of 5*s.* has been inflicted by local Conservative magistrates?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am not aware of the facts now mentioned by the hon. Gentleman. In regard to the Question on the Paper, my attention has been called to this advertisement. I have communicated with the Local Authorities on the subject; and I have received a Report from the Chief Constable of the borough, who informs me that, after careful consideration of this weekly competition, he came to the conclusion that there was no element of chance in the way the distribution of money was conducted, so that the competition did not fall within the Lottery Acts. I understand also that the distribution has been postponed for the present.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he has taken any action, by warning or otherwise, to deter the publisher and proprietor of *The Southwark Standard and South London News* from continuing to infringe the law which prohibits the publication and advertising of foreign lotteries in this country; and, whether he is aware that since his attention was drawn to this subject on the 18th of May last, the said newspaper has continued to advertise such lotteries, and, in particular, published, on the 19th and 26th of May, a paragraph headed "An interesting advertisement," directing special attention to such lottery, and

> "Recommending our readers to take particular notice of the insertion, and try the chances of winning a fortune."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight), in reply, said, that he had communicated with the proper authorities with reference to this subject. He did not think that it would be advantageous to the Public Service to make any further statement at present.

LAW AND JUSTICE—INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, that he wished to put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, of which he had given him private Notice, with reference to a Return relating to the increase of sentences on appeal, which the right hon. Gentleman had laid upon the Table just before the Whitsuntide Recess. That Return contained no particulars beyond a number of figures. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he had any objection to supplement those figures by a statement in each of the 14 cases enumerated in the Return—(1) as to the offences charged; (2) as to the Act under which the proceedings were taken; (3) the penalty imposed in the first instance; (4) the amount of the increase in the sentence; and (5) the grounds, if any, that were assigned by the Court for the increase in each case?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply: The right hon. Gentleman appears to be under some misapprehension with regard to this Return, which was not devised by me but by one of his own friends. The Government have done what every Government always does when a Return has been agreed to—that is, they have given the exact information which was asked for. The Motion of the hon. Baronet (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was for a Return showing by counties the number of instances in which sentences in criminal cases were increased in Ireland during the year 1881, the following years, and that was the Return which was given. The right hon. Gentleman now asks me to supplement it, and I shall be very happy to do so; and, so far as I gathered from his Question, I shall be glad to give him all the particulars which he asks for, with the exception of the last. I do not think it would be proper to put in a Return the reasons given by a Judge for an increase of a sentence; but the character of the increase, and the character of the crime, I see no objection to giving.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: All that the right hon. Gentleman has said with regard to the Motion of my hon. Friend is quite true; and I should not have pressed the matter further if it had not been that the right hon. Gentleman himself drew certain important political inferences, not from the figures, but from the nature of the proceedings. When I asked for the ground on which the increased sentences were based I did not wish to get any private statement, but simply the reasons which were assigned by Judges in Court.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid no record was kept of those reasons, and therefore it would be impossible.

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government had a serious intention of proceeding this Session with the Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill? The measure had been brought up in three different Sessions; but it had never come to anything.

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, that certainly it was the intention of the Government, if possible, to pass this Bill in the course of the present Session. There was no chance, however, of being able to reach it that night.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE VAN AND WHEEL TAX.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it was the intention of the Government to postpone the second reading of the Bill imposing the Van and Wheel Tax until after the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill had passed through Committee?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, that that would depend upon circumstances, and that the matter would have to be further considered.

Mr. CAUSTON inquired, whether the right hon. Gentleman had altered his intention to make the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill take precedence over all other Bills?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that the hon. Member, from his knowledge of Public Business, must be quite aware that it was impossible for a Government to lay down an absolute rule with regard to the conduct of Public Business. It was the intention of the Government to take the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill on Thursday, and, as far as he could see, to continue it for several nights; but that would not bind the Government to take it every night until finished.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE DUTIES ON BOTTLED WINE.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is in a position to say anything as to the introduction of the Bill he promised should be introduced relating to the importation of the cheaper wines?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I hope to make a statement on the subject on Monday.

LAW AND JUSTICE (METROPOLIS)—MOLESTATION OF FEMALES—CASE OF MR. ROWDEN.

Mr. DARLING (Deptford) (for Mr. Addison) (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he desired to put a Question which appeared on the Paper the previous day. It was to the effect, Whether the attention of the Attorney General has been drawn to the case against a man named Rowden, who has for years pursued and accosted in the streets and elsewhere a lady unable to escape from this annoyance, and to the effect that this man, after repeated convictions, was, on May 15, ordered by the magistrate at Bow Street to find sureties to be of good behaviour for six months, the law providing no other punishment for this offence; and, whether, having regard to other occurrences of a similar nature, Her Majesty's Government are prepared to introduce a Bill for more adequately dealing with such an offence?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): I have seen the Report of the case referred to by the hon. and learned Member. I am not, however, aware that cases of the kind, distressing as they are, are of frequent occurrence. I do not think it is possible for Her Majesty's Government to deal with the question during the present Session; but if the hon. and learned Member would suggest any amendment of the law, I shall be most happy to give the matter my most careful attention.

Mr. DARLING asked, whether, it being stated that Rowden was a member of the Bar, the Attorney General, as the leader of the Bar, would bring his conduct to the notice of the Benchers?

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, he had not the least idea that Rowden was a member of the Bar, and if he were it was not for him to take action. Any representations made to him would be carefully considered.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.), in rising to call attention to the position of Trustee Savings Banks; and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the relationship subsisting between Trustee Savings Banks and the State is unsatisfactory, and ought to be revised; that Trustees and Managers should be restrained from using the words 'Government Security,' 'Government Savings Bank,' or other words implying more than the law rightfully authorises, in connection with such Banks, the use of which is calculated to deceive depositors, create a false impression of security, and damage the cause of thrift; and that the Trustees and Managers of such Banks should, as formerly, be made responsible for the safe custody of the deposits committed to their care in connection with such Trustee Banks,"

said, the House would remember that for some 16 months he had been drawing the attention of the House to this matter, and he now found that it was necessary for the House to take some further action. He should not have considered it necessary to make any reference to his motives in bringing the question before the House had it not been for a letter in yesterday's *Times* in which certain imputations were contained. He might be allowed to say that he did not believe in panics nor in legislating when panics took place. All that he desired in this matter, as was well known both to the Leader of the House and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was to call attention to certain defects in connection with the management of Trustee Savings Banks so that some remedial measures might be passed, not in consequence of panic, but for the protection of the deposits of the poor persons who had deposited their savings in them. At the present moment there were 405 Trustee Savings Banks in the country, the number of deposit accounts was 1,590,000, and the aggregate amount of deposits standing in the name of these depositors was £46,843,000. If, therefore, they took into consideration the number of the banks throughout the country, the number of depositors in them, and the amount of the deposits, together with the fact that the depositors belonged to the poorer classes of society, he thought a case would be made out for calling attention to the subject. It would be in the recollection of hon. Members who were at all acquainted with the history of these banks, that they were established towards the close of last century, and that they existed for a considerable time as purely voluntary associations. It was not until they had grown considerably and extended to every part of the country that legislation stepped in. Three Bills were brought in in the years 1815, 1816, and 1817; but it was not until 1817 that any Act was passed for the purpose of regulating them. In 1818, another Act was passed to extend the provisions of the first Act to Ireland. The main object of this legislation was to secure the safety of the depositors' money. That object had always been considered of paramount importance; but the Government of that day and the House of Commons went further. They were prepared to give some kind of encouragement as well as protection to the depositors in Trustee Savings Banks, and, therefore, in order to encourage thrift among the working classes, the Government determined to fix the interest upon the amount deposited at £4 11*s.* 3*d.* per cent per annum. It was subsequently altered to a lower figure, because a number of persons began to make use of these banks instead of the ordinary commercial banks of the country for the purpose of putting in them, as a matter of convenience, deposits which were used in trading transactions. It was never intended that these Trustee Savings Banks should come into competition with the ordinary commercial banks of the country, but they were encouraged by the State for the purpose of developing thrift among the poorer classes. It was, therefore, deemed necessary in order that these institutions should be made use of for that object that certain limitations should be imposed. In the first place, the annual amount invested by any one depositor was limited, and there was also a limit fixed to the maximum amount which any single depositor could place in them. The main object of the early legislation was the protection of the investor; and it was required that the money deposited should be placed in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners. It was thought that by making it compulsory to invest the deposits with the National Debt Commissioners, something like absolute security would be given to the depositors. Although the Government allowed a certain rate of interest to the trustees of these savings banks, yet a portion of the money went to the management, and the other portion to the investors. The State, therefore, paid an absolute bounty for the management of the banks, and consequently had a right to see, especially as they were regulated by the State, that they were properly and efficiently managed. It so happened that very early in the history of the banks it was found that defalcations existed, and defalcations had continued to exist over a long series of years. The earlier defalcations were of a sufficiently startling nature to alarm a great number of prudent men, Members of that House, among others, as to the safety of the Trustee Savings Banks and of the money deposited in them; and therefore it had been attempted over and over again to increase the responsibilities of trustees and managers, whose duty it was to see that these banks were managed in accordance with the statutory provisions. It was very singular, and the history of these banks disclosed the fact, although he mentioned it with some reluctance, and certainly with some shame, that whilst the managers and trustees of the banks and their patrons, many of whom had Representatives in that House, used every effort to keep up the rate of interest at £4 11*s.* 3*d.* per cent, as at first proposed, and had done everything in their power to maintain and continue that high rate of interest, as an inducement to depositors to place their money in the banks; yet from a very early period they threw every obstacle in the way of increasing the responsibility of trustees and managers, and making them liable for any frauds or failures that might take place in regard to them. He did not intend to say anything against the honour of the trustees and managers. In looking through the history of the frauds and defalcations which had taken place, there was scarcely, as far as he remembered, a single instance in which either a trustee or manager had been found guilty of fraudulent practices in relation to the banks. But that could not be said of other officers, both paid and unpaid, and, to a considerable extent, the trustees and managers were by law made responsible for what was done. While practically anxious, therefore, to increase the responsibility of trustees and managers—and there was no other way of doing it than by increasing their liability—he hoped they would not suppose for a moment that he was calling in question their honour with regard to these banks. He knew they had done good work in connection with them in many respects, and he was prepared to admit that a great many of the banks themselves were in a good and solvent condition; but what he contended was that the facts he had already placed before the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer during the last 16 months were sufficient to show that something must be done in order to afford greater protection than they now did to the depositors in Trustee Savings Banks. In his communications with the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the subject, it was his duty to say that he had received every consideration from those right hon. Gentlemen. He had had a long and arduous task in bringing the matter before the House, seeing that it took a considerable time to get all the facts and figures that were necessary to establish a case, and on every occasion he gratefully acknowledged that the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had done everything that they could to aid him up to a certain point as far as he could understand their position. Nevertheless he felt that all that had been done was not sufficient. Last year the House was able to pass an Act for the purpose of making inquiries into the position of certain banks where a *primâ facie* case for inquiry had been made out. But they wanted something more than an inquiry where frauds and defalcations had taken place, where a failure had happened, and a great many persons had been almost ruined. It was not that which was wanted so much as some kind of efficient legislation whereby frauds and defalcations and failures would be prevented in the future. He had already mentioned the bounty given by the State towards the management of the banks. That bounty was altered in 1828 from £4 11*s.* 3*d.* to £3 16*s.* 0½*d.*; in 1844 it was reduced to £3 5*s.*; in 1880 it was further reduced to £3, and it was now proposed by a Bill before the House in the present year to reduce it to £2 15*s.*, of which sum £2 10*s.*, equivalent to the interest allowed by the Post Office Savings Banks, would go to the depositors. [An hon. MEMBER: It may.] As his hon. Friend reminded him, that this £2 10*s.* "might" go to the depositors. At any rate, under the altered circumstances of the case, the condition of the banks would be very much worse than it was to-day, and he was satisfied that in a great many instances it was sufficiently bad to-day. He therefore desired that the attention of the House should be directed to the subject so that some action might be taken before the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer came into operation. He referred to the Supplementary National Debt Bill, whereby the interest on these deposits was to be still further reduced.

In a great number of cases these banks had not a sufficient amount for working expenses already if they were to judge from the returns. He was, however, bound to say that there was very little dependence to be placed on the very elaborate returns which were published from time to time. As far as anyone could judge from them the position ot the Cardiff Bank for instance was right enough according to the returns, and a number of other banks were right enough until frauds were discovered in connection with them. At the same time the returns, if properly examined, did give a number of important facts. For example—one bank sent up to the National Debt Commissioners a balance sheet that showed a profit on the right side of something a little under £40; but when that balance sheet was sent up, showing some credit to the bank, it was found that the bank had left unpaid a part of the salary of the actuary, which amounted to a larger sum. That was not the kind of solvency he wanted to see in regard to these Trustee Savings Banks. He thought their accounts ought to be able to show, on the face of them, a perfectly solvent condition, and if they did not do that, then, taking into consideration the fact that the National Debt Commissioners were empowered to pay a bounty of 5*s.* per cent for the management of the banks, they or some other authority should have power to make some inquiry into the condition of these banks by Act of Parliament. So far as he understood the operation of the Act of last Session that object had not yet been attained. Many hon. Members might not be aware of the large amount of money paid by the State towards keeping up this system of Trustee Savings Banks. If it were a bonus paid only and entirely for the encouragement of thrift, he felt that the House, especially after the experience of what other Parliaments had been doing during the last 50 or 60 years would not grudge a few extra pounds per annum in order to encourage thrift among the working classes; but the House ought to be satisfied that this bounty went to the depositors, and was used for the encouragement of thrift. As he understood it, the object of these banks was not to call into existence an institution that was to provide respectable berths for a number of very respectable people; but the real object was to encourage thrift, and for that purpose the main responsibility with regard to the management of the banks was thrown, not upon the actuaries or secretaries, but upon the trustees and managers. Well, these banks had not paid their way; they had never paid their way, but they had been bounty fed from the first moment of their existence under statutory regulation. They lost in the first year they were instituted—namely, from 1817 to 1818—a sum of £12,000, and it increased year by year until the loss reached something very considerable. During the first 11 years of their existence the actual loss to the National Exchequer was £744,552. These facts were contained in a Return moved for by the late Joseph Hume, for many years a respected Member of that House, and it was published prior to 1828, when the first reduction was made in the amount of interest. It was thought that when the interest was reduced that the banks would be pretty nearly able to pay their way; but, even with the reduction, the banks were not able to pay their way, and a very considerable sum of money was lost to the nation in connection with the management of thrift savings banks, and in the payment of interest up to 1844, when a further reduction was made, and again up to 1880. It would be in the recollection of the House that in the year 1880 the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) brought in a measure whereby arrangements were made to pay off the deficit incurred by the banks. It was somewhat difficult to understand what the actual deficit was, but the sum mentioned to the House was considerably over £3,500,000. It was thought after a still further reduction was made in the amount of interest that the banks would not be landed in further deficiencies; but, as a matter of fact, from 1880, when arrangements were made to pay off the deficit at the rate of £83,272 a-year, up to 1908 the Trustee Savings Banks had cost the nation a further sum of £17,000. The rate was now about £10,000 per annum, £6,000 of which represented the cost of management at the National Debt Office, while something like £4,000 represented the sum paid to the trustees in the shape of interest over the amount actually earned. Only recently the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave some figures in answer to a Question put to him in that House, which showed that last year, 1887, the actual loss to the National Exchequer, instead of being £4,090 as in the previous year, had amounted to £13,746. He could, therefore, understand why it was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had found it absolutely necessary to bring in this Supplementary Bill to deal with the question of Trustee Banks. So far as the Motion was concerned, that was an important aspect of the question; but with a rich nation like this, he felt sure that the sum of £10,000 a-year would not be grudged if necessary for developing thrift in the country. What they wanted to see was that the money should be used in order to develop thrift, and in connection with perfectly safe and solvent institutions. He was sorry to say that the history of Trustee Savings Banks in this country was not so bright a page as he at one time imagined it would be, and as many hon. Members of the House even now imagined that it was. He had had to go through a number of records in connection with these banks, and his feeling was one of sadness when he remembered the great number of defalcations which had taken place. It was a singular fact that 12 failures took place in the first 11 years after the state imposed some regulations in regard to them—namely, between 1817 and 1828. A great number of failures had taken place in various parts of the country at various times, but the reason why they did not hear so much in regard to some of those failures was the fact that the trustees and managers, rather than have an open inquiry and have all the circumstances of the case brought to light, manfully put their hands in their pockets and made up the deficiency, while the defaulting actuary or secretary, whoever he might be, escaped punishment. In one instance Mr. Hoare paid £7,000 out of his own pocket to make up a defalcation which had occurred in connection with a bank of which he was trustee, while other trustees had paid from £500 to £1,000 according to their means. In many instances the trustees and managers had come forward in this way. One instance occurred last year to which the attention of the House was called. The Bishop Stortford case was sufficiently sad in itself. In that instance trustees and managers paid a large sum of money, although he was not quite sure that all the deficiency was made up, in order to make up the defalcations caused by the fraud and default of their secretary. It was a singular fact in connection with that bank that this man was able to draw sums of money year after year from the National Debt Commissioners without anyone calling him to account. The sums drawn out from the National Debt Office amounted to £8,750, but instead of having that sum in hand £750 was all that stood to the credit of the bank, the rest having been drawn by the defaulting secretary. It seemed to him that even the National Debt Commissioners, placed as they were, ought to have seen that there was something wrong; but they said that they had no authority. All he could say was that there ought to be some authority. The trustees and managers themselves had authority, and it was their bounden duty under an Act of Parliament to see that the rules and regulations, established for the control of Trustee Savings Banks, were carried out. On one occasion some years ago the House of Commons voted a sum of money to make up a deficiency in one bank, a sum of £30,000 being voted towards meeting the deficiency which had taken place in Dublin. It might have been thought that that circumstance would have alarmed the trustees and managers of savings banks throughout the country. It certainly alarmed many Members of the House of Commons, and among others Mr. Joseph Hume, who was not a man likely to give way to panic. It might have been thought that some attempt would be made to increase the liability and responsibility of the trustees and managers, but scarcely had this sum of money been voted by Parliament, when other defalcations were brought to light amounting in the case of St. Albans to £24,000, of Tralee to £36,000, of Killarney to £36,000, of Rochdale to £71,715, of Brighton to £4,000, and of Reading to £3,000. These defalcations occurred from time to time until hon. Members of that House became alarmed, and then an effort was made to increase the responsibility of the trustees and managers. It had been held by a decision at law that trustees were responsible, but they got rid of that responsibility. The House of Commons then, in one of these fits of panic which seemed to overtake it, passed a measure which permitted trustees and managers to make themselves responsible and liable by signing a declaration to that effect and sending it to the National Debt Commissioners. The result was that out of the great number of Trustee Savings Banks throughout the length and breadth of the land, only four sets of trustees, who were connected with very unimportant banks, sent in a declaration that they were prepared to incur the liability and responsibility. The trustees and managers of the other banks sent in no declaration to the effect that they were prepared to be held responsible for the money belonging to the poor depositors, and of course this permissive legislation entirely failed to produce any salutary effect. Another effort was then made to increase the security of these banks and the responsibility of trustees and managers. Bills were brought into the House of Commons year after year, and they were rejected mainly on account of the efforts which were made on the part of the trustees, managers, and patrons of these banks, acting, of course, for others whose hands were not quite so apparent. Those Bills were rejected year after year. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian attempted legislation on two occasions, and a third Bill was brought in by some other Members of the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian seeing that he could not enforce this liability upon trustees, brought in, on that account, another measure creating the Post Office Savings Banks which was thus absolutely brought into existence, because trustees and managers would not undertake the due responsibility of the trust they had taken upon themselves. The trustees and managers seemed to have come to the conclusion that it was perhaps wise that some further measure should be brought in, and called upon the right hon. Gentleman to help. They were told that the Government had done their part, and that they must prepare a measure themselves. The result was the Act of 1863. The trustees did introduce a measure, but they took very good care in introducing it that their responsibility was not increased as it ought to have been. Now, he ventured to think not only that the time had come when that House, for the sake of its own credit, must see that the provisions passed by it were carried into effect, but also that it should go on to some further legislation with regard to the trustees of these banks. Their position would be much altered by the new Act, which would come into operation in the course of a few months. Whether, however, that Act had been passed or not, the Trustee Savings Banks could not go on as at present. He maintained that the circumstances which attended the failure and defalcations at Cardiff were quite sufficient of themselves to show the absolute necessity of some kind of legislation. The defalcations discovered at Cardiff amounted to over £37,000, and at Bishop Stortford there was a deficiency of £8,000. The Act of 1863, if it had been honestly worked by the trustees and managers, would certainly have prevented those frauds. At any rate, they would have done so to a very considerable extent, and if the frauds and defalcations had not increased, there would not have been any absolute reason for increasing the responsibility of trustees and managers. But what was the actual state of matters. So far from the trustees and managers doing their duty, it seemed to him that they never stopped to consider whether they had any duties to perform or any responsibilities in connection with the money of depositors at all. This singular fact cropped up in evidence in regard to the banks of Sevenoaks, Bishop Stortford, Cardiff, and other places—namely, that the trustees and managers said that they had never known there were any statutory provisions imposing certain duties upon them. All that he could say in answer to that was that the trustees and managers were rendered responsible for the management of these banks by the Act of 1863. One of the first things set forth in the Act of 1863 was that every depositor on making his deposit, should make a declaration that he had no interest in any other Savings Bank to any extent whatever. It was the duty of trustees and managers to see that this declaration was made by every depositor, and the Act went further, for they were not only required to say that the declaration was made when the first deposit took place, but power was given to them to see that the declaration was made at any subsequent time if they thought fit. Now, in the case of Cardiff, it was in evidence that the declaration was not made by the depositors, and was never expected to be made, and that it was only in comparatively few instances that it was done. Nor did it appear to have been made in connection with other banks where defalcations took place, notwithstanding the fact that it was the first duty imposed by the Act, the object being to see that no man deposited more in one year than £30, or a larger sum altogether than £150. This was not peculiar in regard to any particular bank. A Trustee Savings Bank pass book had been placed in his hands a short time ago. It was given to him by a gentleman who went and put in a sum of money in a certain bank in London about which he should have to say something on a future occasion. This gentleman expected to be called upon to make a statutory declaration, but no such declaration was asked for or referred to, and no trustee or manager was there to initial the book in accordance with the provisions of the Act. The intention of the law was to fix an annual limit of £30 a-year for depositors, and the intention in fixing that limit was that the bank should be used by the industrial classes only; but, as a matter of fact, this annual limit had been exceeded over and over again in various savings banks throughout the country, and not only the annual limit, but the maximum amount of £150. In Cardiff, so innocent were all the gentlemen connected with the bank, notwithstanding the fact that some of the trustees and managers were lawyers, that one of their number, himself a lawyer, deposited thousands of pounds in the bank, and had the principal paid back again with interest, in absolute violation, not only of the spirit, but of the letter of the Act. When the inquiry was instituted at Cardiff, this gentleman, who, it must be remembered, was a lawyer, told the Commissioners that he had no notion whatever of any restriction having been imposed by the law. Then, again, the Act provided that there should be an audit, and that that audit should take place every half-year. He presumed that those who passed the Act and those by whom it was framed, meant, when they used the term audit, that there should be a real audit, and not that a certain number of figures should be totalled up in a book and initialled "all right," and sent up to the National Debt Commissioners to tell any tale it liked. Of the kind of audit that passed muster there was a sad specimen recently in connection with the Cardiff Bank, and also in a case which occurred recently, in which the gentleman who wrote a letter to *The Times* yesterday happened to be the auditor as well as the actuary of an important London Trustee Bank. This gentleman, who was joint auditor with his partner of several other banks, might be thought, from the experience he had gained, to have known something in regard to auditing, and to have been able to detect any frauds or defalcations that might have taken place. Yet frauds had been going on for years undetected by the auditor, although they might have been detected very readily if he had simply carried out the rules and instructions of the Act of Parliament, seeing that the pass book of the depositor was examined with the cash book and ledger at the bank. That not being done, of course the actuary could use the money just as he pleased. He put down certain amounts in the cash book and ledger of the bank, and other amounts in the pass books, and as nobody ever saw the pass books and compared them with the books in the possession of the bank, he was perfectly safe. If the auditor had done his duty, the defalcations which took place at Sevenoaks could not have occurred. The case at Cardiff was worse. The defalcations had been going on there for a great number of years. How many they were not told by the Commissioner; but, at any rate, they had been going on for the last 20 years. In that case, the auditor simply did what the actuary told him, and when the inquiry was instituted it was found that there had not only been a defective audit, but something more. It was found in one instance that an auditor who had acted for many years had been removed, and another auditor was appointed in his place. It so happened that this auditor was not quite so easily satisfied, and in one instance he discovered that a great number of accounts exceeded the full limit of £150, which was the maximum allowed by the Act, or £200, including the interest. It was found that some of the accounts had run up to a considerable amount, but that, nevertheless, only one single account had been sent up to the National Debt Office as having been over £200, and in that case it was marked £200 12*s*. The auditor refused to sign the accounts as correct, and wrote the word "false" against it, to which he signed his name. But what did the trustees and managers do? They absolutely published the balance sheet as signed by the auditor and found correct, but without the word "false" upon it. That account was sent up to the National Debt Office, and it contained the name of one depositor only who had exceeded the maximum allowed to be deposited. Then, again, this singular thing happened in connection with the Cardiff bank. Neither in connection with that bank nor in the inquiry instituted under the Hon. Lyulph Stanley, as Commissioner, was there anything to show that any of the trustees or managers actually benefited themselves to any extent by the frauds and defalcations which occurred, and in asking the House to take steps he was at the same time seeking to protect a body of men who were occupying a post of honour as well as responsibility. But in undertaking the duties it was necessary that they should undertake the responsibility connected with them, and see that the rules and regulations provided by statute were carried out. He had shown that the law was set at defiance with regard to the limit of money to be deposited per annum, also in regard to the limit of the maximum amount, and also in reference to the fact that no real and effectual audit took place. His attention had been called by managers, trustees, and actuaries to certain banks which were, undoubtedly, well managed, but he had never called in question the fact that a great number of these Trustee Savings Banks were well conducted. For instance, there was the Glasgow Savings Bank, which was conducted in every way, as far as he could learn, as a great philanthropic institution; its affairs were managed in a wise manner, and every security was given to the depositors. The same might be said of the Hull Savings Bank, and the Liverpool Savings Bank might also be mentioned, but he did not like to mention individual banks lest it might be supposed that he wished to condemn those he did not mention. All he would say was that there could be no doubt that many of these banks were well conducted. No single charge had ever been made against the Liverpool Savings Bank, and it was managed, he believed, in a proper and judicious manner, and had been placed in a sound and healthy condition in every possible respect. The actuary of that bank seemed to be very angry with him for having brought the question of Trustee Savings Banks before the House, and undertook to get up a trades' union of the actuaries of savings banks for the purpose of opposing legislation on the subject. That gentleman, no doubt believing that he was perfectly right, had said, "We do not break the law in any respect, nor do we parade the name of the Government." Now he (Mr. Howell) had had a circular put in his hands in which this gentleman endeavoured to show that no use was made of the Government name for the purpose of security. Yet, the first passage in that circular said, that as many paragraphs were going round the papers as to the security or insecurity of Trustee Savings Bank, it might be of interest to consider how the matter stood in reference to the Liverpool Savings Bank. In the first place the Liverpool Savings Bank had never assumed the title of "National Security" or "Government Security" in any of its pass-books or other publications. Its full title was "The Liverpool Savings Bank, certified by Act of Parliament," and so on. This circular had been sown broadcast throughout the country, and it was quite true that the pass book was not issued with the words "National Security" or "Government Security" upon it. But in this very circular he found the words "Liverpool Savings Bank, National Security, Government Security." No further observation was, therefore, necessary in regard to that point. His main complaint was that the terms "Government Security" and "National Security" had been used in connection with these banks as traps for the unwary, and that a great number of persons had been induced to lodge their money in these banks, believing them to be absolutely safe and sound, whereas they were not so, but had gone to pieces, and the depositors had suffered in consequence. He thought that some action ought to be taken by the House in the first place to prohibit the use of the name of the Government in the way in which it was so used, even in the simple circular he had referred to. The managers had no right to use the term "National Security" or "Government Security," because it was well known that the only security the Government afforded to Trustee Savings Banks was the security of the money actually lodged with the National Debt Commissioners. The National Debt Commissioners were responsible to that extent for the money belonging to the Cardiff Bank, but what had become of the £37,000 of which the bank had been defrauded, and how was it that a demand was made for so large a sum of money? It was because the rules and regulations of the bank itself had been violated by the trustees and managers, and also the provisions of the Act of Parliament. It became the duty of that House to see that the name of the Government was not used as a trap in the way he had pointed out. In the next place, deposits ought only to be taken during the hours the bank was open. This was already provided for by the rules and the Act of Parliament. Any money taken at any other time was taken fraudulently, and the actuary who took it, together with the trustee and manager who signed the pass book or witnessed the payment, whether they knew it or not, were accessories to a fraud. In the particular instance of the Cardiff Bank he had seen a document which was supposed to have been signed by the Attorney General, in which the public were told by one of these trustees and managers that they had acted in accordance with the opinion of the Attorney General. He much doubted the fact at the time the statement was made, so he said, "So much the worse for the hon. and learned Gentleman's law," but he did not know until a long time afterwards what the terms of the case submitted to the Attorney General were or what his opinion actually was. The trustees and managers mentioned what purported to be the document, but the real document was only extorted by the Commissioner with considerable difficulty. When it was printed in connection with the Report of the Commissioner it turned out that the Attorney General and other counsel who had been consulted on the matter had advised the trustees over and over again for 12 months before he called the attention of the House to the matter that their action had been illegal, and that they would be held responsible. During the whole time the trustees were using the money of the depositors for the purpose of fighting the depositors before the Registrar, before the High Court of Justice, and in the Lobby of that House, they kept the opinion back. As a matter of fact, the opinion of the learned Attorney General did not please them. They therefore consulted another eminent counsel, who also failed to satisfy them. What they wanted was the opinion of some eminent counsel which should absolutely satisfy their consciences, and relieve them of all illegal liability and responsibility, so that they would be able to sleep in peace. But not a single lawyer could be found who was willing to give a certificate to that effect, and, as he had already stated, although this opinion was in the possession of the trustees and managers and the solicitors who were connected with the bank, for more than 12 months, during the whole of that time the money of the depositors was being used for the purpose of contesting their claims before the Registrar and the High Court of Justice, the object being to avoid paying the money which was absolutely due to those who had placed deposits in the bank. The next necessary step to be taken was that the trustees and managers of these banks should be made responsible and liable for loss in exactly the same way as other trustees were liable for money committed to their care. If gentlemen were not prepared to take upon themselves the full responsibility of trusteeship, they ought not to become trustees and managers of a Trustee Savings Bank. They undertook the duties under the provisions of an Act of Parliament on the supposition that they would carry out those provisions, and if they failed to carry them out, then, he maintained, that they were guilty of culpable neglect, and ought to pay for it. There was another thing which, in his opinion, ought to be done, and it had reference to the Registrar's Office. Under the Savings Banks Act, before the Registrar's Office was called into existence, a barrister was appointed to certify the rules. That barrister was subsequently made a Registrar, and it was his duty to see that all matters connected with the banks were in conformity with the provisions of the Act of Parliament. The decision and the award of the Registrar was to be final without appeal. But what had happened in connection with these Trustee Savings Banks was that they had absolutely set at naught every decision and every award of the Registrar. The decisions given by the Registrar time after time had never been obeyed up to the present moment, but the managers and trustees used the deposit money in order to prevent litigation and appealed to the High Court of Justice in some cases to restrain the Registrar from acting. In every possible way they had endeavoured to prevent the poor depositors from obtaining their just demands. The Registrar's Office could be made really useful for carrying out the Act of Parliament. The Registrar should have power not only to make his award but to enforce it. How was it possible for the poor people who lodged their half crowns in these savings banks to employ counsel to fight against the eminent men engaged by the banks to fight against them, and paid by the depositors' money? He asked that something should be done to strengthen the hands of the Registrar, so that these objectionable practices should not take place in future. He would not detain the House further in the matter. What he was anxious for was that the Government would see its way to supplement the Act of last year and the Bill of the present Session by some further legislation in reference to Trustee Savings Banks. He was aware that there was some difficulty in the way of legislation, because the Cardiff case was not yet absolutely settled; but he wanted to impress upon the Government that the position of the matter would be altered very considerably as soon as a further reduction of interest took place. His only fear was that some of these banks with small assets would not, with their present liabilities, bear the slightest test that might be applied to them, and he was anxious to avoid a premature run on any of the banks. At the same time, the existing state of things was a perfect scandal, and it was necessary that remedial legislation should take place in order to prevent the recurrence of the failures and defalcations which had occurred. He had again to thank the Government for the careful consideration which they had hitherto given to this very difficult matter, and he also thanked the House for the attention with which it had listened to his observations. He sincerely hoped that before the end of the Session something would be done to increase the security of these savings banks of the United Kingdom, and to make the trustees and managers absolutely responsible for the due performance of their duties.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) seconded the Resolution.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, the relationship subsisting between Trustee Savings Banks and the State is unsatisfactory, and ought to be revised; that Trustees and Managers should be restrained from using the words 'Government Security,' 'Government Savings Bank,' or other words implying more than the Law rightfully authorises, in connection with such Banks, the use of which is calculated to deceive depositors, create a false impression of security, and damage the cause of thrift; and that the Trustees and Managers of such Banks should, as formerly, be made responsible for the safe custody of the deposits committed to their care in connection with such Trustee Banks,"—(*Mr. Howell,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he was the more induced to say a few words upon this Motion, because he was trustee of one of the banks which had been referred to by the hon. Member as instances of banks that were under proper and satisfactory management. And, as a lawyer, he certainly hoped that he knew more of the duties and responsibilities he had incurred than some of those who had been referred to in connection with the Cardiff Savings Bank. He had not seconded the Motion, although he thought it would be easy to accept it if the last clause were omitted, and he hoped before the close of the discussion the hon. Member would see his way to omit those words, so as to enable the House to come to a unanimous conclusion. He also trusted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to make also some acceptable offer on the part of the Government. With the exception he had pointed out, there was no objection to the principle of the Motion. It was a long time since the matter had been discussed in Parliament, and no one could take exception to the manner in which the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) had introduced it. Those who took an interest in the savings banks would welcome the Motion as a means of drawing renewed attention to these institutions, which had been of great value to the country, and of introducing those reforms which would make them still more valuable, and give increased security to the trustees who took an active interest in such work. He fully agreed with the hon. Member that the position of trustee was one of some honour, and ought to carry with it corresponding responsibility; but he would suggest, when it was considered how much the country owed to these trustees, that there was no reason for increasing their responsibility unduly and incurring the risk of getting rid of the great benefit which they had conferred upon the banks. He hoped the result of the discussion would be that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be induced to give such consideration to the arguments advanced by the hon. Member as to lead him to the conclusion that the subject was one worthy of more formal and detailed consideration than could be given to it in that House, and that, inasmuch as there had been financial changes which altered the basis of these banks, and as there were points in which the law affecting them might be improved, the matter was one which might very well be referred to a Select Committee on the lines suggested by the hon. Member, without interfering with the voluntary work that had been already done with such good effect on behalf of these savings banks. Let them look for a moment at the vast value the savings banks had been to the country. They could hardly realize the importance of their work, the impetus which had been given by them in a difficult period in the history of the country to habits of thrift, and the way in which they had led up to the formation of other institutions of a philanthropic character. True, there had been failures in connection with the savings banks, and if there was one form of robbery more objectionable than another, it was in the plunder of the poor which occasionally took place in connection with philanthropic institutions. But even in the case of Rochdale, which had been mentioned by the hon. Member in connection with such a failure, the establishment of a savings bank there promoted habits of thrift among the working classes, which gave rise to the great co-operative movement that sprung up in that town, so that indirectly benefit was associated with the bank. And even now that the State had done its duty by establishing Post Office Savings Banks, Trustee Savings Banks were still found to be of great value, for notwithstanding the existence of the new institutions, the Trustee Banks had a sum of £47,000,000 sterling invested in them, which was almost equal to the amount invested in the Post Office Savings Bank, although their number was only 400 against 8,000. In point of fact, the Trustee Savings Banks supplied a national want, and met the convenience of a large numbers of persons in a way the Post Office Savings Banks could not hope to do. The centralization inseparable from the Post Office system was incompatible with the convenience afforded by the Trustee Savings Banks. A bank would pay £10 or £20 without notice, merely on the production of a pass book, having its own ledgers to refer to. Thus, in all respects, the Trustee Savings Banks deserved strong encouragement rather than discouragement. A very great interest was taken in the question, and the hon. Member for Bethnal Green would be the first to acknowledge that it would be an unfortunate day for the saving people of the country if anything was done to discourage them from making these investments. Granted that there had been cases of gross mismanagement, failure, and plunder, still he ventured to say that the general position of the savings banks was satisfactory. The hon. Member had admitted this in reference to some of the instances he had referred to. That they were solvent was shown by the funds invested with the National Debt Commissioners, and there were also surplus funds so invested to the extent of £400,000, on which no interest was paid. He congratulated the hon. Member for Bethnal Green on having brought forward the question, but he hoped the hon. Gentleman would consent to the omission of the concluding words of the Motion, so that the House might unanimously agree to the first part. The first part of the Resolution was—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the relationship subsisting between Trustee Savings Banks and the State is unsatisfactory, and ought to be revised."

They would all admit that it was a long time since legislation took place upon the subject. The Consolidation Acts, which were passed some 20 or 30 years ago, were all based on the Act of 1816, and there ought to be no feeling against modern managers in respect of legislation founded upon the political economy of that date. If only upon that ground it was desirable that the matter should be considered. The State had realized a considerable loss in respect of the obligations of the Trustee Savings Banks; but that loss was not a current loss for which the present managers were responsible, but was incurred years ago in the early history of the system. The hon. Member, instead of blaming the existing managers and trustees, should rather censure the political economy of 1816.

Mr. HOWELL said, that there was the loss of £13,000 last year.

Sir. ALBERT ROLLIT said, his contention was that modern legislation was not to be condemned because a financial subject had not been properly dealt with so long ago as 1816. If the political economy of that day had been better, the loss which had been incurred, and which was in a great measure an accumulated one, would not now be the subject of consideration in that House. On the other hand, there had been a succession of legislation constantly reducing the interest paid to depositors, and the Bill introduced in the present Session would make a further inroad upon that interest. That, also, was a matter which required consideration, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on behalf of the Government, were to afford an opportunity for inquiry, the managers and trustees of savings banks generally would welcome many securities which did not now exist, but which were calculated to improve the condition of these banks. There could be no objection to an independent audit, to more frequent comparison of pass-books with ledgers. That would prevent many of the frauds which had taken place in the past. Nor could there be any objection to requiring security to be given by managers and clerks and to Government nominations of local trustees, provided local help and local interest were still maintained. Upon all of these points he believed that the trustees and managers were prepared to welcome inquiry, and he hoped that an investigation would be productive of great good. There was, however, one point on which he seriously differed from the views of the hon. Member. As a trustee, he was fully aware of the responsible position he occupied. It was quite possible that there was a number of trustees who were not lawyers, and who were hardly aware of the responsibility they had incurred; but he thought that the hon. Member had not sufficiently stated those responsibilities. On the contrary, he had somewhat minimized them, and if he would refer to the Act which bore upon the subject, he would find that it made trustees liable in very precise terms for the consequences of their own neglect. Indeed, this had been tested in the Bishop Stortford case, and also in the case of the Cardiff Savings Bank. Trustees were further liable for their own personal default if they did not take full opportunity of inquiring into the position of the bank for which they were responsible, and enforcing those checks which the Legislature had imposed. The last clause of the Resolution, however, sought to make them liable under all circumstances for all the money deposited, the words being—

> "That the Trustees and Managers of such banks should, as formerly, be made responsible for the safe custody of the deposits committed to their care, in connection with such Trustee Banks."

This could not mean, as it might appear to do on the face of it, the physical custody of the money—the taking care of the safes and premises; but it meant that the trustees were further to be liable for every default on the part of their officers, who, he presumed, would have been appointed after full inquiry into their character, and who might fairly be regarded as competent to perform their duties. Certainly, since 1816 or 1818, no such responsibility had been placed upon the trustees and managers. At that time their duties were more clearly defined; and, as far as he could remember, he did not think they had been rendered absolutely responsible and fixed with unqualified liability. Could it be advantageous to the cause of thrift to impose unrestricted liability on gentlemen who had rendered such valuable services to these institutions? Was it wise to place a check and an undue liability upon those who had done, for instance, so much to establish and maintain penny banks? A very large number of those banks were now in existence, and they proved most useful to schools. From those penny banks the depositors were induced to become depositors in the Trustee Savings Banks themselves. Then, was it wise to impose any further responsibility upon the trustees? He hoped the hon. Member would reconsider and withdraw the latter part of the Motion, because there was every reason to believe that the acceptance of those words would impose a liability which very few men of business would be willing to accept in future. They wanted to get as much voluntary agency as possible; and when they found that voluntary agency had, as a general rule, proved so successful in connection with the savings banks, and the trustees were willing to incur great liability, and even to suffer by incurring it, he did not think that Parliament ought to discourage them, but, on the contrary, should offer them every encouragement it could. He would not detain the House longer than to say that he trusted the subject would undergo full reconsideration, and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as he was now dealing with the funds of the Trustee Savings Banks by reducing the interest, would make some return by granting a Select Committee.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, he had taken for many years a great amount of interest in this important question; and he was, therefore, anxious to say a few words in connection with the Resolution which the hon. Member had moved. He must candidly say that in the main he fully agreed with the hon. Member. He thought that the statement made by the hon. Gentleman clearly showed that the time had arrived when the subject should be carefully gone into. The hon. Member who had just spoken had referred to the last clause of the Resolution, and he agreed with the hon. Member that, as it stood, it was somewhat bald and open to objection. But, on the other hand, they must recognize the fact that if trustees and others connected with these banks took on themselves the responsibility of looking after these institutions, if they failed to carry out the law as it was laid down by Act of Parliament, they should be responsible for not attending to those rules and regulations, which, if they had been attended to, would have prevented all of those catastrophes to which reference had been made. At the same time, they ought not to forget the enormous amount of good which these Trustee Savings Banks had effected. They had been the pioneers of the great movement of thrift in this country. Nearly 100 years ago, when they were first commenced, there was no other movement or institution for promoting thrift and this branch of the well-being of the country. Although it was perfectly true that some of these banks had failed, and there were instances of the very unsatisfactory manner in which they had been conducted, yet he thought that no impartial man would deny that the instances of failure had been comparatively few. The work which had been done had, as a general rule, been done well, and it would be a disastrous thing if they were to do anything to endanger the existence of these institutions. He thought they might take it for granted that it was owing to the failure of some of the Trustee Savings Banks that, some 20 years ago, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) brought forward his scheme for the establishment of the Post Office Savings Banks. When that scheme was introduced, most persons thought that the Post Office Banks, by affording such great facilities in all parts of the country, that by opening all the Post Offices throughout England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland for deposits, would shortly absorb the Trustees Savings Banks, which were comparatively few in number and covered a comparatively small area. As a matter of fact, that had not been the case; but it had been proved that the more they gave facilities for thrift in all parts of the country, the more advantage was taken of it. He did not wish to make a long speech; but those of them who had studied the subject were aware that a great number of Trustee Savings Banks had gradually dropped out of existence, and been swallowed up by the Post Office Savings Banks. Although that was the case, still the enormous sum of £47,000,000 was held by these banks. He agreed most heartily with all the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Howell) had said about the system of audit. The system of audit in the Trustee Savings Banks was anything but satisfactory. Unless there was some machinery by which the depositor's pass book could be brought systematically before the auditor, and by which deposits should be received only in regular hours, all other checks would be useless. There was no doubt that many trustees did not realize the great importance not only of an accidental audit taking place every half-year, but of the system of banking being such that there should be a systematic plan by which the audit should go on continuously from week to week and from month to month. Under the present system, by which an auditor simply went to these banks twice a-year, it was perfectly impossible, considering the enormous number of transactions which the banks had, and the carelessness of many of the depositors, to expect a systematic check. In the institution he had a great deal to do with, they were so careful about this that they had a regular staff of men who did nothing else but continuously go about accidentally, without system, rule, or time, or place, and in the most miscellaneous manner, in order to see that the pass book was absolutely compared with the ledger to see that the two tallied. At the present time these Trustee Savings Banks were considered by the public and the depositors to be practically Government institutions. It was no use saying that the public did not understand this; they believed it, they thought that this Government security made these banks Government banks; and although it might be said that the papers did not distinctly state it, the fact remained that the great bulk of the depositors really did believe there was Government security. This was a very serious matter, because there was really no Government security; the State was in no way responsible, the State was simply responsible for the money which was handed over to it, and the State was in no possible way responsible to the individual depositor for getting back his money. He went further, and considered that since the Post Office Savings Banks had been established, there was no reason why the State should take upon itself the responsibility of these banks as well as of the Post Office Banks. In olden days, of course, it was different. Before the Post Office Savings Banks were established, it was reasonable, possibly, that these banks should have some sort of Government guarantee; but at the present time it was not reasonable, inasmuch as the State had created a magnificent system of Post Office Savings Banks. But, on the other hand, he considered it would be a most serious disaster if these Trustee Savings Banks were allowed to lapse. He believed it would immensely retard the cause of thrift in this country; he believed it would be a disaster second hardly to any we had had if, by any means, this House were to settle that these Trustee Savings Banks should collapse. Therefore, he thought we were on the horns of the dilemma how to make it perfectly clear that the State was not responsible, and, on the other hand, so to legislate for them that they should be made perfectly secure and reasonably and practically safe from the depositors' point of view. Many of these banks were very large and important institutions. The banks the hon. Member (Mr. Howell) had referred to—the Liverpool, the Glasgow, the Hull, and others—were banks which were doing an enormous amount of good; but there were a great number of these banks which were very small and unimportant. Some of them had only 200 or 300 depositors; some had only 100 depositors, and some of them had even less than that number. He considered, inasmuch as the Post Office Savings Bank system existed in every small town and village, it was not reasonable that a system should be continued by which these small savings banks should be allowed in small places, and, therefore, he thought the Legislature should so arrange that the smaller Trustee Savings Banks should be worked into the Post Office Savings Bank. As he had said, it was important that there should be a regular system of auditing. The cost of auditing in many of these institutions, no doubt, was very great; in the institution in which he was interested a very large part of the expense was paid in auditing machinery. Now, he agreed most distinctly that there should be a

Committee of Inquiry into the whole question; and he thought that what would result from that inquiry would be that a Bill would be framed by which the position of these banks would be placed on a more distinct and clear footing, which should be so laid down that the Bill should contain clauses providing machinery for auditing and all the various details connected with the banks. He thought that after a certain period, say, two, three, or four years, or whatever period might be fixed in the Bill, it should be clearly laid down that, unless, of course, a bank was wound up in that period, or handed over to the Post Office, the whole responsibility of the State in connection with the banks should cease, and that they should become, as it were, Companies or Corporations, say, under the Board of Trade regulations. In that way each one of the banks would become an independent corporation of itself, and would carry on its own business on the terms laid down by the Bill. He would then do away with all privileges as to the money being deposited with the National Debt Commissioners, and he would allow the managers of the banks to invest their money in Consols, or in local loans, or in any other things according to the precise terms of the Bill under which the banks existed, and by that means, he thought, they would get the banks established on an independent footing. He believed that they would thus do a great deal more good than they were doing now; and that the smaller banks, which were really the shaky ones, would be merged as a matter of course into the Post Office. Now, if that were done, it would be quite clear that those who wished to have Government security, those who wished to invest their money on the security of the State, would then put their money into the Post Office Savings Bank or into Consols. Those, however, who preferred the great facilities which these savings banks gave, would continue to invest their money in the banks, which would be in future rigidly looked after, though they would have clearly no state guarantee. There would be in all large towns these great institutions, gradually developing by School Penny Banks, Workshop Penny Banks, and other schemes, a regular network of thrift which would be of enormous advantage, and which never could be established under the present system. He thought he had already said as much as he need on this matter; but perhaps he would be allowed to add that on the Governing Bodies of these reformed Trustee Savings Banks there might fairly be put representatives of the depositors, for it was strongly desirable, if they were to promote thrift as they were doing in this way, the depositors themselves should take an interest in the management of the banks, as members of the great friendly societies and other institutions did in their concerns. He could see no possible reason why, with the spread of education, the people should not have a voice, and some decided voice, in the management of those institutions, and he believed that by such a system very great benefit would accrue. In that case, of course, the responsibility of the trustees would be clearly and distinctly defined; they would be under ordinary articles of a Corporation or Company, and by that means the whole difficulty which had been raised by the hon. Member (Mr. Howell) would be overcome—namely, that the trustees and managers would, as in large Companies, be responsible for the carrying on of their business. One result would be that all idea of Government security would be done away with, and in every district there would be, as it were, a large institution with a special charter, which the State would not be responsible for, but which would be responsible absolutely under its charter, working side by side with the State guaranteed Post Office Savings Bank. By such means they would have in all the large towns a most efficient system for promoting thrift, and in the smaller villages we should be content with the Post Office Savings Banks. He hoped, therefore, that the Government would agree to the appointment of the Committee of Inquiry, so that the subject might be most carefully threshed out. This was a most opportune moment, inasmuch as we were reducing the interest to be paid to the banks. There must be a great change in the banks, and, therefore, the present moment was opportune for overhauling the whole organization of the banks, and putting them on a permanent and satisfactory basis.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Sir, I think that great advantage will arise from the fact that this subject has been brought before the House by the hon. Member for the North-East Division of Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell). It will, I think, help to dispel some of the doubts which are resting on Trustee Savings Banks, and likewise to put in a proper light both the responsibility of the managers and trustees of those institutions, and possibly also the proportion which the defalcations that have taken place bear to the enormous total which those institutions represent. Amid the many dark spots of our civilization, I think we may point with some pride to the fact of those enormous reserves belonging to the working classes of this country, and to the great development of thrift which is shown by the deposits both in the Trustee Savings Banks and in the Post Office Savings Banks, deposits which now amount to the stupendous sum of over £100,000,000 sterling. I entirely recognize, and the Government recognize, the importance of a question so deeply affecting a vast portion of the community as this question does. We can conceive of no greater disaster than any blow that might be struck at the confidence of the working classes in institutions like the Trustee Savings Banks, with investments amounting to £40,000,000; and I was a little apprehensive sometimes that the account which the hon. Member for Bethnal Green gave as to some of these cases of failure that have occurred, might fill depositors of Trustee Savings Banks generally with undue alarm as to the safety of their deposits. It seems to me that shareholders in limited liability companies might just as well be alarmed by the breakdown or the frauds of a few of those companies, and that such a scare might operate against the whole system of limited liability. But any undue alarm of that kind would be a very great misfortune. While, therefore, I am very glad that the attention of managers and trustees has been called to their responsibility, I think, on the other hand, it would be much to be deplored if general confidence in those institutions should receive a shock which is scarcely justified by the evidence before us. If one contemplates the proportion which the frauds that have taken place bear to the magnitude of these investments and that of these institutions themselves, I do not think it will be found to be greater than that of the frauds occurring in other departments of business. I admit that the frauds in the case of Trustee Savings Banks are more deplorable, because, as an hon. Member had said, the plunder of the poor must come home very forcibly to the imagination of every man, and it is a very sore disaster when humble people who have deposited some of their scanty earnings in Trustee Savings Banks find that their thrift is of no avail to them owing to the default of those in whom they placed confidence. Such disasters are not only economical disasters but also moral disasters of the gravest character. Looking at the frauds which have taken place, I quite admit that they show that there has been great laxity on the part of some trustees and managers —I hope that in many of these cases it has been from ignorance—and I think that the hon. Member for Bethnal Green has rendered considerable service in calling the attention of trustees and managers to what their duties are. An hon. Member of this House or any other member of the community may undertake one of these posts in a moment of enthusiasm, and forget afterwards the great responsibility attaching to them; and it is quite right that the sense of what they owe to depositors in those institutions should be brought home to the managers by these discussions and revelations. An hon. Member has suggested that this is a good opportunity for looking into this question because of the change that is taking place in the financial position of these savings banks; but I would point out to the House that the solvency of these savings banks will not be affected in the slightest degrèe by the reduction of the rate of interest they receive, because that reduction in the rate of interest will be accompanied by a parallel reduction in the rate of interest which they will pay to their depositors, so that none of the Trustee Savings Banks will be the richer or the poorer by the action that has been taken. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green seemed to consider that possibly the reduction of the rate of interest was contemplated on account of the annual loss which in the past has fallen on the Treasury in consequence of the amount of interest allowed to depositors being somewhat greater than was justified by the circumstances. That is not so. The reduction of the rate of interest that will take place, if the House should agree to the proposals to be made to them at the end of the present financial year, is a simple corollary of the conversion scheme. The House will see the point in a moment. The Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt hold £40,000,000 in round numbers belonging to Trustees Savings Banks. If the rate of interest on their investments is reduced by ¼ per cent, that means a difference of £100,000. Therefore, unless there was this parallel reduction of the interest paid by the Commissioners for the reduction of the National Debt to the trustees of savings banks, it would be necessary for the House to vote £100,000 a-year to make good the deficiency that would arise. Therefore it follows that, as the rate of interest has fallen, it is necessary to reduce the rate of interest received by Trustee Savings Banks. Then there is another annual loss, apart from the annuity of £83,000 a-year that has to be paid in order to make good the £3,000,000 of the deficiency of past years. My hon. Friend behind me was perfectly right in saying that the managers of these savings banks are in no way responsible for that deficiency or loss to the Public Revenue. No blame or odium ought to attach to the trustees in consequence of that deficiency. But this other deficiency of £10,000 a-year is due to the fact that the National Debt Commissioners have at times been obliged to invest savings banks deposits in the funds when the funds were above par, and accordingly, whenever they received a large amount of deposits in the course of the year and had to invest them at a rate that would not give three per cent, there was an additional loss. That additional loss is, I think I may say, very slight, considering the enormous amount involved. It is £10,000 a-year upon deposits amounting to £40,000,000. The loss has arisen from the fact of the funds being high during the last few years, and no portion of this loss falling on the State is due to what the trustees have done. I turn now to the suggestion of the hon. Member who moved—

> "That in the opinion of the House the relationship subsisting between Trustee Savings Banks and the State is unsatisfactory and ought to be revised."

The hon. Member further moved—

> "That Trustees and Managers should be restrained from using the words 'Government Security,' and 'Government Savings Bank;'"

and, thirdly, he pointed to the liability of the trustees. As to the use of the words "Government Savings Bank" and "Government Security," of course you can lay down in an Act of Parliament that the Trustees shall not use these words in the description of their institutions. Even now it is questionable whether they are not committing an illegal act for which they might be prosecuted if they use such names. But if they simply put in print "Government Securities," it is sufficiently near the truth in one sense to make it extremely difficult to attack them for using the term and to make it out to be illegal. Their investments are in Government securities, but they have not got Government security for the management of the bank. It is a misfortune that the words "Government Security" have this double meaning. It is a difficulty, however, which must be faced, and I am afraid it will be very difficult to deal with it by Act of Parliament. Various suggestions have been made, and the question has been raised whether the relations existing between the State and those institutions are satisfactory. I am perfectly prepared to admit that I cannot consider them entirely satisfactory. But the suggestion made by the hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) is a very sweeping one, and practically amounts to destroying the whole present character of the Trustee Savings Banks and putting them entirely on the footing of limited companies.

Mr. BARTLEY: Under a charter.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Yes; just so. In many respects I can conceive that very strong arguments can be advanced in favour of that proposal; and I hold with the hon. Member strongly up to this point—nothing can be more unsatisfactory than illusory security of any kind. Any forms or any arrangements which give the impression of security which does not exist are infinitely worse than those forms and arrangements under which security does not profess to exist at all. Therefore, it must be the duty of the House or a Committee, if it should be appointed, to analyze most carefully the existing arrangements and to see whether they are illusory in their nature. I am prepared to say, on the other hand, that whatever securities you may take, whatever laws you may lay down, whatever regulations you may draw up, it will be impossible to make it absolutely certain that frauds will not take place. No private bankers, with all their shrewdness, are able altogether to avoid frauds; no limited liability companies have been able to avoid them. It seems as if the ingenuity of the fruadulent really defeated every precaution that can be taken. There is one quality in the end upon which you must rely—the general character of the people who are appointed. Trustees may study Acts of Parliament, they may investigate all their regulations; they may have a man on whom they stake their reputation, but sometimes he abuses it, and terrible frauds result. I fear, therefore, no regulations can be framed which will prevent occasional disasters. Here comes the immense advantage of the Post Office Savings Bank, where, if any disaster takes place, there is the credit of the country behind the Bank. In that case there is absolute security, which cannot be given by any private establishment, however watchful the audit may be, or however excellent the rules. It may, however, be said that that point is acknowledged, but what is wanted is personal liability. But in that case is there not force in the contention of an hon. Member that if you make trustees liable generally for the losses which may be caused by the negligence of officers, you will not get trustees who will make themselves responsible with their own fortunes. You may get men of straw to act, but you would not get that which you want—namely, trustees with money behind them to make good any loss which takes place. If you compare the various cases of frauds which have been committed, it is seen that there is a family likeness among them; and you might be able to put a finger on the point where reform might be useful, and by which you might counteract the designs of the fraudulently disposed. We could not agree to the suggestion that trustees should be liable in the form in which the hon. Member for Bethnal Green proposes, because liability, even formally, means that they are to be liable indefinitely for all that takes place. I do not say that we may not find means to enforce liability to a greater extent on the trustees. You may be able to make regulations, or pass a law to bring them to book more easily. That, however, seems to me to be a matter for most anxious consideration; but to say that trustees should be liable in the manner suggested is a proposal which I do not think will be generally desired. What, therefore, I would suggest to the hon. Member is this—that he should allow his Motion to be negatived, the Government undertaking on its own Motion, or at the suggestion of the hon. Member himself, to move for a Committee which should inquire into the operation of the law of 1863, and into the questions which he raises in his Motion. The Committee should inquire into the liability of trustees; into the use of the words "Government Security;" generally into the relations between the State and the Trustee Savings Banks; into the relations with, and the duties of, the Registrar; and examine the question of audit. Personally, I should rather deprecate an official audit, because I think it would be in the direction again of strengthening the idea that you had a Government security when really you had not. There ought to be an independent audit in every case, and on which we ought to insist. I understand that those institutions are themselves desirous of being reformed, and I think they will welcome any broad, fair, and impartial investigation. I think it may tend to dispel any alarm which may be created if we allow the best as well as the worst about these institutions to come before the public eye. Unfortunately, it is only the disasters with which the House of Commons and the public are acquainted, and we see little of the considerable service and magnificent working of many of the larger institutions which have done so much credit to the country. But in the case of an inquiry they would be granted the opportunity of stating their case fully. Even the sweeping suggestion of the hon. Member for North Islington might be placed before the Committee. I think, however, the House will see that there is one point which ought not to be referred to the Committee—the financial relations between the State and these institutions. The question of the rate of interest which should be allowed is a subject to be dealt with in a clause of the National Debt Supplementary Conversion Bill, and ought not to come before the Committee; but on every other point the Government would welcome the fullest inquiry, believing that nothing but good could come of it. There is no jealousy on the part of the Government of these Trustee Savings Banks from the point of view of the Post Office Savings Bank. If we had initiated an inquiry of this kind perhaps there would have been a suspicion abroad that we desired to prove the greater soundness of the Post Office Savings Bank; but coming, as the Motion does, from the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, there can be no suspicion of any desire to throw impediments in the way of the full development of the Trustee Savings Banks. I say again, therefore, that the hon. Member has done considerable service in bringing this most important matter before the public.

Mr. HOWELL said, he should be glad to accept the offer of the Government, and to withdraw his Motion. He thought the object he had in view would be attained by accepting the recommendations of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Sir EDWARD REED (Cardiff) said, he desired to express his indebtedness to the hon. Member for the action he had taken. As to the Cardiff Savings Bank, he thought it ought to be borne in mind that the trustees in that case had erred by negligence and not with the intention or hope of getting gain for themselves. They had been as much deceived as anyone. He thanked the Government for the course they had adopted in this matter.

Mr. WHITLEY (Liverpool, Everton) said, he would assure the hon. Member for Bethnal Green that the statement he had attributed to the actuary of the Liverpool Savings Bank, to the effect that the actuaries of savings banks were going to form a trades union to oppose legislation, was not correct. What the actuary of the Liverpool Savings Bank stated, he was informed, was that the managers of the Liverpool Savings Bank, and other large banks, together with the actuaries, were most anxious to assist the Government in every legislation for the benefit, both of Post Office and Trustee Savings Banks; and, so far from opposing the Motion, as the hon. Member had supposed, the Members for Liverpool intended to support it. The actuary of the Liverpool Savings Bank was a man of high character, and in justice to him he thought it just to set right the no doubt unintentional misrepresentation of the hon. Member.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he had heard with satisfaction the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There was not the slightest reason why these banks should sail near the wind in the way of appearing to hold out the inducement to depositors that they were founded on the basis of a Government security. He held in his hand papers relating to a most successful Trustee Savings Bank in his own constituency, and there was not a word in the rules, depositors' books, or reports tending in that direction. Yet the amount of the deposits had more than doubled, and the number of the depositors had been nearly doubled within the last 10 years.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) said, that before the Debate closed there were one or two questions which he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. No one could doubt that the Savings Banks had done much good. The question was whether there had been serious loss to the country or to depositors. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green in his interesting speech had referred several times to a deficiency of £3,500,000 in the Savings Bank account, and to a sum of £83,000 a-year set aside to wipe this out. If, however, he was not mistaken, that deficiency was calculated at a time when Government securities were much lower than at present, and he believed that the actual difference between the amounts due to the Savings Bank and the securities held by the Commissioners was only £120,000. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would state whether this was so, for he (Sir John Lubbock) was afraid that otherwise an erroneous impression would be created. He would also like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he could state what loss had been suffered, say, in the last

20 years, by depositors in Savings Banks? Most of the cases referred to by the hon. Member were either of some years back or the loss had been made up by the trustees. His impression was that the loss to depositors of late years had been very small, and he should like to ask if the right hon. Gentleman could state what the amount had been? He (Sir John Lubbock) thought that the Savings Banks on the whole had been well managed, that the country was indebted to the trustees and managers of Savings Banks, and that they would not object to such an inquiry as proposed by the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) hoped he understood rightly that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was about to accede to the suggestion made by his hon. Friend (Mr. Howell). The offer of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was that they should allow this Motion to be negatived. His hon. Friend, however, asked that he should be allowed to withdraw it. He (Mr. Rowlands) would like to know whether the Government accepted that, because it made a very vast difference as to the action his hon. Friend would take. He (Mr. Rowlands) did not intend at the present time to inflict a speech upon the House, but he desired to make one remark as to the position his hon. Friend had taken up. With regard to the use of the name of the Government by many of these banks, the hon. and learned Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) said, that the bank with which he was connected, and which he told the House was a very well governed bank, in no way flaunted the name of the Government before the public, but stood on their own financial position. But that was vastly different to many other banks. He held in his hand the book of a bank whose name he would not for obvious reasons give. Upon the book was given the local name of the bank, and then came the words "Government Bank for Savings." That implied that there was some direct connection with the Government, and ordinary individuals who deposited their money in Trustee Savings Banks were not well versed in legal matters, and therefore they were readily deceived by this palpable fraud upon them. That was a matter which it would be well for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to deal with at once, even before waiting the result of the Committee. If, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he believed it was already illegal to use the name of the Government, in the way it was used in the book he held in his hand, he would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it was not possible for the National Debt Commissioners or some of the legal officials of the Government to send out a warning to the trustees of these banks, that if they used the name of the Government, they were using it illegally? He believed that great good would result from such action on the part of the Government. They must all agree that the debate which his hon. Friend (Mr. Howell) had raised on this occasion must result in good; they knew that there were too many gentlemen in the country who had lent their names to these institutions, he was afraid without realizing the responsibility they incurred to look after the institutions to which they had lent their names. There were of course others who, realizing their responsibilities, did attend to the business of the banks. It was impossible, however, for the general depositor to draw a distinction between these two classes of persons. There were defalcations which had been brought before the notice of the House. Some of the defalcations which his hon. Friend had mentioned were not those of times gone by, as the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) seemed to think; some of the worst cases had only just occurred, and it was because there was some fear, on account of these defalcations having become publicly known, that there might be other banks in the same position, that an inquiry was desired to see whether these banks were solvent or not. Those Gentlemen who were connected with banks in which they had the utmost confidence need not fear an investigation; indeed, an investigation would result in their banks being placed in a better position than they had hitherto enjoyed. He hoped the Government would accede to the request of his hon. Friend, and allow him to withdraw the Motion, and then at some future time they might have a Committee to investigate the whole question, which he thought was now ripe for thorough investigation.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that before the right hon. Gentleman replied, there was one matter which he did not think had been made quite clear. He felt indebted to the Government for the manner in which they had met the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for North-East Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell), and he quite agreed with what had been stated by nearly every hon. Member that anything which checked in any fashion the growing habits of thrift—for he believed them to be growing habits, despite what was said outside—would be a misfortune. He understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make some exception as to how far the inquiry was to go. That exception was as to the interest to be paid to the Savings Banks' Trustees. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) did not quite understand whether the inquiry was to extend to everything else. It was a matter of great importance that the powers of the Registrar and the methods of enforcement should be included in the inquiry. He only rose for the purpose of emphasizing that, in case it had been overlooked.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said, there was only one point to which he desired to call attention. In the county of Essex, which he represented, there was a Trustee Savings Bank which was conducted on the best principles. Now, if they arbitrarily took away from that bank the name of Government Savings Bank, the depositors—who were, as a rule, ignorant men, and who knew nothing of finance — would be seized with panic, and the result would be very much like the panic which took place the other day in Victoria Street, without, however, the same fortunate result. He fancied any drastic change in these banks would do considerably more harm than good.

Mr. GOSCHEN, in replying to the questions addressed to him, said, that all the questions to which reference had been made would be referred to the Committee of Inquiry, the only exception being the rate of interest between the Government and the Trustee Savings Banks, which was dealt with in a Bill now before the House. The whole question of the relations between the Government and the Savings Banks, and between the Registrar and the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt and the Savings Banks, would be included in the inquiry. He should himself wish the inquiry to be as thoroughgoing and to cover as much ground as possible. He would consult with the National Debt Commissioners as to whether it was possible to take any action with regard to those banks which were using the words "Government Security" and "Government Savings Bank" so as to prevent the use of such descriptions. The question was one partly of law, and he could not give a definite opinion upon it now. As regarded the point mentioned by the hon. Baronet the Member for the London University (Sir John Lubbock), it was perfectly true that the deficiency of £3,500,000 was calculated at a time when the Government Stocks were very much lower than they were now; and that deficiency was almost wiped away, if they took the present market value of those Stocks. It was also correct that the amount of actual loss suffered over a series of years by depositors in Savings Banks had not been very large.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed.

PUBLIC HEALTH—SPREAD OF SMALL POX IN SHEFFIELD.—OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester), who had the following Motion on the Paper:—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the circumstances of the epidemic of small-pox in Sheffield and the surrounding district, and especially to ascertain whether its origin can be traced to defective vaccination, or to insufficient sanitary precautions, or to any other causes; also to inquire how far the rapid spread of infection has been owing to the absence of any system of compulsory notification of contagious diseases; likewise, whether the notorious diminution of vaccination in Leicester, Keighley, Dewsbury, and other towns, has been attended by any evil consequences, or whether preventive measures other than vaccination have been found effectual, and, if so, whether they are capable of wider application,"

said, he trusted, although it would now be impossible for him to ask the House to divide upon the Motion which he had proposed to bring forward, the subject would be deemed of sufficient significance and importance to justify him in advancing the arguments on which, had the Rules of the House permitted him, he would have liked to have taken the opinion of the House. The arguments that he should urge would not, he hoped, offend the strong convictions of any section of the House, however keenly they might feel upon a matter which had given rise to a good deal of bitterness. It was open to the Government to accede to the proposal for an inquiry even if he was not allowed to take a Division, and the proposal for an inquiry did not necessarily commit him or anyone else who supported it to any particular opinion upon the subject of vaccination. He desired that that should be distinctly understood. Of course, they all had their own opinions; he himself had a very different opinion from what he used to hold upon this subject. He felt there was a great deal to be said on both sides of the question; but it was now 17 years since any public and authoritative inquiry was held in regard to it, and during those 17 years very great advance had been made in medical science, and especially in the sanitary branch of that science. During those 17 years a number of medical treatises had been published bearing on the question, and suggesting that many theories formerly held rested upon very insecure foundation. He said this much in order to defend himself against the accusation that he was asking something unreasonable or impracticable, or in a marked manner contrary to universal opinion, and as a reason for asking that an inquiry should be held. It would ill become him to deal with technical medical arguments; he did not profess to understand them as well as some hon. Members who sat near him, and he would rather draw attention to certain facts which had recently come to light, and which did suggest that the country ought to have some more information upon the subject. Let him compare—without insinuating that any inferences could fairly and logically be drawn from the cases, but as a suggestion as to the line of inquiry that ought to be pursued—let him draw attention to the experiences of two towns, the town of Sheffield and that which he had the honour to represent—namely, the town of Leicester. He trusted that no hon. Member would think that the history of the diverse experiences of these towns could be dismissed with a smile. The town of Sheffield, like a good many other parts of the country, was afflicted with an epidemic of small-pox in the year 1871-2, and at that period a very considerable number of people died of the disease. The town of Leicester also was visited in 1872 with a very fearful epidemic of small-pox, and 346 of the inhabitants died from the disease in the course of the year. He asked the House to notice the different impressions produced by this epidemic upon the two populations. In Sheffield, the result was, he believed, that an increased attention was paid to vaccination. It was pressed, of course, by those in authority; the officers were very busy, and the number of vaccinations increased in Sheffield until it stood at over 95 per cent of the population. Sheffield had earned very large bonuses from Government for extra and specially good vaccination. During the last 10 years, £2,223 had been distributed in bonuses for specially successful vaccinations, and during the last year £189 had been granted in bonuses in Sheffield for special success in vaccination. The result of the epidemic in Leicester in 1872 was very different; the people observed that the disease did not, in all cases, respect vaccination, or even re-vaccination, and, whether rightly or wrongly, they came to the conclusion that, notwithstanding all the fuss made about it, vaccination was not an effectual safeguard against small-pox. In the next year, 1873 and 1874, there was a slight rise in the number of those vaccinated; but afterwards, as he should presently show, the number of vaccinations very rapidly diminished. He would like to return to this point in a little more detail, as the argument resting upon it would more properly come in in another part of his remarks. However, the number of vaccinations in Leicester rapidly diminished, as he had said, until last year not more than one child in nine of those who survived to undergo the operation had been vaccinated. Now, of course, those who looked upon vaccination as the only effectual guarantee against incursions of small-pox would acknowledge that that was a very serious state of things, and many people had said that Leicester was like a mass of dried tinder exposed to falling sparks; that when once small-pox made its appearance in Leicester, the epidemic would devastate the whole town. Now, in March, 1887, there were three cases of small-pox reported in Sheffield, and there were three admissions to the hospital. The existence of these three cases attracted but little attention, because, as Dr. Sinclair White wrote in his Report to the Health Committee of the town, a Report dated January of this year, "the disease appears every few months in Sheffield." They were so used to its appearance that these cases attracted very little attention. In November of the same year five cases of small-pox appeared in Leicester in one house. Not only those who were seized with small-pox, but all the occupants of the house were instantly removed. The patients were taken to the hospital appropriated to such diseases, and the other occupants of the house who had shown no signs of having the disease were removed voluntarily into quarantine. There was no compulsion exercised; but the inhabitants of Leicester were reasonable, and they voluntarily subjected themselves to a term of quarantine in such cases. In the absence of the people just referred to, the house was entirely disinfected and limewashed, and put into such a state that no return of the infection might be feared. That was the experience of Leicester last year; now look, again, at the very diverse experience of Sheffield. The fates of the towns were as different as the methods employed were different. He had spoken of three persons who were removed into hospital in Sheffield in March, 1887; only the patients were removed, no one else was disturbed. But as the patients multiplied, it was soon found that there was no room in the hospital, and the people seized with the disease had to be left in their houses. In April there were four cases, and one death; in May there were 20 cases, and no deaths; in June there were 35 cases, and two deaths; in July there were 104 cases, and three deaths; in August there were 130 cases, and 11 deaths; in September there were 187 cases, and 21 deaths; in October there were 582 cases, and 57 deaths; in November there were 656 cases, and 79 deaths; and in December there were 1,011 cases, and 103 deaths; so the deaths rose to more than 10 per cent of the number of cases. The Committee would observe that the percentage of deaths rapidly rose as the year went on, while the disease increased by leaps and bounds. Dr. Sinclair White issued his Report on January 11th of this year, and said—"At the time of writing the disease is more prevalent than at any time since the commencement of the outbreak." Unfortunately that was so, for, from January 1st to April 9th, there were 3,464 cases of small-pox, and 362 deaths; in all, from the beginning of the outbreak to April 9th, there were 6,202 cases, and 609 deaths. Of course, it was not necessary to enlarge upon the horror of such a visitation as that; those who, like himself, notwithstanding efficient vaccination in infancy, had suffered from the disease against which it was intended to guard, and suffered not once only, but twice, were well aware that there was no affliction that could recall so vividly the terrors and the suspicions incidental to a time of plague. There was no visitation which excited a more cruel conflict between the affections of those who desired to surround the sufferer with faces of sympathy, and the stern duty, on the other hand, which required insistance on a rigorous isolation. The house visited by such a disease was like a pest house, and only those of unusual courage dare go near it. Nor was it personal suffering alone that was to be lamented. The loss of business in Sheffield during the last year and a quarter could scarcely be estimated. Sheffield had had little intercourse with surrounding towns during that time, and he remembered very well the alarm expressed in Liverpool when an excursion train was advertised to run from Sheffield to take people to the Liverpool Exhibition; in fact, he believed, the train was taken off. It was, therefore, from no levity in regard to the terrible nature of the disease he desired to guard against, that he was urging on the House the necessity of inquiry. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the course of some remarks upon the interesting subject that had recently been discussed, warned the House against the unsatisfactoriness of any illusory security. Certainly, in matters of disease an illusory security was just as unsatisfactory as in matters of business, and he (Mr. Picton) believed the population of this country were suffering under an illusion, the nature of which he proposed to endeavour to explain more clearly presently, as to the complete sufficiency of vaccination alone as a safeguard against small-pox. He had spoken of the experience of Sheffield during the last year; let them turn again to Leicester. He had said that there was an outbreak of five cases in November, 1887; in the next month, December, 1887, a man living close to the borough boundary, but outside the boundary, went on a visit to Sheffield. He was a vaccinated man, and, therefore, let no argument be founded upon that. When he came back, he certainly had small-pox in his organization, for within a few days he was down with the sickness, and by December 10 the disease became known. Observe, it was outside the borough boundary; the medical officer attending was not bound, by the compulsory Local Act existing in Leicester, to make known the disease; notwithstanding, he felt that so much was at stake that he reported it, and though the patient did not belong to the town, the usual officers visited him and persuaded him to go into the borough hospital. The whole family were taken away, and some of them suffered from the disease afterwards; the house was disinfected, and there was no further extension of the disease in the neighbourhood. On December 14 there was another case, but this time within the town; the same measures precisely were taken, and with precisely the same result. Since the beginning of the year there had been eight more cases, but the disease had always been stamped out; 26 times within a very recent period the disease had been brought within the town from places it could generally be traced to, and 26 times it had been stamped out. Now, they were constantly being told that if Leicester were visited with small-pox, there would be an end of the system adopted there; but the town had been visited again and again by the disease; it had been visited as often as any other town, but the authorities had always succeeded in stamping out the disease. He thought the experience of Leicester did deserve more inquiry than it had yet received. He might be told—he supposed he would be presently, by the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), if that right hon. Gentleman was kind enough to notice his remarks—that an inquiry had been and was being held, and that they had not yet received the Report. But the inquiry was a Departmental inquiry. That might be satisfactory to the right hon. Gentleman, and to those who sympathized with his views, but it was not satisfactory to the people of Leicester, and it was not satisfactory to the growing multitude of people who objected to be compelled to vaccinate their children. Therefore, he urged that the experience of Leicester was deserving of some larger inquiry than it had yet received. He had spoken of the rapid diminution of vaccination in Leicester. Immediately after the great epidemic of 1872, in 1873-4 the rate of vaccination was kept up, but in 1875 it began to go down, and from that period it rapidly fell. Notwithstanding the relentless prosecutions constantly persevered in for many years, by zealous Guardians and magistrates, vaccination rapidly fell until the time when the people exercised local option by electing a Board of Guardians, the majority of whom were opposed to vaccination. Since 1885, there had been no prosecution, and last year, he believed, the number of vaccinations in Leicester amounted to only between 11 and 12 per cent of the births. The small-pox, though it had visited the town, had been very slight, and for several years there had been no deaths at all. Now, he had said that one reason for this change in the habits of the people in Leicester was their observation of the ineffectiveness of vaccination. The people of Leicester were not fatalists; they did not believe they must resign themselves to the evil until they had tried every way of combating it. In 1872 there was a very zealous crusade in sanitary matters which was persevered in for many years. All kinds of old cesspools and objectionable institutions of a similar character were disestablished, and disendowed, as it were, and proper modern appliances were brought, as far as possible into all the houses. Besides that, the compulsory notification of infectious diseases was adopted. There were 49 towns in the country, he believed, which had Acts giving power of insisting upon the notification of infectious diseases, and Leicester was one of them, and Leicester had made very good use of that power. In the year 1881-2 there was a period of test, for, although it was said by Dr. MacVaile that there had been no epidemic of small-pox since 1871-2, there was a very considerable amount of small-pox in the years to which he had just now referred. There were in Leeds, he believed, 174 cases, and a very considerable number of cases of small-pox came into Leicester in the year 1881-2. The health officer showed in his report of that year how the disease was dealt with. He showed that the disease appeared in different localities in the town. On January 5, for instance, a case was reported in a house in Abbey Street. The inhabitants of the house were removed without delay, and the house was forthwith thoroughly fumigated and disinfected. There was no doubt, the officer stated, that, from inquiries made at the time, the infection in the case was received from the person of a tramp who had rested for a few hours in the house, and had then left the town. On the 7th January, in another lodging-house in the same street, three cases were reported. They were all removed to hospital, together with the other lodgers, and the same means were employed for disinfecting the house; and a strict and daily inspection was kept up for some time afterwards. No fresh cases, however, appeared. Of course, the greatest vigilance and zeal were required to carry out these precautions, but certainly an equal amount of zeal was required to insure compulsory vaccination, and the result in Leicester gave ample ground for inquiry as to how the zeal and vigilance should be directed. The experience was not of one town only. It was well known that Keighley, Dewsbury, and other towns were revolting in an increasing degree against compulsory vaccination. The Medical Officer of the Local Government Board, in his Report for 1886-7, said that 71 per cent of the children born in Keighley were left unvaccinated. There was very little vaccination in Dewsbury, and he was informed that only about 7 per cent were vaccinated. In Oldham, Halifax, Gloucester, Nottingham, Ashton-under-Lyne, and many other places all over the country, the compulsory law had been suspended by the action of the Guardians, and small-pox had, by various precautions, been kept down, so that his case did not rest on the experience of Leicester alone. It was often supposed there were only two alternatives on the question of vaccination—either to deny there was any advantage in it at all, or else to acknowledge the duty of compelling vaccination; but he declined to accept these as the only alternatives. He would not say there was no value in vaccination. He attached great importance to the experiments of M. Pasteur, and could not say that in all circumstances vaccination was wholly valueless. It had a certain value; but he contended that the claim for it as a general and universal safeguard against small-pox had entirely broken down; and besides, as a precaution, it depended upon conditions impossible to realize. He could give reasons for that moderate expression of opinion. Many hon. Members, whose attention had been drawn to the subject by their constituents, had met with the pamphlet of Dr. Wallace, on the registration statistics, and also Dr. MacVaile's book, *Vaccination Vindicated.* He (Mr. Picton) had done his best to master the arguments of both, and the conclusion he arrived at was that small-pox might, to a considerable extent, be guarded against by careful and effective vaccination over a period of five years, but after that its effect entirely disappeared. Dr. MacVaile, in his book, quoted from the Report of the Registrar General, and gave a table separating the following ages:—Under 1 year, under 5 years, between 5 and 10 years, between 10 and 15, between 15 and 25, from 25 to 45, and from that upwards. Then he took the periods from 1847 to 1853, when vaccination was optional, though strongly recommended. Then from 1854 to 1871, when vaccination was obligatory; then the period from 1872 to 1880, when vaccination was made, if possible, more obligatory, or, at any rate, when it was more effectively enforced. It was a striking fact brought out from those figures that the only age that showed the benefit from vaccination was under five years, and even amongst these children any substantial benefit appeared to be confined to infants under one year. The table showed the mean annual number of deaths from vaccination in the successive periods per million of births. In the period 1847 to 1853 the mean annual death-rate from small-pox of children under a year was 1,617 per million; from 1872 to 1880 the deaths were only 323 per million, which, so far as it went, afforded a successful argument in favour of vaccination. Taking the case of those children under five years in the corresponding periods, there was a diminution from 327 to 186, and between five years and ten years the numbers were 94 deaths per million as against 98 in the last period. Between 10 and 15 years of age, in the first period of optional vaccination, the deaths from small-pox were 109 per million, and in the last period 173 per million. Between the ages of 15 and 25 the deaths under the period of optional vaccination were 66 per million, and in the latter period, when vaccination was obligatory, 141 per million. Of the ages from 45 upwards, the deaths in the first period were in proportion of 22 in the million, and in the latter period 58 per million. So that in the ages over five the mean annual rate of deaths from small-pox had increased considerably, though vaccination was strictly enforced. Those were striking facts that indicated the necessity of inquiry. It was easy to suggest re-vaccination, but by no means easy to carry it out, and a proposal to enforce re-vaccination every five years would be regarded as a Coercion Act more hateful, and would excite more opposition, than any Coercion Act for Ireland. No Government would attempt it. But if it could not thereby guard the people against small-pox, was it not useless cruelty to insist on vaccination in all cases? He had spoken only of deaths from small-pox, not as to the amount of disease. He might be told that the disease had been very much mitigated, and with good authorities on either side he was not prepared to offer an opinion; but at present all that could be fairly urged was that vaccination was a safeguard, though not an altogether effective one, for a period of five years. The argument for the compulsory clause was that if vaccination was compulsory in the case of every birth, then we should become entirely free from small-pox; but the acknowledgment of a very different state of things by medical men of high position strongly suggested the expediency of inquiry. Vaccination, too, was not an entirely safe process. It was too late now to say that no child had ever been killed by vaccination, or that the number of cases of injury was so trifling that no parent need be alarmed. He might refer to the Norwich case, and the lame and impotent conclusion of the inquiry, that the medical officer had used ivory points not quite clean. That same officer had received handsome gratuities the year before, and, in spite of what happened, the bonuses given began rapidly to rise again, and he was evidently a medical gentleman of high repute in his locality. It was maintained by Dr. Collins, in his review of the Norwich case, that it was not proved that dirty ivory points were used, and there was no evidence to satisfy any jury not prejudiced in favour of vaccination. Dr. Collins occupied a high position in his profession, and had won high honours in the London University, including two gold medals, one of which was for sanitary science. But he only mentioned that gentleman to refer to a quotation in his book from Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson, who, in reference to the notion that contamination could only be conveyed by blood drawn in vaccination, said that in three series of cases, carefully examined, there was no evidence of the lymph being contaminated by blood. Dr. Charles Creighton, a high medical authority, was selected to re-write the article on the subject in the last edition of *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, and value must be attached to his words. On page 125 of his work on *Vaccinal Syphilis* Dr. Creighton states that, as a result of all his previous inquiry and argument, the real affinity of cowpox was not to small-pox, but to the great pox. The vaccinal roseola was not only very like syphilis, but it was the same sort of thing. Now, in that conclusion, Dr. Creighton was not referring to one or two or half-a-dozen cases, but to a very long series of cases. He (Mr. Picton), therefore, believed he had very considerable authority for saying that vaccination was not entirely as safe a process as it was believed. Whether hon. Gentlemen agreed with that or not, they could not convince all parents that it was a safe process. To tell a parent that he must subject a child to an operation which he did not conscientiously believe to be right, but, on the contrary, thought was wrong, and involved very serious danger to the child, was one of the most cruel applications of law that civilization had ever decreed. The only defence for such a law would be that vaccination was the only possible safeguard against small-pox, and that it was a sure and certain preventive. Nothing less than that would justify the law of compulsory vaccination, and that, he was sure, could not be maintained now. Besides, the law of compulsory vaccination was very unequal in its application. He dared say hon. Members had received a letter from a gentleman residing at Hampstead describing his own case. That gentleman refused to have his child vaccinated. He was summoned before a magistrate, who allowed a solicitor to appear for him. He was fined, and the fine was paid, the defendant saying that the fine was of no consequence to him. But, at the same time and place, there were a number of half-starved persons who were unable to pay fines, and who were liable to have their property seized and to be dragged through the streets to gaol for defying the same law. He (Mr. Picton) maintained that whatever might be advanced in favour of vaccination in certain circumstances, it was not an equitable or humane law. The enforcement of law, outside Ireland, depended upon public opinion. In England the law could usually be enforced, because public opinion was in its favour; but the moment there arose a strong opinion against it the law could not be enforced. According to the Local Government Report the opposition to vaccination was spreading and coming to such a head that it might become impossible to enforce the law. He might be reminded, perhaps, of the excessive mortality of the unvaccinated. But there were facts also on the other side. That had been demonstrated as the result of a house-to-house visitation at Leeds, where the disease had been unfortunately severe. How could it be maintained that vaccination mitigated the disease? There were figures as strong on the other side, and therefore it was high time that an inquiry was held to see on which side the truth lay. He had endeavoured, to the best of his ability, to put before the House some of the new facts on which he had ventured to urge the Government —he would not say the House—to give way on this subject, and to be considerate to their weaker brethren who could not see the value of vaccination. If his opponents had confidence in the truth of their opinion, they must know that any further inquiry would only illustrate that truth, and bring it out the more clearly. If, on the other hand, they allowed that medical opinion had to a considerable extent changed, and that it was desirable to know whether a better mode could not be adopted, then he ventured to think they ought to agree to the appointment of a Select Committee of the House to consider the subject. He therefore hoped the Government would take the matter into their consideration with a view of granting the inquiry that had been asked for.

Mr. COLMAN (Norwich), in supporting the proposal, referred to the inquiry which took place some years ago respecting the alleged deaths of some children at Norwich through vaccination. He had always been of opinion that the conclusion to which the gentlemen who conducted that inquiry had arrived was not at all satisfactory. The inquiry in question turned upon the allegation that the deaths of the children were due to erysipelas, and whether or no that was caused by vaccination. He would quote the following extract from the Report of the Inspectors as to two of the cases:—

> "Although we are unable to assign with certainty a specific source of infection" (with respect to the erysipelas contracted in the vaccination station) "the evidence raises a strong case of suspicion against the freedom from contamination of the lymph with which they were vaccinated."

The Inspectors, however, practically exonerated the vaccinator, although Dr. Buchanan, in an appendix to their Report, made some very severe remarks as to his want of cleanliness in the use of the ivory points. It was true that the inquiry took place some years ago, and he was bound to confess that no complaints of similar nature had reached him since, the same vaccination officer remaining at his post. He was glad to find that the hon. Member who had asked for the inquiry (Mr. Picton) had not placed himself in such direct antagonism to the theory of vaccination as had been assumed by his predecessor (Mr. P. A. Taylor) in the representation of that constituency. The former Member for Leicester, who was accustomed to move a similar Resolution to the one given notice of, took a view so hostile to vaccination that he had alienated the support of those who wished that an inquiry should be made into the whole subject. He (Mr. Colman) was not prepared to take up that feeling of hostility to vaccination itself. But knowing as he did how strongly many persons felt upon the subject, he was prepared to say that he thought the time had come when there should be further inquiry of a full and impartial character into the whole question. The Report of the Committee of 1871 upon this subject contained the following:—

> "If the operation be performed with due regard to the health of the person vaccinated, and with proper precaution in obtaining and using the vaccine lymph, there need be no apprehension that vaccination will injure health or communicate any disease."

He was very much inclined to think that the opinion expressed by a good many medical men at the present moment was not so strong as to the impossibility of conveying disease by means of the vaccine matter as it was in 1871. He would also point out that it was a very difficult thing to have proper precautions taken in crowded vaccine stations. Some time ago, a friend told him (Mr. Colman) that his child was going to be vaccinated, and that he had a feeling of dread as to the result. The medical man who would perform the operation in this case was a near relation of the parent, and, of course, knew all about the condition of the child, yet the parent was not free from anxiety. He (Mr. Colman) felt when he heard that observation how much greater must be the force of the objection to vaccination by a poor person, in whose case the operator did not know anything at all about the constitution of the child that was going to be vaccinated. Some years ago a friend of his, a magistrate, referring to the compulsory clauses, said he had many cases coming before him of persons who refused vaccination for their children, and he added that he never had convicted them and never would. That gentleman was blamed by his magisterial colleagues for his obstinacy, and his reply was that the law should make vaccination really universally obligatory, or repeal the so-called compulsory clauses. As the law allowed exceptions to be made, his friend said he would not carry out the law, as he contended that all should be treated alike. He (Mr. Colman) was inclined to think that his friend had a considerable amount of common sense on his side. There was one other question touched on by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Picton), and that was in reference to the partial way this law was carried out. They all knew that there were institutions in the country established for the purpose of resisting the Vaccination Laws. Some of the societies were in the fortunate position of having a balance at their bankers with which to resist the law. The members of those societies, therefore, were certain to be exempted from the operation of the law, and, as a matter of fact, the law was not put in force against them. The haphazard character of the law in this respect was therefore most unsatisfactory. He thought that any parent who objected to vaccination should be able, at the time of registering the child's birth, to state this objection, and to obtain a certificate of exemption; whether on payment of a small fee, was a question that might be settled by Parliament. That course would lay the foundation for complete statistical knowledge as to the value of vaccination, and was in his opinion desirable, though he was quite aware that a similar proposal had been condemned by the Committee of 1871. In conclusion, he would say he supported the demand for inquiry, because he felt there was a very strong feeling of distrust and of very great hardship in the mind of a portion of the public with respect to these Vaccination Laws.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said that when inquiries of this kind were asked for, there seemed to be an irresistible tendency to launch out into the general question. His hon. Friend (Mr. Picton) stated that it was generally believed in Leicester that the protection given by vaccination against small-pox was entirely illusory. If that were so, all he (Dr. Farquharson) could say was that it was so much the worse for the mode in which vaccination in Leicester was carried out, because it was undoubtedly the fact that in London, during the last visitation of small-pox, not one single fatal case occurred amongst those who had been properly vaccinated—that was to say, where the proper number of vaccination marks was shown on the arm. Although he did not agree with the first part of his hon. Friend's speech, he was bound to say that in some measure he agreed with the latter part of it, for he believed it would be more satisfactory to the public if a Committee of the House were appointed to consider the special question brought forward by his hon. Friend. If the Government would agree to an inquiry into the two cases of Norwich and Sheffield, he thought it would supply a great deal of scientific information, and to a great extent satisfy the public mind. He thought the inquiries that were held into those cases were of a somewhat hole-and-corner character; they were not public in the sense that their proceedings were open to the public, and there was throughout the stamp of officialism upon them. He did not use the term in an invidious sense, but he could not help thinking that the inquiry suggested by his hon. Friend would be more satisfactory to the public and to the Medical Profession. He congratulated the hon. Gentleman on the system carried out in Leicester. In that borough, compulsory notification of disease was in force, he believed; also, compulsory removal to hospital and compulsory disinfection. He quite agreed with that; but it was very curious that Leicester, in the words of *The Lancet* commissioner, had no compunction in restricting personal liberty except in the matter of vaccination. He was bound to say that, short of the pole axe, which could not be here applied, he did not think that any more effectual means could be employed for stamping out disease. Of course, the Medical Profession held that these precautions were not alone sufficient; they maintained that vaccination was necessary, and if, as the hon. Gentleman said, the non-vaccination of children in some towns was growing yearly, he was afraid that some day the results would be indeed serious. He had no doubt that everything was done under the Local Government Board by means of inquiry, well and efficiently, but he thought that in addition to that, if some further inquiry were held to satisfy the public mind, it would be of very great value.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) said, he had some difficulty in supporting the Motion of the hon. Member in its present terms. The hon. Member had in his speech entered into questions which had nothing to do with the Motion before the House. Few men in the House had devoted more time than he had to the study of vaccination, and whether the conclusion he had come to were right or wrong, he was convinced that no just conclusion could be arrived at upon statements in half-a-dozen *ex parte* books. If anyone wanted to understand the matter, he must go into the statistics of half-a-century, and compare the results of vaccination against small-pox with those general laws discovered to exist in connection with vaccination and inoculation in the case of many diseases of the lower animals; and even then, probably he would not be right if he dogmatized like an author quoted by the hon. Gentleman when he asserted that cow-pox had a greater affinity for syphilis than it had for small-pox. He would, however, point out that the method of safeguarding against small-pox might with perfect regard to the theories held by the Department, be inquired into with advantage; and some such inquiry as the hon. Member had suggested might have a great deal to do with improving the system which the Department had to supervize. There were three different systems which might with advantage be inquired into. There was the system which prevailed at Leicester, where there was very defective vaccination, but strict attention to segregation; there was the system which prevailed in London, where vaccination was carefully carried out, without any effective provision; and there was the system prevailing at Glasgow, where there was great attention to vaccination, the re-vaccination of those brought into contact with the infected, and strict attention to segregation. It seemed to him that an inquiry into the results of these three systems would result in demonstrating the superiority of some such plan as that adopted in Glasgow, as contrasted with the system which prevailed in London where it was sometimes almost impossible to get persons removed to hospitals, and where it seemed no one's duty to provide either for vaccination or disinfection. An inquiry which would elicit the results of the three systems might, he thought, lead to the adoption of practical measures, which would tend to the suppression of small-pox and the diminution of the number of deaths from the disease.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken was worthy of the closest consideration, as there was no one who had paid more attention than he had done to the subject. But the hon. Gentleman, while he said that the speech of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) was altogether outside the four corners of the Resolutions on the Paper, seemed rather desirous of supporting the appeal for the appointment of a Select Committee. [Dr. Cameron: Not a Committee, but an inquiry.] The hon. Gentleman would see that the inquiry which he desired was altogether of a different kind from that asked for by the Mover of the Resolution, because whatever might be the terms of his Motion, the hon. Member for Leicester had spoken in terms of studious moderation. There could be no doubt, whatever inquiry might be made, a Select Committee of the House of Commons was not a proper Body to make it. The hon. Member who introduced the subject, though not himself strongly opposed to vaccination, yet spoke in the name of a large mass of the people of Leicester who were strongly opposed to it, and believed that it was not only not a blessing, but that it was a curse. Therefore, when the hon. Gentleman asked for an inquiry it was impossible to dissociate him from the cause which, to some extent, he represented in that House. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) must be aware that any inquiry into the more efficient employment of vaccination would not be of the kind which the hon. Member for Leicester desired; and that no results which had been anticipated by the hon. Member from the inquiry which he advocated would, in the smallest degree, be likely to remove a single prejudice on the part of those whom he (Mr. Picton) represented. The hon. Member is aware that if the Government were to grant such an inquiry as he advocated, the hon. Member for Leicester, and those whom he represented, would insist that certain Gentlemen who had expressed opinions strongly adverse to vaccination should be placed on the Committee. No such tribunal could ever hope to arrive at a unanimous Report on the subject; things would remain very much as they were, and no satisfaction would be given to the minds of those who supported the hon. Member for Leicester. The hon. Member for Glasgow had dealt with many of the points raised by the hon. Member. The question was brought into the debate as to whether or not syphilis had resulted from some cases of vaccination; and the same with regard to erysipelas, which sometimes occurred altogether apart from vaccination—but, whether or not those results had followed, it was impossible for them to discuss on that occasion. The hon. Member for Leicester had really anticipated very much what he was about to say on this subject. The Government acknowledged that the circumstances of the epidemic in Sheffield were such as called for inquiry, but they said that a Committee of the House of Commons was not the proper tribunal to make the inquiry, which, to be effectual, must be made on the spot by men properly qualified to conduct it. Such an inquiry, though the hon. Member did not attach much importance to it, was now being made, and when the House was in possession of the whole of the facts they would see that a more thorough investigation had never been instituted. The inquiry embraced such points as these—how the disease had arisen, how it had spread, and how far vaccination, or want of vaccination, had been concerned with the prevalence of the disease; a house-to-house visitation was being carried on, and every case of death of an unvaccinated person was being rigorously inquired into. He hoped that when the result of this inquiry was placed before the House it would be seen that the sole aim and object of the Government was to get at the facts and at the truth of the case. The inquiry was not being conducted with any prepossession for or against vaccination. Every single case would be reported on by a medical inspector of the Local Government Board, who had been down at Sheffield for many months, the name of the person, the date, and all the circumstances attending the case being specifically set out.

Mr. PICTON: Are vaccinated as well as unvaccinated cases to be dealt with?

Mr. RITCHIE said, every death was being investigated, and all particulars gone into. Of course, it was necessary that there should be a fuller and more careful verification of cases reported as unvaccinated. There would, however, be full inquiry into every case. He was sorry to say that it would be longer than at one time he had supposed before the Report could be laid upon the Table of the House. The investigation had already occupied a large amount of time, and only a few days ago he had received a letter from the gentleman who was conducting it, in which he said that, owing to the large number of cases to be examined into, it was doubtful whether he would be able to send in his Report before the end of next month. It would not, therefore, be possible to lay the Report before the House earlier than that, and it might, perhaps, be somewhat later before it could be done. The hon. Member had spoken about the very sad circumstances which had been in existence in Sheffield before the investigation was made. No doubt the epidemic which had raged at Sheffield for some time past had been extremely severe, and had taxed the resources of the authorities to the utmost extent. Although a good deal of fault had been found at the beginning, yet the authorities in Sheffield had done their utmost to meet the necessities of the case when the epidemic was upon them. It was rather a pity that those precautions were not taken earlier; but he might say that nothing could exceed the vigour with which, when once the authorities became aware of the enormous importance of the question, the disease was attacked. So far from the result of the investigation at Sheffield telling against vaccination, he thought that in all probability there was never a more complete case in favour of vaccination than that which would be presented; and he would give a few figures from the Report of Dr. Sinclair White, the Medical Officer of Health for Sheffield, which would speak for themselves. The number of vaccinated children under 10 years of age in Sheffield was estimated at 82,958, and out of that number 207 were attacked, or one in 400; and of the 207 children only two, or 1 per cent, had died. The number of unvaccinated children under 10 was estimated to be 4,366, and of that number 146, or one in 30, had been attacked, while 70, or 48 per cent of those attacked, had died. If the same proportion of vaccinated children had died as of unvaccinated their deaths would have amounted to 1,330. He was well aware that great precautions had been taken, and could not speak too highly of the way in which the authorities in Sheffield had attacked the disease; but it must be remembered that those who were most strongly in favour of vaccination did not contend that other precautions were not necessary. They did not say that, because persons had been once vaccinated, therefore, for all time to come, a town was perfectly safe against small-pox. No assertion of that kind had ever been made; but what the Government said was that hand in hand with vaccination it was essential that there should be proper means of isolation, of disinfection, and of destruction of everything that could possibly convey small-pox; and they said also, that because Leicester by reason of the precautions it took had been able to show a very satisfactory condition of things so far as small-pox was concerned, it did not disprove the enormous danger that Leicester was now in, and was likely to remain in. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Picton) had seen a report which had been made quite recently by a gentleman who was well acquainted with Leicester—he meant Dr. Tomkins who was officer of health for Leicester, and who had just written an article in the last number of *The Lancet*, giving the history of the attack of small-pox in Montreal. He would not trouble the House by reading this Report, but as it was desirable that the people of Leicester and other towns similarly situated should be made aware of danger they were running, it was most important that he should give the House one or two facts in regard to the outbreak in Montreal—facts which had been brought to the attention of the public by the Officer of Health for Leicester. Prior to the year 1885, there had been for many years no case of small-pox in Montreal. There was considerable opposition to vaccination in the town, and the consequence was that there was a very large proportion of the population of that town unvaccinated as at the present moment there was a very large proportion of the population of Leicester unvaccinated. Like Leicester, Montreal for many years had enjoyed immunity from this terrible disease. But in 1885, a man was admitted to the hospital in Montreal suffering from small-pox. He was cured and left the hospital. Within a few days of that a further case arose; but until the month of June the cases did not become very numerous. In July, 46 cases were reported, and in August 239. Then the people became alarmed; further hospital accommodation was called for and supplied, and vaccination was vigorously and rigorously enforced with compulsory removal to hospital of persons attacked; but the disease went on at such a pace that by December of the same year no less than 3,164 deaths had taken place in six months in a population of under 200,000. If the same proportion had died in London of the disease the death would have been upwards of 63,000 in six months. As a matter of fact, however, there were not 63,000 deaths from small-pox in all England and Wales during the period of 10 years from 1871 to 1880.

Mr. PICTON: Does the report to which the right hon. Gentleman is referring give any description of the sanitary state of Montreal?

Mr. RITCHIE said, that it did not. He thought the hon. Gentleman would have gathered from what he had said that he did not at all undervalue the comparative security given to Leicester by reason of the excellence of its sanitary arrangements, and he was not prepared to argue that the sanitary arrangements at Montreal were as good as they were at Sheffield; but he was certain that no amount of sanitary precaution would enable the authorities of a town to deal with this disease when it had once seized hold of a place as it had in the case of Montreal. It was absolutely and entirely beyond any measures of that kind, and the only means of dealing with it was a vigorous course of vaccination and re-vaccination. He had given the statistics of the deaths in Montreal. By December, instead of any opposition existing to vaccination in that town, the vaccination station was literally besieged by applicants for vaccination, so much so, that it taxed all the energies of the authorities to regulate the applications and to keep order. No less than 80,000 persons were vaccinated in three months. A remarkable fact, showing conclusively the protection given by vaccination and re-vaccination was that among all the numerous officers who had to deal with the large number of attacks in Montreal not a single one had ever been attacked by small-pox. That circumstance was also common to the case of Sheffield, and in connection with Sheffield he would further remark that notwithstanding the prevalence of small-pox there all the large number of Post Office *employés* in that town were re-vaccinated, and not one was attacked, notwithstanding the fact that they had constantly to be all over the town and to face those dangers which the hon. Gentleman opposite had said that excursionists from Liverpool were afraid to face. He should just like to call the attention of the House to the last paragraph in the report of Dr. Tomkins to *The Lancet* with regard to the outbreak in Montreal. This gentleman spoke of the heavy weight of responsibility which in the face of evidence such as this rested upon those who opposed vaccination, and whose influence was greatest upon the poorer and least educated classes of the community who were least able to form a right judgment upon such a question, and who suffered most severely from the disease. He also stated that those who were familiar with this plague looked forward with the gravest apprehension to the future so far as those towns were concerned, which like Montreal contained a large proportion of unvaccinated people. He (Mr. Ritchie) had endeavoured to show, from the report of the Sheffield Health Officer, the results of the outbreak of small-pox in Sheffield as an evidence of the value of vaccination and re-vaccination, and he had shown by quotations from the evidence relating to Montreal what might possibly occur in Leicester some day or other looking at the large number of unvaccinated people who existed there. He had acknowledged that there was in Sheffield a case for inquiry. He had shown to the House that the Government were instituting an inquiry in Sheffield of a most drastic character, the results of which would be placed before the House of Commons, and if, when it was so placed before the House of Commons, it should then be thought that a further inquiry was desirable, it would then be for the House at the time to consider the question; but surely it would be in the highest degree indiscreet on the part of the Government to institute such an inquiry as that asked for by the hon. Member opposite when an inquiry such as that he had referred to was going on in Sheffield, the result of which would shortly be communicated to the House. He was aware the inquiry which was going on was not such as the hon. Member demanded. The inquiry the hon. Member asked for was such as was only asked for by those who were opposed to vaccination, and looked upon it, not as a blessing, but as a curse. No evidence given before such an inquiry would be of value to the purpose of those, or could possibly give satisfaction to those, who were asking for it. It might have a result which the Government would very much deprecate, that of showing on their part some want of confidence in the power of vaccination—a want of confidence which they did not feel, and a want of confidence which was not felt by a very large proportion of the people of this country. The Government, in common with the unanimous opinion of the whole medical profession of this country and of the world, entertained no doubt at all as to the efficacy and value of vaccination, and he did not think they had anything to learn by such an inquiry as that advocated by the hon. Gentleman; and he must, therefore, on the part of the Government, decline to accede to the hon. Member's proposal.

Dr. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) said, he wished only to refer to one or two statements made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Dr. R. MACDONALD said, he wished to refer to one or two points in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman from a medical point of view. He wished, in the first place, to say that he entirely agreed with the facts put forward in the admirable speech the right hon. Gentleman had made in defence of vaccination. The right hon. Gentleman's facts were admirably marshalled, and he had done great service to the cause of vaccination by his statement; but there were one or two points to which he (Dr. Macdonald) desired to call attention. The right hon. Gentleman stated that it had not been proved that syphilis was capable of being carried into the system by vaccination. He (Dr. Macdonald) wished to point out, in answer to that statement, that medical men were of opinion that the disease was capable of being carried into the system in that way. That such a thing had occasionally occurred was what few medical men doubted. The argument against the general impression was that there was no certainty that the children had not had syphilis in the system previous to vaccination, as it was a well-known fact that syphilis was apt to appear in children at three months of age, and that many children were vaccinated before that age. With regard to his own experience in dealing with vaccination in the North of Scotland, one year they had several cases of small-pox in a country district where all the people were healthy, and where there was not one case in a thousand of syphilis. He had been detailed to vaccinate every individual in the country whom he could vaccinate, and he had gone to the different villages around, and had vaccinated one, two, three, and four at a time, using the healthiest lymph. A short time afterwards he went back and vaccinated about 20 people from each individual of these, and what had been his experience all over the country? Why, he had kept an accurate and correct record of what had occurred, and he had found that now and again here and there about one case in 20 showed severe symptoms—that where 19 of those vaccinated from the same person were all right the twentieth would have a very bad arm and abscesses about the body, what was there to complain of? These 20 individuals were all vaccinated from the same person, and if there had been anything wrong, any syphilitic inoculation, the whole 20 persons would have suffered; but, as a matter of fact, serious symptoms occurred very rarely—as he had said, only in a proportion of about one in every 20 cases. So that vaccination was very frequently blamed in cases where it had no right to be blamed. These were the only points he wished to put before the House. He would recommend the right hon. Gentleman opposite, if it should be his duty at any future time to do anything further in this matter, and he would also recommend the hon. Member for Leicester, to read a book published about a month ago about vaccination, which shattered in almost every point the arguments and statistics of the anti-vaccinationists all over the country, and showed that there was no foundation for them. This book showed that the arguments and statistics of the anti-vaccinationists were copied from one book into another, and were frequently exaggerated in the process; and furthermore, that they were nearly all without foundation. All these statements against vaccination were inventions, and had been handed down from one book to another.

SCOTLAND—SOUTH-EAST COAST FISHERMEN — RIGHTS AS TO MUSSEL BEDS.—OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, he had to call the attention of the House to a very important question connected with the fishing industry on the South-East Coast of Scotland. He had given Notice of the following Motion on the subject:—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire as to the existence and extent of private rights in mussel beds in the tidal waters of Scotland, and to inquire generally as to the nature and value of such rights, and to report as to the advisability of compelling the transfer of all such rights and of all mussel beds to the Fishery Board for Scotland, with the view of preserving and protecting the mussel beds, and enabling fishermen to obtain mussels at reasonable rates."

He was precluded by the Forms of the House from moving this Resolution, but he could call attention to the subject. He regretted that it should be necessary to do so, because he had hoped that what took place last year would have been sufficient to effect his purpose. It might be remembered that a Motion almost identical in form to the one standing on the Paper in his name was brought forward by him last year, he thought in the month of May, and that on that occasion the Motion was opposed by the Government on the ground that the inquiry he wanted, and of which they admitted the necessity could be better conducted by the Scotch Fishery Board than by a Royal Commission, which would be a much more costly process. Well, certain pledges were then given by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate to which he (Mr. Anderson) would refer more particularly presently, but it was needless to say, and he regretted it very much, that those pledges had not been fulfilled—that the promises then made by the Government had not been carried out, and that practically this question which was of such vital importance to the line fishermen of Scotland had been put on one side, apparently by the Government and by the Scotch Fishery Board as a matter of comparatively little importance. A subject of the most vital interest, which ought to have engaged their closest attention, was put on one side to make way for others which, to his mind, would be much better left alone. It would be seen at once that to line fishermen any question relating to bait would be of the greatest importance. One of the essentials to their prosperously carrying on their business was that they should have a good and ample supply of bait, that they should have that supply near at hand, and that they should have it without being put to any great expense for it. At the present moment the line fishermen of Scotland could not be said to enjoy any single one of these conditions. It would seem almost incredible to many Members that although the mussel, which was the bait ordinarily used by line fishermen, was one of the fish which, above all others, was easy to propagate—which would grow without any difficulty at all—at the present moment the line fishermen on the North-East Coast of Scotland had to procure the greater part of their bait from the Western Coast, and even some of it from Ireland and other places. It seemed that on the Eastern Coast of Scotland—and this was the point upon which this matter originally arose and caused him to bring it before the House last year—the landlords had appropriated to themselves, backed up, he must say, by laws which protected their rights of property, the mussel beds in the tidal waters. Into the question of the assertion by the landlords of their right to the mussel beds he was not going to enter, except, in passing, to say that it was a very strange right to assert, because he ventured to think that every reasonable person would assume that fishermen could not fish without bait, and would be supposed in the natural course of things to procure their bait from the natural bait beds in the vicinity in which they lived. To an ordinary person that would seem to be an ordinary thing, but instead of that it had been asserted that these bait beds did not belong to the fishermen at all, and that they could only use them by the consent of the landlords, who charged a very high rate for the mussels. Evidence was given upon this subject before the Crofters Commission. Witnesses were called who spoke to the fact that on the estate of the Duke of Sutherland as much as 1*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.*, and 2*s.* 6*d.* a basket was charged for the mussels, which the fishermen gathered in the tidal waters on that estate. The witnesses were asked if the Duke of Sutherland had a right to these mussels, and the answer was: "Well, he claims the right, and we also claim that we have a right to them." It seemed to him (Mr. Anderson) that that was ungenerous conduct in the extreme on the part of a landlord who knew the difficulties that fishermen had to contend with, and that they were at the present time making a very precarious living. It seemed to him conduct which ought to be condemned, particularly when they remembered the exorbitant charge which was made in many places for the mussels which the fishermen must have in order to obtain a living. He was glad to find that this rapacity did not seem to prevail on the whole coast of Scotland, for they found on the West Coast that no claim of this kind was made—at least this was the case so far as he knew. And what had happened? Why the fishermen on the East Coast being charged 1*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.*, and 2*s.* 6*d.* a basket for their bait did not buy the mussels in their own neighbourhood, but it paid them better to dredge for mussels on the West Coast, and to have them transported across Scotland by railway. After paying for this transportation and going to the trouble of dredging them, they obtained the mussels cheaper than they could get them in their own neighbourhood from their own landlord, who made this high charge. That was the present state of affairs, and the consequence was that fishermen were put in a position of great difficulty, because bait was a very serious item in their day's work. It was essential that they should have it, and each of them should pay, generally speaking, a shilling before he could commence his day's work, which was a thing he very naturally resented, believing that he ought to be able to get his bait without paying for it. When the fisherman came back after his night of toil on the deep, he found it result in a small, miserable pittance, the greater part of which either went to the landlord or to pay for bait brought from the West Coast. The question was, whether this was a state of things which ought to be allowed to continue. As he had said, he brought the subject before the House last year, and he had pointed out what he again proposed to point out—namely, that the grievance was one which should not be allowed to continue, and that, therefore, it was desirable that a Royal Commission should be appointed for the purpose of making inquiry, and ascertaining what were the real rights of the landlords to these mussel beds, and for the purpose of ascertaining what steps should be taken by the Scotch Fishery Board, or by the Government, to put this matter in a satisfactory position. He had said just now the Government stated that inquiry was being made. As a matter of fact, he was put off, as hon. Members on that, the Opposition, side of the House, were very frequently put off, by the statement that the matter was engaging the very serious and earnest consideration of the Government, and that the Secretary for Scotland was deeply impressed with the importance of the subject. He was told, in effect, that the matter was one in respect to which no stone would be left unturned to ascertain the merits of the case. These were the Lord Advocate's own words as they appeared in *Hansard.* He stated—

> "The Government admitted that it was a matter for inquiry; he thought the Fishery Board was a competent body to look into it, and perfectly competent to advise the Secretary for Scotland, first, as to whether anything should be done, and, in the second place, as to what should be done."

Now, upon hearing that statement, he (Mr. Anderson) believed that several hon. Members who would otherwise have supported his proposal, believing the position taken up by the Government to be a reasonable one, refrained from supporting him, and ranged themselves on the side of the Ministry. He himself, however, did not feel justified in accepting that statement as satisfactory. He confessed that perhaps he did not place that confidence in Government statements that he ought, and on that occasion he took a Division on the subject because he fancied that the general remarks which had fallen from the Lord Advocate were perhaps not seriously meant, and might not lead to what was desired. Well, he was sorry to say that his prophetic feeling on that occasion was correct, because, although that had been in May last, up to the present moment the Executive Government of Scotland, represented by the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (the Lord Advocate) and the Secretary for Scotland and other officials in the Scotch Department, and also the Scotch Fishery Board, he believed, had done absolutely and literally nothing to carry out that pledge of the Government. Although this question only affected men in a humble position of life, and men who had to work hard for their livelihood, he wished the Government and the Lord Advocate, or whoever represented the Scotch Fishery Board, to remember that it was a matter of vital importance to thousands of people. A solemn pledge was given a year ago that it should be investigated, and it was almost incredible that since then nothing should have been done to redeem that promise. That to his mind was a monstrous dereliction of duty on the part of the Government. This dereliction of duty absolutely led to a waste of the time of the House, because it had rendered it necessary for him to repeat observations which he had made last year. If the Government had done their duty, it would have been unnecessary for him to have troubled the House this evening, so through their inattention to the subject they were to blame for the time of the House being occupied with this discussion. The question was one which was not very difficult to deal with. In Scotland they had at the present moment a Fishery Board which, he believed, was not the case in England. In the Resolution of which he had given Notice, but which he was precluded from moving, he had suggested that this Scotch Fishery Board should take in hand this question of bait beds around the coast of Scotland. Such was the feeling of the people of Scotland. A meeting was held last autumn in Aberdeen which was attended by a large number of fishermen, and there was a general expression of opinion there given that the bait beds should not be open to everybody, because that course led to very great mischief. One of the mischiefs of the present system was that although the landlords excluded the fishermen from the use of the bait beds by an exorbitant charge for mussels, they could not prevent the public from taking them from other beds. Everybody who chose went to the bait beds, and the beds were consequently seriously damaged by improper dredging and by bait being taken away in improper quantities. The bait was taken by unskilled persons, and great part of the beds was spoiled, and he wished to remedy this evil by putting the beds into the hands of a proper authority—a competent public body—in order that they might protect them so that the fishermen might reap the greatest possible benefit from them, a small toll being levied from fishermen to defray the cost of management. That seemed to him to be the proper course to be taken by the Scotch Fishery Board in this matter. He was bound to say that although the Scotch Fishery Board, as a body, had done nothing, a certain member of that Board had recently published, apparently upon his own responsibility, a report upon this question. He was sorry to say that he believed that gentleman—namely, Professor Ewart, did not seem to get on very well with the other Members of the Board. He had published a paper—he (Mr. Anderson) did not know whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had read it, although he hoped he had—a very important paper which dealt very fully with the subject in hand. Might he ask the Lord Advocate if he had seen it?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Yes, I have seen the Report by Professor Ewart.

Mr. ANDERSON said, it was a very important document, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, he was sure, would agree with him that it dealt very fully with many matters which he (Mr. Anderson) had brought forward last year. It pointed out how important it was for the Government to take action, and to take action at once, with regard to this subject. Professor Ewart pointed out that in many cases, owing to neglect of these bait beds, the supply of bait was deteriorating in quality and quantity. He pointed out that last year over 20,000 tons of mussels were taken and consumed by the fishermen of Scotland, but that next year—that was to say, the ensuing year—the prospect was a very gloomy one, and that the sources of the supply of bait were not nearly sufficient.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I thought the hon. and learned Member was referring to a paper read by Professor Ewart before the Fishery Board. In the answer made just now I may have made a mistake. I was referring to the printed paper before me.

Mr. ANDERSON said, he was sorry the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not seen the document to which he had referred. It was in the form of a letter.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: What is the date of it?

Mr. ANDERSON: All he could say was that the copy he had of it was extracted from *The Scotsman* newspaper, he thought of the 11th May—either the 11th or 12th of May.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he had read it in *The Scotsman* at that time.

Mr. ANDERSON said, the Government had evidently not yet fully considered the document, and knew little about the subject beyond having read that letter in the columns of *The Scotsman.* He thought it unfortunate that the document had not been brought officially under the notice of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, because in it Professor Ewart, who was the scientific member of the Scotch Fishery Board, said that the cause of the discontent amongst the Scotch fishermen was the charge made for bait, and then he went into the causes which were bringing about a gradual decrease in the number of mussels. He said that the amount of bait was decreasing owing to the mussels not being properly looked after, and then he proceeded to point out various measures which he thought ought to be adopted for the purpose of remedying the evil and placing at the disposal of the fishermen bait at a reasonable price. In one part of his letter, Professor Ewart pointed out that fishermen on the East Coast of Scotland were taxed by the railway rates they had to pay, in order to get their bait for use from distant places, something like £20,000 a-year. He trusted, at any rate, that this report would be considered by the Government. It seemed a most extraordinary thing that this document, which had been published some weeks ago, should not have been brought under the notice of the Executive Government, even privately. Why had they officials to carry out the Executive Government if important documents of this description were not at once brought to their notice when they knew discussions of this kind were about to take place? He (Mr. Anderson) thought he had just cause of complaint in the fact that the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate was not able to get up in his place and tell them that the Government had considered the paper of Professor Ewart, and whether or not they agreed with the statements contained in it and the recommendations and suggestions made. He did not wish to say anything disagreeable, but desired to put fairly before the House the course the Government had taken in the matter, and fairly criticize their conduct. He only desired what was most reasonable—namely, that the Government of Scotland should come down to this House, and say whether or not they agreed with the views expressed by Professor Ewart. What were these views? He had shortly stated a portion of them, but the Professor went on to point out the absolute necessity of practical legislation. In the third part of the report Professor Ewart stated that sufficient had been said to show—firstly, that the mussel fishery was one of great importance to Scottish fishermen; secondly, that the fishermen along the Eastern and North-Eastern seaports were dependent for mussel bait almost entirely on supplies brought from the West Coast; and thirdly, that the insufficiency of local supplies was apparently in many cases due to the reckless destruction of mussels; and that such being the condition of affairs on the large fundamental subject of bait—a *sine quâ non* of line fishermen—it formed a subject of serious consideration as to what measures it was possible to adopt with the view of remedying it. Then Professor Ewart went on to discuss various measures which he suggested. He dealt with the matter in considerable detail, but the substance of his suggestions was practically that the mussel beds should be brought under the Scotch Fishery Board. Towards the end of his paper, he mentioned three or four points. He said that should his proposal be adopted as to legislation, he would recommend amongst other things —firstly, that there should be an accurate survey made by the Fishery Board of the mussel beds to be cultivated; and secondly, that the taking of mussels by hand should be prohibited, except under special circumstances, since great quantities were destroyed by the fact of the people gathering them, and that the gathering should be done by a system of raking; and thirdly, that where it was possible only a limited portion of the beds should be annually worked, and that care should be taken to prevent the overcrowding of any portion of the beds. Then Professor Ewart went on to deal with other parts of the coast. These seemed to him (Mr. Anderson) to be very practical suggestions on the part of Professor Ewart; but there was another matter which he thought had not had sufficient importance attached to it, and that was that he believed we were the only fishing country which had not made some attempt to increase bait by artificial means. Had that subject engaged the attention of Her Majesty's Government?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: Yes.

MR. ANDERSON said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate assented. It had engaged the attention of Her Majesty's Government to this extent that he (Mr. Anderson) had put a Question on the Paper on the subject, and that he received an Answer from the right hon. and learned Gentleman, which gave him no information at all—that he had got the stereotyped answer from the Scotch Office to the effect that the subject was engaging the attention of the Government of Scotland. He wished to ask the House whether the time had not come for the Government of this country to take a leaf out of the lessons taught us by the United States of America, and by Norway, Sweden, and France, who spent enormous sums of money for the purpose of putting bait in the way of fishermen to enable them to carry on their industry successfully? This was a matter which would lead to very little expense. The Lord Advocate said that it was being attended to; but he had asked the Government the other day if they attached any importance to the bait beds in the Moray Firth, but it seemed that they did not, as they replied that they could not undertake to spend a few hundred pounds for the purpose of carrying on experiments there. What had Professor Ewart said upon this subject? Why that it was essential that these experiments should be made. The mussel was a fish which grew in enormous quantities with very little difficulty, and all that was required for their cultivation was to take some steps for the protection of the beds. He thought the least they could have expected from the Government was a promise that they should take measures, at any rate, to experiment in that direction. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had told him the other day—although he might have misunderstood him—that the Government did not see their way to spending money in making experiments, and if that were so he thought it was a matter of which the Scotch fishermen had every right to complain. The points he had gone over showed this was a matter of the utmost importance, and one which the Government ought to take in hand without delay. The Lord Advocate looked as if he were about to reply, as he had a number of papers in his hand, and he (Mr. Anderson) supposed that if the right hon. and learned Gentleman did reply, he would say that the inquiry which he had promised last year should be made had been made. It was true that last September a State Paper was issued from the Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland; but the inquiry to which that Paper gave an answer was as to where the principal mussel beds on the Coast of Scotland were, to whom they belonged, and upon what terms the Scotch fishermen could obtain mussels from them? He could only tell the right hon. and learned Gentleman that those were not the points upon which his (Mr. Anderson's) Motion of last year was founded and upon which he had desired the Government to obtain information. They all knew where the mussels beds were, and they all knew to whom they belonged—or rather to whom it was alleged they belonged—and they also knew the terms upon which fishermen could obtain mussels from them. His complaint last year was that the fishermen were charged exorbitant rates for the mussels. He certainly had not gone to the Scotch Office for the purpose of obtaining an answer to a number of questions which he had not put, and for the purpose of hearing a number of facts stated with which they were already acquainted. He was bound to say that this table did summarize very conveniently what he ventured last year to bring forward—namely, the great difficulty fishermen on the North-East Coast of Scotland had in obtaining bait. It was clearly shown that over an enormous expanse of coast—the greater part of the Coast of Aberdeenshire, Banffshire, Morayshire, and Nairn—there were practically no mussel beds, and men had to obtain their mussels from those persons who had private beds, or to get them, as he had said, from the other side of Scotland. He hoped that they would hear from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate something satisfactory upon this question. He assured the right hon. and learned Gentleman that this was a question in respect to which the deepest interest was taken by the fishing population in the North-East of Scotland. He could hardly believe that the Government realized the importance of this question, because he saw the Secretary for Scotland this afternoon, and he was surprised to find that the noble Marquess apparently did not know that this question which was coming up for discussion was a question of any importance; he did not appear to have considered what answer the Government should give in the matter. That was not at all a satisfactory way of treating a question which affected the fishing population of Scotland most deeply. When it was seen how precarious their existence was, and how toilsome a life they had to live, he could not help thinking that the time of the House could not be better employed than in considering measures for their relief. In bringing this matter before the House he felt that he was only doing a simple duty to those men, and he trusted that some satisfactory assurance would be given by the right hon. and learned Gentleman on behalf of the Government.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Elgin and Nairn (Mr. Anderson) took a great interest in this question, and always spoke upon the subject with great earnestness. Representing, as he did, a constituency which was especially interested in the matter, the hon. and learned Member would not be doing his duty if he failed to bring before the notice of the House the views which his constituents entertained with regard to it. There might be, on the part of a number of people, a certain feeling of impatience that their views on this subject were not at once carried out; but he hoped it would be realized that those who had to act had a great deal more to do than those who merely suggested. Up to the present moment the Government had not had put before them any scheme on the part of scientific men that would enable them to say whether it would be wise to carry it out or not. Hon. Members opposite would agree with him that to attempt anything in a matter of this kind before they were satisfied, in the first place, that it would be effective, and, in the second place, that any money spent upon it would not be wasted, would be a most unwise proceeding. This matter was one which depended to a great extent on the evidence to be obtained from persons of scientific knowledge and skill. It was quite true that upon the bleak and exposed coast of some parts of Aberdeenshire there were no mussel beds; but he thought it would be found that the reason why there were no mussel beds there was that the ground was not suitable for the establishment of mussel beds. On a very rocky, iron-bound coast, they could not have conditions which admitted of successful mussel scalps. When the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn said there were certain points on the East Coast of Scotland where there were no mussel beds, and where mussel beds could be established, he was entirely mistaken, and he would not get any evidence to support that statement.

MR. ANDERSON said, that Professor Ewart pointed that out himself.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he was afraid that with the information before them it was perfectly hopeless to attempt to establish mussel beds in any of the places suggested by the hon. and learned Member. If mussel beds could not be established in every place where there were fishermen who might desire to use those mussel beds, was it a cure for the difficulties which had arisen to throw open the existing mussel beds to everybody? The inevitable result of throwing them open would be this, that those people who lived in places where there were no mussels would flock down to those places where there were mussels, and they would make a hash of the garden of mussels wherever they found them.

MR. ANDERSON said, he never suggested anything of the kind. He suggested that the mussel beds should be put under the Fishery Board to prevent that being done.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he quite understood that. It was obvious that if regulations were to be made by which the supplies of mussels were to be available to all fishermen, that was a matter which would require very grave consideration if it was to be worked out at all. His hon. and learned Friend had pointed out that they did not imitate the example of other countries which were spending enormous sums of money in the development of fisheries. He would remind his hon. and learned Friend that the authorities at Dover House had no control over the public purse, but if a grant were made for any purpose connected with the fisheries of Scotland, he could assure his hon. and learned Friend that they would be very glad to spend it to the very best advantage.

MR. ANDERSON said, if the Secretary for Scotland asked for money, he would get it.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, that was a popular delusion. If that was the idea which was present in the minds of hon. Gentlemen, he could quite understand their indignation that any views which they might put forward were not carried into effect. The grant they had at present did not enable them to carry out any such proposal as that suggested by the hon. and learned Member. The problem they had before them was to see whether the mussel scalps which existed could not be made more productive and safe from destruction. It had also been brought out quite clearly that in a great number of cases where there was no competition for mussels, the proprietors had allowed the fishermen in their neighbourhood to take them perfectly freely. The Government had just lately received from Professor Ewart a report of very great importance. Professor Ewart pointed out the necessity of proceedings that had not been thought of in this country till a year or two ago. Not relying upon natural causes, but adopting some system of cultivation, there had been a very successful system of cultivation carried out on the Continent in regard to mussels. Three things had been realized—First, that they must have a rich or muddy bottom for cultivating; second, that they must have some means to enable the mussels to attach themselves conveniently and quickly; thirdly, that they must have some pruning and clearing of the spaces; and fourthly, that they must have a removal of the mussels when they had got to a certain size, so that the new ones might form in a sheltered spot. All these things were of enormous importance; but they meant not only the expenditure of money, but considerable study and experiment. Professor Ewart's report had only been received on the 10th of April. He (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) himself looked forward to very great results from some such system. If it could be successfully carried out in this country, it would probably lead to the relief of a great portion of the difficulty felt on many parts of the coasts of Scotland. Hitherto in this country the practical principle had not been adhered to by fishermen as was followed by agriculturists in the cultivation of land—the rotation of crops, or the alternation between fallow and cultivation. It was, therefore, necessary that there should be some regulation—analogous to the system of cropping on land—by which a certain portion of the mussel beds should have a rest while other portions were being worked. All this would require a great extension of the powers of the Fishery Board. The evil undoubtedly existed, and it could only be hoped that, by reasonable measures, those places that had severely suffered might be restored to a condition of productiveness. Careful investigations had been made, and these necessarily occupied time. The report which had appeared in *The Scotsman*, and to which reference had been made, was not the report he had before him, and he assumed that the Fishery Board was now making its report upon the subject. All these suggestions were the suggestions of experts, and required consideration, which they were receiving. Clear and detailed estimates of the cost were also required before Parliament could be asked to vote any money. It was for the Cabinet to consider whether any such action could be taken after receiving information. He was afraid to say the matter was receiving serious consideration, because he quite saw that the hon. and learned Member never believed that; but the Government frankly admitted the importance of the subject, and that it was their duty to investigate it, and see what was best to be done; but he thought it was only reasonable that they should not be pressed for an answer till they had considered all the questions involved.

MR. R. W. DUFF (Banffshire) said, he was glad that the Lord Advocate admitted the importance of this subject. It was one the importance of which was felt especially on the East Coast of Scotland, and the present depressed condition of the fishery trade intensified its importance. At present, on the East Coast of Scotland many of the best men were looking to other fields for their labour. Many of them desired to emigrate, and try their hand at fishing on the other side of the Atlantic; and, while he admired the enterprize of these men, he would not like to see them leaving our shores until, at any rate, all the resources of this country had been fully developed. He would not detain the House by going into the many hardships which the fishermen had to encounter in getting bait. It had been generally understood — at any rate, amongst laymen — that while rates might be charged by a proprietor for mussels between high and low water mark, yet where fishermen succeeded in finding mussel beds for themselves beyond the low water mark, they had a right to them; but a case brought before the Courts where the proprietor charged for mussels found five or six fathoms deep had been decided against the fishermen. That decision occasioned surprise even among some of the Legal Authorities of Scotland. [MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD dissented.] The Lord Advocate shook his head; but he (Mr. Duff) recollected going to the Fishery Board in Edinburgh, and being told by two Sheriffs that they believed that no right whatever could be established by law to mussel beds beyond the low water mark. However, the case was decided against the fishermen. The Lord Advocate had said he did not want to take any precipitate action in the matter. He (Mr. Duff) did not think they need be alarmed about that. His hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Anderson) brought this question forward last year, and was then told that it would receive the serious attention of the Government. He did not know what the Government had done in the interval. They did not seem to have made much progress. The Lord Advocate had also said—"It was all very well to come down there and ask the Government to cultivate mussel beds; but where was the money to come from?" That was a point on which he (Mr. Duff) ventured to offer a suggestion to which he hoped the Government might pay some attention. Some years ago, he presided over a Committee on the Herring Brand, and before that Committee it was distinctly and conclusively proved that there was a very large surplus, which was acknowledged to belong to the fishermen, of £31,570. He would suggest to the Lord Advocate and the Secretary for Scotland whether they could not with justice give some of that money to carrying out a scheme for cultivating mussels. It seemed to him a very appropriate fund for the purpose, and one on which they had some claim. Fishermen were being helped in Ireland and on the West Coast of Scotland. Well, here were some of the best men on the East Coast going out of the country; and while there was a large sum of money which practically belonged to them, the Government came down to the House and said—"We cannot cultivate mussels because we have not the means." He could assure the Lord Advocate that there was a strong feeling on this question. He might be asked, if his hon. Friend could carry his Motion, what would be the result? Well, if they were to cultivate mussels, they would have, in the first place, to determine the existing private rights. He had never advocated the confiscation of these rights. Let them be valued and compensated; then let the mussel beds be handed over to the Fishery Board, and he had no doubt that under the able supervision of Professor Cossar Ewart they could produce mussels in various parts of Scotland just as they were produced in France. This would be an immense boon to fishermen on the East Coast.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) said, he admired the great ingenuity with which the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate had evaded, if he might say so, all the points raised by the observations of the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn (Mr. Anderson). As he (Mr. A. Sutherland) understood the question, it was not as to the best means for the artificial cultivation of mussels, but as to who had a right to the mussel beds. It was perfectly well known to the fishermen that the mussel beds used to be free; in fact, he believed the oldest fishermen would assert that they could remember the time when they could go to the beds and take what bait they wanted, without being charged for it. It was a matter well known to everybody that bait for line-fishing was a necessity —as much a necessity as a boat—and, therefore, it was the duty of the Government to give every facility, not only for the cultivation of mussels, but also for the free supply of mussels to the fishermen. The question of proprietory in the mussel beds was not touched upon at all by the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, and he (Mr. A. Sutherland), for his own part, would have liked very much to hear the right hon. and learned Gentleman's opinion on that subject. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Banffshire (Mr. R. W. Duff) had stated that it would be a very great thing for the Government to buy out the rights of the owners of the mussel beds. He (Mr. A. Sutherland) should like to know how many of those who now claimed rights of proprietorship on the mussel beds really bought these rights in the first place. That subject would certainly have to be considered before the subject of compensation was taken in hand. The principal question, however, was that of the right of proprietorship. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had stated that on questions of this kind generally the officials at Dover House were dependent for information upon their subordinates, and, no doubt, that was so. No one could blame the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate or the Secretary for Scotland (the Marquess of Lothian) for not having information upon a matter of this sort, if their subordinates had failed to supply them with it; but he thought the opinion of experts was worth ascertaining, and that was the exact point of the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman who had introduced this subject (Mr. Anderson) —namely, that the Government should consent to an Inquiry being instituted into the whole question. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, however, met that proposal by giving them a long dissertation upon the artificial production of mussels. Now, with regard to the proprietorship of these mussel beds, the pretence always put forward was that it was necessary that some one should have the ownership vested in him, in order that they might be protected and regulated. Well, he believed that also. He believed that the mussel beds should be protected and regulated, but that was no reason why the beds should be appropriated by private persons. His hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Anderson) declared that the best custodian of the mussel beds would be the Fishery Board of Scotland, a Body publicly appointed and responsible to the Crown for the due administration of its functions. That was the point, and towards its elucidation the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate had not contributed very much. He (Mr. A. Sutherland), however, was thankful for small mercies coming from that quarter, and he was thankful that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had stated that, at any rate, this subject would be made a matter for consideration. It was to be hoped that he would grant this inquiry.

Mr. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) said, he should be failing in his duty if he did not join in the appeal made to the Government to look into this matter, with the view of taking definite action upon it. The supply of Scotch mussels was a matter of great importance to English as well as Scotch fishermen, particularly to those along the North-East Coast of England. He supposed there was no article of food in our country which had increased in price so much as fish, and to this addition to the cost of fish the scarcity of bait was one of the principal factors. But whilst this was of great importance to the country at large, it was of more pressing and immediate importance to those who brought in this food supply to England,

and who earned a living very hardly on the waters of our North Sea. If the men who went out in open boats all round our coasts carrying on this line-fishing industry, could see the comparatively small interest that this subject excited in that House, he should be sorry to confront a body of them to-morrow. It was a fact that every one of these men had to lay out from 3*s.* to 8*s.* for bait before he went in search of fish, and it might be, if the weather was rough or the catch was small, a man might come back not only having lost his night's labour and his expenditure on bait, but a serious amount of capital, which might leave him in debt and cripple him for some time to come. The scarcity and the high price of bait was a very serious problem. He might mention that this was no mere supposition. He had taken great pains to work out a balance sheet as affecting 90 fishermen—line fishermen—and he found that these men, living in the town of Filey, in Yorkshire, in 10 weeks last autumn only made a profit of 10*d.* per head per week. One of the principal items which had reduced their profit was the extremely high price they had to pay for bait. That was a very grave position of things, and he thought the responsibility of the Government was considerably enhanced by the fact that this matter had already been the subject of legislation, and had been acknowledged by the House to be a suitable subject for legislation, only, unfortunately, such legislation as had been adopted had turned out to be practically a dead letter. There was an Act passed dealing with this subject so long ago as the year 1868, but the Royal Committee of 1885 made a careful inquiry along the Scotch Coast, and that Committee actually said—

> "With regard to this particular matter, as we already pointed out, the Legislature has attempted to deal with it by the Act passed in 1881, but we were informed that that Act was a dead letter. We think it advisible that some more effective method should be adopted for dealing with what has already been recognized as an evil by the Legislature."

He thought that when a Royal Commission declared to the House that this matter had been dealt with ineffectually hitherto, and recommended, as they did in 1885, that it should be dealt with effectually, it was to be hoped that the Government would not delay making the most definite and effective inquiry that could possibly be made upon the subject.

MR. BERNARD COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe) said, he had no wish to intervene for any length of time in that debate, seeing that he was an Englishman, and that he did not represent a coast constituency. At the same time, he personally had some interest in a part of the country in which there was a fishing community, and he wished to point out to the House the enormous importance of the subject they were discussing, a subject which he believed to be equally interesting and applicable to other parts of the United Kingdom as to Scotland, and that was the reason why he should not be surprised if other English Members desired to say a word or two in that debate. In olden times the rights of fishing around our coasts were carefully guarded. Wherever the tide came up the public had the right of fishing on the shores, and so close had been the guardianship of that right that never had any of the Law Courts recognized the validity of a grant by the Crown since the year 1215 derogating from the supreme right of the people to take fish wherever the tide ebbed and flowed. That right had undoubtedly been whittled away in many respects by presumption of lost grants—a presumption held by the Courts in more than one instance. Though individuals had had difficulty in securing the exclusive right to fish in mussel-beds under the claim of a fishery—because fish, of course, included mussels—yet individuals had secured the right of taking mussels on our sea shores by another process. The process by which they had obtained that right had been by claiming the soil upon which the mussels were placed, there being no Statute of Prohibition against the grant of the soil to individuals. Though the right to the soil did not carry with it the exclusive right to take the mussels on the soil, or to fish in the waters that overflowed that soil, yet, by the various Salmon Fishery Acts, it had been held that wherever an individual could show that he had a right to the soil on beds marked out and chose to place mussels or oysters thereupon, he had a right to take those mussels or oysters in derogation of the *primâ facia* rights of the public. That being so, the Legislature had, he presumed, contemplated certain circumscribed, settled, and definite beds; but cases had come under his own knowledge in which individuals had "marked out" whole miles of our coast. In one instance he knew of five miles altogether being marked out by an individual who claimed the soil along the sea. He had put up certain posts at the corners of these five miles of land, and had said that that was an oyster and mussel-bed, "well and sufficiently marked out and known as such"—in the words of the Legislature—and had claimed the right, therefore, and had succeeded in making good his claim to oust the fishermen from taking mussels as bait over the whole of the five miles. The result of that had been that the fishermen of that particular locality had been really prevented from exercising their trade as fishermen because, as the oysters could not be disturbed, therefore the mussels could not be disturbed, and because the mussels could not be disturbed, there was no bait for fish, and, as a consequence, the fishermen had had a profitable trade closed to them, and had their means of obtaining a livelihood barred to them for good and all. He submitted that the question was one of some moment, and that it was time that the rights of the public and the rights of individuals were made the subject of inquiry and definitely ascertained.

Mr. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland) said, that as representing a constituency largely interested in mussels and oysters, he should like to say a word upon this matter. The rights of the owners of the soil and of the fishermen to the bait beds around the Island of Orkney were unsettled, and he thought in any inquiry instituted this point should be set at rest. There seemed to be some doubt in the North as to whether private rights did not extend in some cases eight miles from shore, or considerably more than the three miles limit, which existed in other quarters. This was an important question, not only with regard to mussels, but also with regard to the cultivation of oysters. Considerable importance appeared to him to attach to the matter of providing police in these waters—these tidal waters, these small shallow waters which, in certain places, were valuable for the cultivation of shellfish. He would urge upon the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate and the Government to take means without delay to get this question settled. Several attempts had been made to cultivate oysters in the sea water near the shore in the large firths which ran far inland, and which in former years were well known for the enormous supply of shell-fish that they yielded. These firths had all been cleared out now by parties from the South, and perhaps by the Islanders themselves, and the state of things now existing was not likely to be set right, as the people were in ignorance of their legal position. He thought, however, the question was one essentially of police—of supporting proper police in these waters in which these rights existed, or were supposed to exist.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £27,968, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, including certain Expenses connected with Emigration."

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, that a short time ago he asked a Question of the Government with reference to their alleged intention to give up the Island of Ascension, and also with reference to the alterations which such abandonment would necessitate at the naval station of Simon's Town. He should like, for a moment, to ask the attention of the Committee to the position of affairs in these two places. With reference to the Island of Ascension, he believed that it was popularly supposed to be rather a barren and useless spot, and that at the most it was only a sort of port of call for ships occasionally when they were in distress. So far, however, from that being the correct view, the Island of Ascension was a fertile and healthy spot, and most agreeable as a sanitarium. So far from its being an arid waste, it was to-day not only very fertile, but of late years had had a rainfall of as much as from 40 to 53 inches, and sheep and cattle bred well in the Island. He merely mentioned these facts to draw attention to the importance of the place as a sanitarium. It had, he believed, long been used as such for the benefit of our officials in that part of the world.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): I rise to Order. I wish to point out that there is nothing relating to Ascension contained in this Vote. The Vote for the Island of Ascension is taken in the Navy Estimates, and I wish to know, therefore, whether the hon. Member's observations are in Order?

THE CHAIRMAN: Any observations in connection with the retention of the Island of Ascension would be in Order, because that question would refer to Colonial policy; but if the question is merely as to the retention of the Admiralty establishment there, that would not be in Order.

MR. CONYBEARE said, that he wished to deal with the question of the Island of Ascension and the question of Simon's Town as matters of Imperial Policy. He had commenced his observations by saying that he had called the attention of the Government to these matters the other day.

THE CHAIRMAN: As I understand it, there is no intention whatever of altering the possession of the Island of Ascension, and the subject is not, therefore, one of Colonial policy. The question of the Admiralty establishment being kept up there is not relative to Colonial policy.

MR. CONYBEARE said, he understood that, and did not think he should be out of Order in what he was about to say. He did not desire to detain the Committee by entering into the advantages of retaining the Island. He was aware that it was used primarily, or had been used primarily, as a naval station, and any remarks which he might be disposed to make with regard to the Island in its character as a naval station, he would reserve until they came to the Naval Estimates if there were any Votes left in those Estimates upon which he could bring this matter forward. But he apprehended that, so far as the question of retaining the Island as a sanitarium was concerned, that was a question which he was perfectly entitled to raise now, because it did not affect simply the question of our Navy, but, as was well known, the Island had been used as a sanitarium for our Colonial officers and Governors on the West Coast of Africa. It was because he thought it of some importance, from that point of view, that he desired to address some observations to the Committee. Everybody knew that the West Coast of Africa was extremely unhealthy, and the importance of having such a sanitarium as this Island had been admitted, he thought, by most persons. Assuming that there was any value attaching to the Island as a sanitarium for recruiting the health of officers of different kinds in the Colonial Service on the West Coast of Africa, the question as to whether the cost involved in maintaining the Island was equal to the benefits we derived from it was the point he wished to consider. The inquiry he had addressed to the Government the other day had reference to both points—that was to say, as to the desirability of retaining the Island as a naval station, and as to the desirability of its being retained as a sanitarium. On both points he was answered that it was intended to give up the Island, and he thought he was entitled to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they had fully decided, as he understood they had, to give up the Island as a sanitarium, and whether there was any possibility of getting them to reconsider that decision? The point of Imperial policy which he had raised, and to which he had referred, was one which he could not altogether keep out of view at that moment. It appeared to him that if Her Majesty's Government intended to give up the Island both as a sanitarium and as a naval station, the Island practically would become useless to us. He did not know what proposal Her Majesty's Government intended to make for the purpose of maintaining our rights over the Island. He had asked them, on a former occasion, what means should be taken for the purpose of preventing its being seized by some Foreign Power, and he had not yet received any satisfactory answer to that question. If the Island was not to be used either as a sanitarium or as a naval station, it appeared to him that it would be perfectly idle and useless to keep any guard there, and if no guard was kept, he did not know what was to prevent any Foreign Power from seizing the Island if it felt so disposed. However that might be, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Vote to give them some explanation of the matter, only expressing as his opinion what he did not give as his opinion merely, but as based on the authority and assurances of persons who were more familiar with that part of the world than he was himself, that it would be a great loss to this country if the Island were given up, as it was proposed to do, and if we no longer had the advantage of using it for the purpose of recruiting the health of our Colonial officers on the West Coast of Africa. Now he would pass on for one moment to the question of Simon's Town. He did not wish to say a word about Simon's Town from the point of view of its being merely a naval station, but at the same time he quite felt that the remarks which he desired to address to Her Majesty's Government on the subject of Simon's Town might possibly be ruled out of Order, on the same ground that the noble Lord opposite had endeavoured to have ruled out of Order his observations with regard to the Island of Ascension. He did not wish to speak of Simon's Town simply as a naval station, but the point he wanted to raise was this—and he should be glad to ask the Chairman whether he should be out of Order in raising it—as to the present position of the fortifications of that port, and as to the future policy of the Government in respect to it.

THE CHAIRMAN: That would certainly not come under this Vote. It is not a question connected with the Colonial Office at all.

MR. CONYBEARE: Very well, then, he would not trespass upon the atention of the Committee with regard to that subject. He would, he hoped, have some other opportunity of raising the question of the condition of the fortifications of Simon's Town, and he would merely leave the matter, so far as the Island of Ascension was concerned, where he had placed it, before Her Majesty's Government, asking them to give him some answer to the question he had addressed to them. With reference to the details of the Vote for the Colonial Office, he should like to draw attention to one item, not for the purpose of opposing it; but he observed that, amongst other items, there was an extra allowance for attendance on Sundays to Queen's, Home Office, and First Class Messengers, who got 5*s.* a-week for that extra service. Lower down in the Estimate he saw that door-keepers also had a similar extra allowance for attendance on Sundays. It appeared to him to be a sound principle that officials in different branches of the Service should be treated equally and fairly and on the same principle, and the reason he drew attention to these extra allowances for Sunday work was because on several occasions he had had to direct the notice of the Government to the want of a similar arrangement so far as firemen engaged in the Devonport Dockyard were concerned. He was aware that he was sailing very close to the wind in mentioning the firemen in the Devonport Dockyard, but he simply mentioned them in order to draw attention to the difference of treatment between them and the messengers and door-keepers who were paid under the Colonial Vote.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, the hon. Member had made his observations as to the Island of Ascension under a complete misapprehension as to the use to which the Island had been put for years past. The Island had been used as a naval station, and it had been decided, after full consideration, by a Royal Commission who had gone very carefully into the question of the defence of our Colonies and coaling stations, that it was not advisable any longer to maintain this naval establishment at Ascension. The matter was subsequently referred to the Admiralty, and the Colonial Defence Committee, composed of representatives of the Colonial Office, the Admiralty, and the War Office, and they confirmed the opinion of the Commissioners, and consequently the present Board of Admiralty thought it advisable, in the interests of economy, that this naval station should be transferred elsewhere. Therefore, for naval purposes, the establishment hitherto maintained at Ascension would be transferred to other stations on the African Coast. The hon. Gentleman assumed that the Island had been used as a sanitarium for civil officers employed on the African Coast. That was entirely a mistake. [Mr. CONYBEARE: I did not say so.] The hon. Member assumed that it was used by Colonial and other officers, and he also assumed that it was a very fertile Island. Well, the fertility could not be very great, for, as a matter of fact, the Island was an extinct volcano, and all the cultivated soil it possessed, some five acres in extent, had been carried up on men's backs. The hon. Member had said that any Foreign Power could seize the Island if England abandoned it. Well, every Foreign Power would know that if it attempted to seize any Island belonging to the English people, it would come in contact with the most powerful Naval Power in the world. The Island of Ascension, whether a naval station were maintained there or not, would enjoy the same immunity from attack as all other British Possessions in every part of the world.

MR. CONYBEARE said, it might be that he had gone too far in talking about Colonial and other officials having systematically used the Island of Ascension, or as being supposed to have systematically used the Island as a sanitarium; but he certainly had been given to understand that others besides men belonging to the Navy had been sent to Ascension for the purpose of recruiting their health. However, he accepted the statement of the noble Lord. He was at variance with the noble Lord as to the fertility of the place. He understood that the Island was small, and probably the five acres to which the noble Lord alluded constituted a considerable portion of it. But whether that was so or not, the reasons he had given for retaining the Island as a sanitarium, if not as a naval station, appeared to him to be sufficient; but, of course, when one was prevented from discussing the matter in all its aspects as a naval station as well as a sanitarium, it was impossible to lay all the facts before the Committee. However, he did not wish to labour that point. It occurred to him that he would not be out of Order, in speaking of Simon's Town, to ask Her Majesty's Government with reference to the proposed railway, with regard to which some correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Cape Colony had been laid before the House. It appeared from that correspondence that the Government had now finally decided not to lend their assistance in any way to promote the extension of the railway from Hawk's Bay to Simon's Town. He did not know whether he correctly stated the intention of the Government in that respect; but he should like to mention that it would be a very great saving to this country, to the administration of the Naval Department at any rate, if we had that extension of railway carried out, because he was assured, and he believed the right hon. Gentleman opposite did not deny it, that during the last few years, while the construction of forts at Simon's Town had been proceeding, the cost of transport alone had amounted to £10,000 per annum, which was double what would have been necessary to spend if they had had the railway. There were other reasons, he thought, why it was desirable that the railway should be completed. After the removal of the naval station from Ascension, Simon's Town would become a larger and more important depôt than it was at present. That, it appeared to him, was a very strong reason in favour of the Government in some way contributing or assisting in the completion of this short railway, for he believed it was only five or six miles in length, and was easy and inexpensive to construct.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he should like it if the Government would give him some information with regard to the Island of Cyprus upon a matter which he had brought before the House some time ago, but upon which he was unfortunately stopped by a "Count." He should like to know what they were doing with reference to the compulsory cultivation of land in the Island, which, by two Ordinances, they had sought to enforce, partly by a penalty tax and partly by confiscation of lands? It would, he was sure, be interesting to the Committee if the Government would say how the farther policy had succeeded; how much land they had confiscated; and what they had done with the land they had so confiscated. He did not wish to press the Government unfairly upon the matter. He had given them no Notice of his intention to raise the point; but as they had had their attention drawn to it quite recently, he thought that some Member of the Government would probably be able to give him an answer.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth) said, it would perhaps be more convenient to defer the discussion upon the question of Cyprus until a later period. There was a Vote for Cyprus.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, it was true he had not given Notice of the Question, but the Government had had an opportunity of investigating the matter since he had last raised the question. He was willing, however, not to carry it any further, and he would content himself with giving Notice that when they came to the Vote on Cyprus he should ask for the information he had indicated.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, that technically the objection taken by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Baron Henry de Worms) was no doubt a sound one—namely, that there was a separate Vote for Cyprus on which the question could be raised; but the hon. Gentleman had not reminded the Committee that the Vote for Cyprus, which was £18,000 last year, was £30,000 this year, and that almost the entire Vote had already been taken on account. The Government had already obtained £29,000 on account out of the Vote of £30,000. It was on that ground that he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) objected, when the Vote on Account was before the Committee, to the very unreasonable proceedings of the Government in obtaining such a large proportion of the Vote by such means.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is quite irregular to enter into that question now.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Yes; I am not going to discuss the Vote on Account.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is quite irregular to enter into the question of the deficiency of the Vote for Cyprus on this Vote.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Quite so; but I was simply dealing with the subject to which the Under Secretary had referred. If I am out of Order, he was clearly out of Order too.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Under Secretary was simply referring to a Vote to come on later, and showing the inadvisability of going into the question now.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he would not pursue the point further. With regard to the Office itself it appeared to him that the Colonial Office as an establishment was in a very curious condition. There were under the Secretary of State an Under Secretary, three assistant Under Secretaries, and then there were four principal clerks receiving £1,000 each. All these gentlemen were at the maximum of their salary. There were below them seven first-class clerks, with salaries rising from £700 to £800. All the seven were at the maximum of their salaries. In other words there was absolutely no promotion; there was no prospect for any portion of the staff in the Office. The non-effective Vote in connection with the Colonial Office was £10,000. Over and above the regular classified staff there were a Superintendent of the Correspondence and Legal Instruments Branch, who was almost at his maximum too; a Superintendent of Registry, a Superintendent of Printing Branch, a Superintendent of the Library, and a Superintendent of the Copying Branch. All these gentlemen occupied positions which were altogether exceptional. Hon. Members would not find any set of appointments like this in any other office. There was a Note appended to the Estimate by which it appeared that "no vacancy in the superintendentships was to be filled up without previous reference to the Treasury"—that was to say, that besides a staff which was so old and of such long service that all of them were at the maximum of their salaries, there were maintained at the Colonial Office a number of superintendents of different branches, not one of whom would appear to be necessary, because the special sanction of the Treasury was to be obtained for the filling up of a vacancy. The history of any of these appointments in the Colonial Office was rather a strange one, and in certain cases it was rather a shabby one. The superintendent of the library had £400. That post represented one which was held by a Mr. Wood, who was removed from the Treasury on the distinct promise that he would be allowed to succeed from the post of sub-librarian to that of librarian. Mr. Wood gave up his prospects at the Treasury under the assurance he obtained on his transfer. When he was in the Colonial Office the Treasury abolished the post of librarian and pensioned him, but not on the sum he was assured he would obtain, but the very much lower pay of the sub-librarian.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I fail to understand how the case of Mr. Wood can be brought under this Vote. I remember it was settled at the Colonial Office before my time there many years ago.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it was, no doubt, settled years ago; but these superintendents were, he presumed, contemporaries of Mr. Wood. He knew perfectly well that the Under Secretary for the Colonies might tell him that all these positions were under the consideration of a Committee. With that answer the hon. Gentleman might possibly meet any inquiries addressed to him; but, as a matter of fact, in spite of the existence of the Committee, the Government was setting its house in order in a great number of different directions, especially in the Department from which the hon. Gentleman had lately been removed—namely, the Board of Trade. So it might be in the Colonial Office; and, if it was not, he should like to ask why it was not—why such a staff, at such rates of pay, was maintained in its present position? Was it a fact that there were officers at the Colonial Office who were not really necessary, and that some of them, at least, were kept at a very high rate of pay when they were beyond effective work?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS said, that the hon. Gentleman had really answered the question he himself had put. The hon. Gentleman was perfectly well aware that the whole question was now being considered by a Committee, and that when the Report was received, very important changes and reforms would, no doubt, take place. As had been pointed out, these were no new appointments. If the hon. Gentleman would look at page 111, he would find that, with regard to the Superintendent of the Correspondence and Legal Instrument Branch and the Superintendent of the Printing Branch, the rates of salary were personal to the present holders. Those places might possibly not be continued when the present occupants ceased to hold office.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, there was one topic on which the Government ought to give the Committee some information—it was one which was exciting very intense feeling in Australia, and which was likely to cause considerable friction between the colonists and the Colonial Office—namely, the emigration of Chinese to Australia. Of course, he spoke subject to correction, because no Papers had been laid before the House on the subject, and hon. Members had no information except what was to be derived from the newspapers; but he understood the policy of the Colonial Office was, in the supposed interest of the Empire, to oppose the policy which found favour with some of the Australian colonists, who desired to exclude the Chinese from the Australian Colonies. That was a question of great importance, both to the Colonies and to the Empire, and it was most desirable that no uncertain sound should be given on the subject. He trusted the Under Secretary of State was in a position to inform the Committee what was the present stage of the negotiations between the Australian Governments and the Colonial Office, and what was the policy the Government intended to pursue.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS said, that he must demur to the views that had been expressed that Her Majesty's Government were in any way opposed to the line of policy adopted by the Australian Colonies. He was not yet in a position to lay Papers on the Table of the House dealing with the subject. He explained, in an answer he gave the other day, that one or two telegrams had passed between Her Majesty's Government and the Australian Governments, and that it would not be advisable, before the Papers were completed, to lay them on the Table. On the 12th of the present month, a Conference would meet in Sydney for the purpose of considering this very important question; and until the result of that Conference was known, it was impossible for Her Majesty's Government to make a statement to the House. But Her Majesty's Government were deeply sensible of the very strong feeling which existed in Australia that they should not be called upon to receive an unlimited number of Chinese. The Government were most anxious to see that the best measures possible were taken. He might remind the Committee that a very similar question was being dealt with in this country, and a Select Committee was at present sitting to consider the best means of meeting the enormous influx of foreign labour which found its way to these shores. There was one point which was of very great importance, and which ought to be cleared up. There seemed to be an impression that China could claim, on general grounds, the right of pouring her subjects into our Colonies. That was not the case; and he asked the attention of the Committee to what was really the fact. Although the Emperor of China had engaged by Treaty not to prevent his subjects from leaving China and emigrating to British Colonies, there was no engagement on the part of Her Majesty's Government that Chinese emigrants should be permitted to enter any British Colonies at their pleasure; so that the engagement was not reciprocal. On the other hand, it was desirable, if possible, to make such arrangements with China as would obviate any check in the extensive commercial relations between her and our Australian Colonies. It might, perhaps, be of interest that the Committee should know what the words of the Treaty really were. Article 9 of the Treaty between Great Britain and China, signed at Tien-Tsin, June 26, 1858, said—

> "British subjects are hereby authorized to travel, for their pleasure or for the purposes of trade, to all parts of the interior under passports, which will be issued by their Consols and countersigned by the local authorities."

This was amended by Rule 8 of the agreement. Rule 8, referring to foreign trade under passports, was as follows:—

> "It is agreed that Article 9 of the Treaty of Tien-Tsin shall not be interpreted as authorizing British subjects to enter the capital city of Pekin for purposes of trade."

He quoted this in order to show that there was no reciprocal engagement between China and Great Britain. Article 13 of the Treaty said—

> "The Chinese Government will place no restrictions whatever upon the employment by British subjects of Chinese subjects in any lawful capacity."

There was nothing in the Treaty that could be construed into an obligation on the part of the British Government to admit an unlimited number of Chinese into British Colonies. There also seemed to be an entire misapprehension as to what was said by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Lord Knutsford) with regard to this question. The noble Lord was quoted as having said—

> "That if the Australian Governments will join together and make common cause, then, and then only, will he communicate the character of the negotiations between China and the Home Government on the Australian difficulty."

No negotiations had been commenced as a matter of fact, and what Lord Knutsford really said was embodied in the following telegram, which was sent to Sir William Robinson, at South Australia, on the 22nd of May:—

> "Referring to your telegram of the 10th of May, there can be no doubt that Her Majesty's Government would obtain assistance from Australasian Colonies, making joint representation in dealing with Chinese immigration. If Conference meets, Her Majesty's Government will be happy to telegraph for consideration points for discussion which appear important."

As he had said, the Conference would sit on the 12th instant. The decision would be communicated to the Home Government, and then he might be in a position to communicate the result to the House. There was no pretence for saying that Her Majesty's Government had in any way ignored the wishes and representations of the Australian Governments, and in corroboration of this he would read another despatch, which was sent to Lord Carrington on the 11th of May, by Lord Knutsford—

> "No foundation for report that Her Majesty's Government refuse to negotiate with the Chinese Government. Before arriving at conclusion against negotiations, Australian Colonies would have been consulted further. Her Majesty's Government fully recognize strength of feeling."

Now, it appeared to him that from the information he had given, the Committee would be satisfied that, as far as Her Majesty's Government were concerned, they were not in the slightest degree in antagonism to the Australian Governments. The question was of very great importance, and one not to be decided hastily. It would be obviously improper if any decision were suddenly arrived at by the Australian Governments which should prevent many thousands of persons from landing on their shores, under the idea that their so doing would be prejudicial to their commercial interests. On the other hand, it was equally clear that, in view of the treaty which he had quoted, it might be reasonably argued that there was no ground for saying that the landing of Chinese there could be demanded as a right. The Conference would, naturally, take all the facts into consideration, and he had little doubt that some arrangement might be arrived at, perhaps in some degree similar to that which had already been arrived at with the United States, and which might be entirely satisfactory to Australia, without in any way wounding the susceptibilities of the Chinese.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, there was one phrase he would like the hon. Gentleman to modify. The hon. Gentleman had spoken of the Select Committee which was sitting in reference to the "enormous" influx of foreign labour into this country. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) would not be in Order in referring to the proceedings of the Committee; but he hoped the hon. Gentleman would erase the word "enormous" from his remarks. There were certainly no statistics before the House which would justify the use of the word at present, and he was not at all sure there ever would be. There might be immigration oppressive to a particular trade; but the evidence in a general sense was the other way.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, he accepted the correction, and would substitute the word "considerable" for enormous.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) said, he did not desire to obstruct the passing of the Vote, but he would like a little more information. He was anxious to be informed whether there was anything in the Treaty between England and China which would prevent as favourable terms being granted to Australia as were granted by China to America.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, there had been no refusal to negotiate with China a similar treaty to that made between China and the United States, as far as the conditions of that Treaty might be applicable to Australia.

Mr. HUNTER said, he had to put a single question to make clear what was a very important point with regard to the Treaty rights of the Chinese. Was he right in the view that according to Treaty, the Emperor of China bound himself not to prevent any of his subjects leaving China, and leaving China to reside permanently in British Colonies; and, in the second place, whether by Treaty, or by International Law, Chinese who left China with that intention, had the right to take up residence in the Australian Colonies?

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON said, there was another thing in regard to which more information was desired. The House was informed last night that these negotiations were not carried on with the Agent's General of the Colonies, but directly with the Governments of the Australian Colonies themselves. It would strike one that those Agent's General could give most important information, and hon. Members would like to know whether the Governments of the Australian Colonies were compelled to send over the Bills which were passed by the Parliaments of New South Wales and Victoria to the Queen for her Assent? He believed that all previous Acts of Parliament relating to China were sent over to England, and that several were refused.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, it would be impossible for him to give information as to the exact bearing of the Treaty. Of course, the Treaty would be considered by competent authorities, and before any decision was arrived at, the facts might be laid before the House.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) said, he desired to refer to the personal changes which had taken place in the Colonial Office. The head of the Department was no longer a Member of the House of Commons. He did not imply any censure upon Lord Knutsford, because he was sure he only did what all hon. Members were prepared to do, when he acknowledged the courtesy and ability which Lord Knutsford invariably brought to bear upon the duties of his Office. Neither did he complain of the hon. Gentleman (Baron Henry de Worms) who now represented the Colonial Office in the House of Commons. His complaint was of a more general character. He thought there were too many Members of the House of Lords in the present Ministry, as in all Ministries. Probably the country did not know or realize how largely the House of Lords absorbed the high places of every Administration. He found that in the present Government, to deal with that alone, out of the 17 principal Ministers, including the Secretary for Scotland, 11 were Members of the House of Lords. He held that that was a totally unfair proportion. He once made a calculation of probabilities. The question was—Supposing the average number of a British Cabinet to be 15, how often, on the average, might a Duke be expected to be a Member of the British Government, and be found——

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I rise to Order. I wish to know whether the hon. and learned Gentleman's remarks have any bearing on the vote?

THE CHAIRMAN: I understand the hon. and learned Member is commenting on the fact that the Colonial Secretary is a Peer, but he is taking a very wide scope.

MR. E. ROBERTSON said, that what he was about to say was that while on the average a Duke might be expected to be a Cabinet Minister once in 32,000 years, there never was a Cabinet without a Duke in it. He should say that, on the average, if there was one Peer in a Ministry that would be a fair proportion, supposing Peers to be no wiser and no better and no luckier than any other people. He had another objection. He held that the heads of all Departments ought to be Members of the House of Commons, and there was a perfectly good and sound Constitutional reason for that proposition. The House of Lords had no control whatever over the Administration of the country——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. and learned Gentleman cannot enter into a general discussion.

MR. E. ROBERTSON said, that he would content himself by saying that, in his opinion, the House of Lords having no control over the Administration, and the House of Commons having sole control over the Administration, the heads of Departments who were responsible to the House of Commons ought to be Members of the House of Commons. That was a general principle he laid down. He took objection to this Vote for the Secretary for the Colonies, not on any personal grounds, but on that general ground; and, in order to test the opinion of the Committee, he begged to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £5,000, the salary of the Colonial Secretary.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £22,968, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he had had the honour of being a Member of the House during the three Administrations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and during the whole of those Administrations the Secretary for the Colonies was a Member of the House of Lords. The principle of which the hon. and learned Gentleman complained was, therefore, sanctioned by his own Leader.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:* — Ayes 56; Noes 103: Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 120.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he would like the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies to give him some explanation as to what the Queen's Home Service Messengers were. In the last Vote passed, provision was made for Foreign Service Messengers. There were five of these Queen's Home Service or First Class Messengers, and they received from £150 a-year each. In addition, there were second and third class and extra Messengers. He really could not understand what all these Queen's Home Messengers did, and why they had different salaries to the Messengers of the Foreign Office? What did they do? Did they take messages to Her Majesty in any particular way? If that were the case, surely there were too many of them. He found eight in the Foreign Office, and five in this Office, and he had no doubt if he went into the other Offices he would find several more. He imagined they took boxes of despatches to Her Majesty, or to Members of the Cabinet. If so, the salaries were excessive. It was Lord Palmerston who first appointed Foreign Office Queen's Messengers. The noble Lord used to appoint butlers and such like people. It was then felt he had got relations, or his friends had got relations, members of the aristocracy, and he thought it desirable, as the salaries were good, that these places should be given to them. Lord Palmerston then sent a circular abroad to say that henceforth Queen's Messengers were not to be treated as butlers, but as gentlemen. Under these circumstances, the Committee might fairly ask what these gentlemen were? what their precise salaries were? why their salaries should be larger than the salaries of other persons in a similar position.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, that these Messengers were Messengers of the Secretary of State. He was not able to say why there was a different scale of pay for the Foreign Office and Colonial Office Messengers. All he could say was, that the duties were the ordinary duties of Messengers. Their duties were confidential, as they carried despatch boxes.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, that under the circumstances, he must move the reduction of the Vote by £250. The hon. Gentleman said that these Gentlemen were paid more than other people, because their duties were confidential. What were these confidential duties? Taking a few boxes with despatches to Ministers. Who did the despatches come from? Why was not the Minister in his proper place in the Colonial Office or the Foreign Office? Why could he not carry his boxes himself? This was one of the instances of abuse which had crept into the Civil Service, and which was perpetuated year by year. It was high time the House of Commons registered its protest against the continuance of the abuse, and therefore he moved the reduction of the Vote by £250.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £27,718, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 59; Noes 114: Majority 55.—(Div. List, No. 121.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON said, he wished for some information with regard to Item B for telegrams, £3,500. He pointed out that even the large sum here asked for was generally exceeded, and a further sum asked for under a Supplementary Estimate. He thought hon. Members would agree that the time was come when the payment of these large sums for telegrams should cease. The Government paid as much as £50,000 a-year for telegrams, and he asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade for some explanation of the item to which he referred.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, that no doubt the sum in question was large; but hon. Members would bear in mind that last year there was much communication with Australia, and that the cost of this by telegram was as high as 10*s.* a word. The only explanation he could give was, that the amount of communication by telegraph being large, there must be a corresponding amount of charge.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that recently strong claims for representative government had been put forward by many of the Colonies, especially by the Colony of British Guiana. Very urgent representations had been made from that place to Her Majesty's Government with regard to the absolute disfranchisement of the great mass of the population. The Colony was ruled by a Court of Policy, consisting of five nominated and five elected members, the latter being chosen by a College of Electors, composed of five members. The people who chose the members for the College of Electors were only equal to about 1 in 250 of the population. There was, therefore, really no representative Government whatever, and practically a few members who were large plantation owners ruled the Colony. Taxation was carried out by a Combined Court, the Members of which were only nominally elected. Under those circumstances, representations had been made to Her Majesty's Government with regard to the claim of the Colony to something like representative Government. The population of the Colony was very rapidly increasing, and in the near future its position, in respect of its neighbour Venezuela, would be an important question. Without representative institutions of some kind, it was impossible to ascertain what were the views and wishes of the people. The question was also of importance with regard to other Colonies which were clamouring for representative government.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, the hon. Member's description of the Government of British Guiana was not quite correct. The present constitution of British Guiana was practically that established by the Dutch previous to the cession of the country to Great Britain in 1803. It consisted of the Governor, the Court of Policy, and

Combined Court; there was no Executive Council; the executive functions were exercised by the Governor and the Court of Policy, and the line between what was executive and what was legislative was not sharply drawn. The Court of Policy consisted of five official and five elective members, the latter being indirectly elected. There was a College of Keisers or Electors, consisting, not of five, but of seven persons elected for life by such of the inhabitants as possessed the required property qualification for the franchise; and when a vacancy in the Court of Policy occurred, the Keisers nominated two persons, one of whom was selected by the Court of Policy to fill the vacancy. All legislative matters were dealt with by the Court of Policy, except subjects relating to finance; these were considered by the Combined Court, which consisted of the members of the Court of Policy, together with six financial representatives chosen directly by the same electorate that chose the College of Keisers, but who only held Office for two years. No change of any kind had been made in the political system since 1849. A Memorial had been addressed to the Government by certain inhabitants, and the general desire of the Memorialists was to obtain such a modification of the qualification for membership of the Court of Policy as would enable those who were not landed proprietors—that was, professional and commercial men—to obtain seats in it. He would say that the subject was engaging the very serious attention of the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Lord Knutsford); but, to prevent any possible misunderstanding, he would point out that although there was every disposition to consider the expediency of reforming the representation so as to give more representation to every class than was the case now, Her Majesty's Government had no intention of adopting any such changes as would transfer from the Crown the full control of such questions relating to boundaries, or otherwise, as were being agitated for at the present time.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he never expected that the Crown should abrogate any rights in respect of such questions as that of territorial boundaries. What he urged was that the electorate which now existed, and which was merely nominal, should be made really representative of the people, and that, instead of a single elector in 250 of the population, there should be 1 in 50 or 60, so that the desires of the people should be made known. He pointed out that the reform which the hon. Gentleman referred to—namely, the reduction of the qualification for membership of the College of Electors—was a most worthless reform, inasmuch as it would leave the whole Government in the hands of a small clique of planters, who arranged all matters to suit their own interests, utterly regardless of the wishes of the people. The desire was the extension of the suffrage to the whole body of the population.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS said, he had stated that there was every desire to consider the expediency of extending the suffrage, so that all classes should be represented, but that Her Majesty's Government did not intend to allow them to have any voice in the question of boundaries.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, it was perfectly clear that the present Government of British Guiana was an oligarchy of the narrowest kind, and he trusted that any reform that might take place would not be merely an enlargement of that oligarchy, but that it would be on the basis of popular representation. In Colonies where the Government had conceded popular representation the result had never been anything more than what he called oligarchy on a wider basis—that was to say, the main body of the population of the country was excluded. To give British Guiana a Constitution like that at the Mauritius would do more harm than good. He would also invite the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies to give the Committee some information with regard to the burning question of the Chinese in Australia. He knew that this was a delicate subject; but Sir Henry Parkes, and other Australian Ministers, had not treated it in that sense, but had, in fact, attempted to "bounce" us in the matter. He did not wish, at that hour, to prejudge the question; but he said that if the Chinese immigration was prohibited we might under existing Treaties with China get into very great difficulties. What would be the position taken up by this country and the House if the Chinese Government acted in the same way with regard to Europeans entering China, or if they were to put upon them a heavy prohibitive tax? He thought they ought to treat the Chinese in the same way as we insisted on their treating us. He asked the Government to inform the Committee if they were prepared to enforce the law in Australia as well as in Ireland, and see that our Treaties were duly observed? He was far from depreciating the sentimental connection between this country and the Colonies; but it could not be long maintained, unless the latter were prepared, to some extent, to subordinate their wishes to Imperial requirements and interests. He hoped the Government would tell them as much as they could on the present position of that important matter without injury to the public interests.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, he hoped the hon. Member would not think him discourteous if he refrained from repeating the speech which he had delivered half-an-hour ago, and in which, as far as he was able, he had explained the exact position of the question with regard to Chinese immigration into Australia.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked whether the Papers relating to Cyprus for which he moved some time ago would be presented before the Cyprus Vote was taken? If so, he would not now enter upon the Turkish tribute and other matters, which he would raise on a future occasion.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, the Papers would be in the hands of Members before the Vote came forward.

Sir JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked what was the state of the negotiations with regard to the boundary between British Guiana and Venezuela?

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, that was a question within the province of the Foreign Office.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £37,356, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council and Subordinate Departments."

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, he only intended to call attention to one of the many questions which might be raised on this Vote. He would like to have an explanation of the item of £5,000 for agricultural purposes. The items were so set forth in the Vote that it was impossible to understand what assistance was to be given to agriculture under the various heads. He wished to urge upon the Government the great value there would be in having, during hay-making and harvest time, the weather calculations posted up at the post offices, as was, he believed, done in the United States of America.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, that when the Estimate was prepared, the Committee was just finishing its work. It had not been decided in what form the £5,000 should be applied; but the Government had put the sum of £5,000 into the Estimate, in order to show that it had an earnest intention to do something in the matter. The Committee had made several recommendations; these were considered by the Privy Council Office, and the Privy Council Office communicated with the Government. The matter was now under consideration, and when a decision was arrived at they would be able to appropriate the money in the best way for agriculture generally. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and which was made also last year, he had made inquiry of the Post Office Authorities, who, although they recognized the importance of the question, pointed out that there were many practical difficulties in the way, and he was sorry to be unable to say at present that the proposal could be adopted.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) said, he hoped the Government would state what amount of the grant would be given to the different parts of the United Kingdom, and in what way the recommendations of the Committee would be carried out. All that they received in Scotland was £150 a-year in aid of an Agricultural Chair in the University of Edinburgh, and he considered that grant for the purpose of technical education very small. In

Scotland they wanted better teachers. The ordinary school teachers who came up with certificates from several Universities were utterly unacquainted with practical agriculture. There were many reasons why they were anxious to hear from the Government in what way this money would be distributed. He was anxious that Scotland should get a larger share than she did at present; and he would urge upon the Government especially that Scotland should be allowed to use her share of the grant as she thought best, and without being hampered with restrictions from a central office in London.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) said, the Committee would observe that the Departmental Committee had recommended a great many things. They recommended that grants should be given to elementary schools; that new State-schools should be set up for the purpose of agricultural education; and that grants should be given to secondary and endowed schools. Three distinct courses were suggested. The Government now asked for £5,000 for the purpose of giving effect to such of the recommendations as might be adopted by them, and surely the Committee might ask which of the recommendations they intended to adopt. His hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) could not give that information—he could only say that communications were going on between the various Departments. He agreed with his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Mark Stewart) in asking how much Scotland was to receive, and for the same reason he would ask how much of the grant would go to England? They were all agreed that it was a good thing to support agricultural education; but there was some difference of opinion as to how it should be supported. He thought that, at all events, they should have some information from his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to how the Government proposed to allocate the grant.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): There is some force, no doubt, in the observations of my hon. Friend that the Committee are entitled to know how this £5,000 is to be distributed. My hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) has stated the circumstances under which this item was inserted in the Estimate. At the time no final scheme had been made, but the Government were anxious to redeem the pledge of assisting agriculture in this matter. We regret that this extremely difficult subject is not in a more advanced condition, and that we are unable to state the manner in which this sum will be expended; but I am sure the Committee will feel that nothing can be worse than to act in a hurried manner, and without taking into consideration all the difficulties of the case. Of course, the Committee can insist upon the postponement of the Vote if they think it desirable to do so. The Government have given their most anxious consideration to the mode in which the money should be spent. The Privy Council have reason to believe that much might be done by the expenditure of £5,000 in the first year, which would cover the cost of grants-in-aid to selected schools in various parts of the country, and the inspection which would be necessary in order to insure proper distribution of the money; and the communication states that if the Commissioners of the Treasury would agree to this arrangement their Lordships would at once frame regulations. The Treasury has not yet agreed, and it is for that reason that we cannot yet state the way in which the money will be allocated. We do not feel in a position to carry cut the recommendations of the Committee that there should be established seven dairy schools in different parts of the country, five for England and two for Scotland, as it is felt that the districts would be too large for the development of that local effort and interest which would be necessary for the full development of the schools. It is, therefore, thought wiser that grants-in-aid should be made to the existing schools which would undertake to give agricultural education. If the Committee will leave it to us to propose a scheme, to be hereafter communicated to Parliament, we will then proceed to elaborate conditions on which the grants will be made; but I think we may undertake, although I have not communicated with the Privy Council on the subject, that no part of the money will be spent until we are able to lay before Parliament the perfect scheme under which the expenditure would take place, and in the preparation of which I can assure the Committee that no time shall be lost.

Colonel NOLAN said, he thought, under the circumstances, the course pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was the best to adopt. He would have been much better pleased if a scheme had been submitted by the Government; but as the item was an earnest of their intention to do something to assist agriculture he should vote for it.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, although he had spoken of agricultural schools, had said nothing about agricultural colleges. He would like to hear that no portion of the money would be used to subsidize Cirencester, or any other agricultural college.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he thought, for the reasons given by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the Vote ought to be postponed until the Government had decided how the money ought to be spent. The Committee must not forget that they were the custodians of the public purse, and that it was no part of their duty to entrust the Government with money before they knew what was to be done with it. To test the question he would move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £5,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £32,356, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

Mr. HUNTER said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would give an answer to his Question.

Mr. GOSCHEN: It is not proposed that any portion of this £5,000 should be given to any college.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 34; Noes 130: Majority 96.—(Div. List, No. 122.)

Original Question again proposed.

It being after Midnight, the Chairman rose to interrupt the Business,

Whereupon Mr. William Henry Smith rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne), as a point of Order, asked, was it competent for the right hon. Gentleman to make that Motion, seeing that it was past midnight?

The CHAIRMAN: The Motion may be made "on the interruption of Business," and Business would be interrupted at the close of the Division.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 121; Noes 40: Majority 81.—(Div. List, No. 123.)

Original Question put accordingly.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 128; Noes 32: Majority 96.—(Div. List, No. 124.)

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next.

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Sir JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) gave Notice that on Report of Supply [1st June] on Civil Service Estimates, Class II., Vote 7, Privy Council Office, to move to reduce the Vote by £12,635.

FISHERY ACTS AMENDMENT (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.—[Bill 260.]

(*Mr. Macartney, Mr. O'Neill, Sir Charles Lewis.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said, he hoped the House would agree to the second reading. The Bill had not yet been circulated; but a draft had been submitted to the representatives of inland fishermen in Ireland, and approved by them; and the next stage of the Bill would be set down for a date that would afford an ample interval for hon. Members who took an interest in the subject to give full consideration to the Bill. Of course, if the second reading was now opposed, there would be little chance of proceeding with the Bill.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, as one who felt some interest in the subject he must object to giving a second reading to a Bill with the provisions of which he was not acquainted.

Second Reading *deferred* till *Thursday* 21st June.

MOTIONS.

—o—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 9) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Calverley, North Bierley, Shipley-and-Windhill and Thornton Joint Hospital Districts, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 274.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 10) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the City of Bath, the District of Bilston, the Local Government District of Saint Thomas-the-Apostle, and the Borough of Stoke-upon-Trent, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 275.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 11) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Boroughs of Bolton, Heywood, and Kingston-upon-Hull, and the Local Government District of Leigh, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 276.]

House adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, *4th June*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Rochester Bishopric (98).

Report—Glebe Lands (119).

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS—*First Reading*—Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 4)* (120); Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 5)* (121); Metropolitan Commons (Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray)* (122); West Loch Tarbert Oyster and Mussel Fisheries* (126).

PUBLIC BUSINESS—STANDING ORDERS.

POSTPONEMENT OF MOTION.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN), who had a Notice on the Paper for a Select Committee to examine and report upon these Standing Orders of the House which related to the conduct of Public Business, said, since he had given the Notice, he had received several representations to the effect that it would be for the convenience of the House if the Motion were postponed for a few days longer. He proposed, therefore, with their Lordships' concurrence, to submit the Motion on Thursday next.

ROCHESTER BISHOPRIC BILL.—(No. 98.)

(*The Lord Bishop of Rochester.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he had that day presented a Petition from the Rochester Diocesan Conference, representing both the laity and the clergy, requesting that their Lordships would, with one consentient voice, pass the Bill into law. He also had with him a communication from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who were, perhaps, the Body most competent to form an opinion upon the subject, in which they said that they approved generally of the proposed legislation, and were prepared to assist in promoting it. The first clause to which he would draw attention was that which repealed the section of the Bishopric of St. Albans Act, which required that the residence of the Bishop of Rochester should be situated in the county of Surrey, without stipulating that it should be situated in the diocese of Rochester. If the Bill which he had brought forward were passed the men of Kent could, in future, have the episcopal residence within their own county. Perhaps it might be expedient to introduce into the Bill another clause to add certain towns within the diocese of Rochester to the towns named in the Suffragan Act of Henry VIII. as towns entitled to Suffragan Bishops. A Bill giving that power, entitled the Suffragan Amendment Act, had already been read a second time; but as it was possible that it might not reach the end of its journey, it would be better to make doubly sure by inserting a clause in this Bill. The Bishopric of St. Albans Act, passed by Lord Beaconsfield's Government in 1875, created one new diocese, and very considerably altered the boundaries of two others, East and Mid Surrey being added to Rochester, which then had a population of 1,300,000. In 1881 the population had risen to

1,500,000; now it was 1,800,000; and probably at the next Census it would be 2,000,000. The centres in which the populations were increasing most rapidly were Battersea, Plumstead, Hatcham, Lewisham, East Dulwich, Walworth, and Bermondsey. There could be no doubt that the diocese required additional episcopal supervision, not merely on account of the increase of the population, but also on account of the great development of activity on the part of the clergy, which made greater demands upon the time and strength of the Bishop. The question was how the necessity for increased supervision could best be met. It could be met in one way, which would obviously require careful and mature consideration, and that was by the subdivision of the diocese. No doubt, there were circumstances which pointed to an ultimate sub-division of the diocese, but it would be premature to discuss them at present. The feeling of Churchmen in favour of sub-division was so strong that the movement could not be much longer resisted. This Bill met the difficulty in as convenient, reasonable, and suitable a manner as possible; and it would for a time gently retard the sub-division of the diocese. In several dioceses the expedient of Suffragan Bishops had been tried. His Brother of London had two Suffragans; the most rev. Primate had one; and it seemed to him that in this case a Suffragan Bishop would best meet their needs; but there were difficulties as to the maintenance of the Bishop. On this head suggestions had been made which he need not discuss; but the pivot and motive force of the Bill was that a commodious and well-situated residence, with grounds of by no means inconvenient extent, precisely the sort of house in which a dignified clergyman of moderate means might be able to reside in, had been placed at his disposal for the use of a Suffragan Bishop by a very eminent London publisher. It was necessary, before it could be accepted for this purpose, that legislative power should be given to receive it; the Bill, therefore, contained a clause to enable the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to receive this house in trust. Another clause empowered the Commissioners to receive money not only for the repairs of the house, but also to create a fund for the maintenance of the Suffragan Bishop. If the public were willing to make contributions to such a fund, it would be a pity that there should be no one empowered to receive them. Care was taken to prevent the creation of a vested interest and to secure to the occupant of the house the interest of the fund for his maintenance only so long as he acted as Bishop Suffragan under the Bishop's seal. If this Bill passed into law he might have the assistance of a Suffragan before the winter began. He wished to impress upon their Lordships that the Bill would in no way prejudice the formation of a new diocese; it would rather help it. He would not anticipate what the future diocese for South London might be. Possibly it might consist of the whole Metropolitan area South of the Thames, and he would defy any one man to work that diocese properly without a Suffragan.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Bishop of Rochester.*)

VISCOUNT MIDLETON said, that he protested against the passing of the unfortunate and ill-considered Act of 1875, and he now protested against the operation of that Act. The Act had brought about every mischief which he had foretold, and the very introduction of the Bill now before their Lordships was a condemnation of the Act. He wished to express the unanimous conviction of all with whom he had been brought into contact in the county of Surrey. It was that the right rev. Prelate who had moved the second reading of the Bill had filled the See of Rochester and had carried forward the work of the Church in that diocese with ability, energy, and unwearied perseverance. But it was utterly impossible for any single Bishop to effectually superintend a diocese with so vast a population. He was not quite sure that the Bill did not go a little further than the right rev. Prelate thought it would. The first part, which repealed certain portions of the Act of 1875, he found no fault with; but he was under the impression that some of the clauses which followed would create difficulties which it would be hard to escape from when some larger measure came before their Lordships. It was obvious that a larger measure would be introduced in the future when they considered the very large population in the diocese near the Metropolis. Until they knew what would be the actual working of a Bill which the Government had introduced in "another place," and how far Surrey would be dealt with, it would be difficult to legislate in regard to these matters. If their Lordships gave a second reading to the Bill, it should be upon the distinct understanding that the clauses should, if necessary, be so modified in Committee as to leave them a free hand to legislate in the future with respect to the ecclesiastical wants of the vast and growing population which surrounded the Metropolis.

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury): The Government have no objection to this Bill being read a second time. Whatever alterations it may be desirable to make in it may be made in Committee. No one, I think, can doubt the wants of this great diocese, or that some provision is necessary to meet them. I would only ask my noble Friend behind me (Viscount Midleton) not to be misled by the fallacy of great and comprehensive measures. The day of great and comprehensive measures is rapidly passing away, and the chances of carrying them are decreasing. The noble Viscount says that during the period between the year 1874 and 1880 it would have been easy to pass any measure for the benefit of the Church. I see some of my friends who were in the House of Commons at that time, and they will bear witness whether the passing of measures through that House was even then a matter of such extreme facility. That was, I think, the time when the glorious institution of All-night Sittings commenced. The difficulty of passing measures has since increased and is increasing more and more; and for practical legislation I believe that a number of small Bills, however imperfect from a technical point of view they may seem to be, are a surer way of making useful improvements than the achievement of that great chimera of the Parliamentary imagination, great and comprehensive measures.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Tuesday* the 12*th instant.*

CLERGY DISCIPLINE BILL.—(No. 118.)

(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.*)

THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading, read.

The Archbishop of CANTERBURY said, that his attention had been called to a criticism which appeared in the newspapers of that morning which complained that insufficient opportunity had been given for consideration and for the introduction of Amendments. Nothing could be further from his wish than a surprise, or the very thought of a surprise; and he therefore asked their Lordships' permission to postpone the third reading of the Bill till to-morrow week in order to give still further time.

Third Reading *put off* to *Tuesday* the 12*th instant.*

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

STATEMENT.

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (The Marquess of Lothian) said, that on the Motion for going into Committee on the Bill to-morrow, he should propose to re-commit the Bill. His object in doing so was that as there were a great number of Amendments down on the Paper, they would be very much more easily understood by their Lordships if the Bill, as it was proposed to amend it, were reprinted and circulated. If their Lordships should agree to that course, he would propose to take the Bill in Committee on Thursday.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he would have no objection to the course proposed to be taken by the noble Marquess; but he begged to give Notice that to-morrow, when the Motion was formally made, he should bring before their Lordships the question of affiliation and incorporation as affected by the Bill. His reason for doing so was to assist the progress of the Bill. As the question of affiliation was the most important and the most debatable question of principle in the whole Bill, and as the alterations that had been made were such that he could not himself very clearly understand what the intentions of the Government were, he would take that opportunity of raising the whole question.

WEST LOCH TARBET OYSTER AND MUSSEL FISHERIES ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm an Order made by the Secretary for Scotland under the Sea Fisheries Act, 1868, relating to the West Loch Tarbert Oyster and Mussel Fisheries—Was *presented* by The Lord Ker (*M. Lothian*); read 1^a; and *referred* to the Examiners. (No. 126.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 4*th June*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Ayr District of Burghs, *v.* Richard Frederick Fotheringham Campbell, esquire, deceased.

New Members Sworn — Thomas Alexander Dickson, esquire, *for* Dublin City (St. Stephen's Green Division); Francis Henry Evans, esquire, *for* Southampton Borough.

Public Bills—*Resolutions in Committee*—Imperial Defence [Expenses, &c.]—r.p.; National Defence [Remuneration, &c.]—r.p.

Ordered—First Reading—North Sea Fisheries * [278]; Torquay Harbour and District Act (1886) Amendment * [279].

Provisional Order Bills — *Ordered — First Reading* — Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) * [277.]

Report—Metropolitan Police * [212]; Public Health (Scotland) (Denny and Dunipace Water) * [229]; Water * [227]; Pier and Harbour * [221]; Pier and Harbour (No. 2) * [248]; Tramways (No. 1) * [222].

QUESTIONS.

BANKRUPTCY ACT—HORTICULTURAL COMPANY (JOHN WILLS, LIMITED).

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is the fact that the Horticultural Company (John Wills, Limited), went into liquidation in the year 1882; whether the plant, business premises, &c., were shortly after sold; and, whether the liquidation is still being continued, entailing heavy costs upon the creditors and shareholders?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): I have received the following information respecting the case referred to by the right hon. Gentleman. This Company was ordered to be wound up by an order dated December 9, 1882. The business was carried on (for the purpose of a sale as a going concern) for some time at the instance of creditors and shareholders. A contract for sale was made on April 23, 1883, which was rescinded in November of that year (the purchaser being unable to complete). The property was finally sold piecemeal, the sales being completed in 1885. The certificate of contributories was made on May 26, 1883; the certificate of debts in July, 1886. A dividend of 4*s.* in the £1 was paid in July, 1886; a further dividend of 2*s.* in the £1 was paid in August, 1887, when an order was made to tax the costs; and in April last the solicitor was called upon to explain the delay in completing the taxation. It is explained that delay arose from carrying on the business in view of the attempt to sell as a going concern, and from litigation with the vendor to the Company and with the mortgagee of the property. The litigation is being continued only as far as it is necessary to tax the costs and divide the residue of the property among the creditors; but this entails slight, not heavy, costs upon the creditors, and as the estate is insolvent of course none upon the shareholders.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—COLONEL KING-HARMAN'S ESTATES — FAIR RENTS.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Has his attention been called to the following judgment of the Land Commission in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 12th instant:—

> "There were two cases on the property of Colonel King-Harman, Michael Killeen, £14 0*s.* 2*d.* old rent and £9 judicial rent, and Thomas Hoey, £15 10*s.* old rent and £9, which were heard before Judge Curran. Judge Curran appended to his order a statement that he thought £12 would be a fair rent in both cases, only for the unreasonable conduct of the landlord as to the cutting of turf by the tenants; and in consequence of that unreasonable conduct he made the rent £9 . . . they would make the rent in both cases £10 10*s.*;"

and, were the Government in possession of the text of the Judgment of County Court Judge Curran, or would it be possible to lay a copy of it upon the Table?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): My attention has been called to this matter through the Question appearing on the Paper. I understand that the tenants on this property have no right (excepting where turf is actually on their holdings) of turbary; but that the bank containing the requisite amount of fuel is let to them for sums varying from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.*, the landlord keeping the whole of the roads and drains in order. The cost to him, over the amount he receives for the supply of the turf, averages annually from £200 to £250. But the arrangement is advantageous to the tenant. The two tenants alluded to were offered turbary on the same terms given to the other tenants. This they refused until after the appeals were heard, when they accepted the offer. The text of the Judgment of the County Court Judge appears to be among the records of the Land Commissioners. It would be possible to lay a copy of it upon the Table; but the doing so would form a very inconvenient precedent, as it would then be hardly practicable to decline to do so in any other case of a judicial rent if asked for.

EXCISE—LICENCES FOR SALE OF SWEET OR MADE WINES (SCOTLAND).

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, How many licences for the sale of sweet or made wines in Scotland have been issued by the Excise Authorities; whether any restriction is laid upon the alcoholic strength of the liquors authorized to be sold under such licences; whether any restriction as to hours of sale is entailed on the vendors; and, whether the local licensing authorities have any voice in the granting or refusal of such licences in Scotland?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The number of licences for the sale of sweet or made wines in Scotland is 92. There is no restriction laid upon the alcoholic strength of the liquors authorized to be sold under such licences, nor any as to the hours of sale. The local Licensing Authorities have no voice in the granting or refusal of these licences in Scotland.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—TRAINING COLLEGES—PROBATIONERS.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Commissioners of National Education sanction the appointment of "probationers" as substitutes for teachers while undergoing a course of training in the recognized Training Colleges?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Commissioners of National Education inform me that there is no existing grade of teachers designated probationers by them; but they assume the Question refers to ex-Queen's scholars, who after training have to serve a period of probation. The Commissioners do sanction their employment as substitutes for teachers in training, and also recognize their service so given as probation.

INLAND REVENUE—INHABITED HOUSE DUTY—SMALL TENEMENTED HOUSES.

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is aware that small tenemented houses (the rental of which in the aggregate exceeds £20 per annum) are subject to the Inhabited House Duty, whilst self-contained houses under £20 per annum are exempted; if so, whether he is prepared to submit a Resolution to the House, placing tenemented dwelling-houses in the same category as self-contained houses, which are now exempt from the tax?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: All houses, whether let in tenements or not, which are of the annual value of £20 or upwards, are by law subject to the Inhabited House Duty, which is payable by the occupier. Those let in tenements are, under a special enactment, chargeable on the landlord as one house. Under a concession, however, granted some years ago by the Government, no House Duty is charged on buildings erected for artizans and industrial dwellings, where each tenement is separate and self-contained, and is under the annual value of £20. The extension of this concession to all houses let in tenements would create an exemption in favour of a class of dwelling which it is not desirable to encourage — "rookeries," for example.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE LICENSING AND COMPENSATION CLAUSES.

Mr. SUMMERS (Huddersfield) asked the President of the Local Government Board, What powers he proposes to confer on the County Councils, with respect to the refusal to renew a publican's licence, that are not already possessed by the Justices under the existing law, as recently declared by the Judgments of Mr. Justice Field and Mr. Justice Wills; also, whether the recent decision in the Queen's Bench Division with respect to the discretion of Justices in refusing renewals of publicans' licences must be accepted as conclusive, unless and until it is reversed upon appeal; and, whether he will consent to the publication of the case of "Sharpe *v.* Wakefield and others" as an unopposed Return, according to the precedent set in the case of "Clarke *v.* Bradlaugh" (4th April, 1881); also, whether it is the right hon. Gentleman's intention to amend the Compensation Clauses of the Local Government Bill, in the sense of the Solicitor General's declaration at Southampton, that they would "impose no new burdens on the people?"

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The hon. Gentleman asks me Questions on several very controversial points in connection with the Licensing Clauses of the Local Government Bill, which it is quite impossible for me to adequately deal with in answer to Questions. I must, therefore, ask the House to allow me to reserve what I have to say on the subject until we get into Committee on the Bill. With reference to the presentation of the Judgment in the case of "Sharpe *v.* Wakefield," I have nothing to add to my previous answer. The case of "Clarke *v.* Bradlaugh" was altogether different, dealing, as it did, with the proceedings of Parliament.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—BORROWING POWERS OF COUNTY COUNCILS.

Mr. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey) asked the President of the Local Government Board, provided the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill should become law, Whether the County Councils would be entitled to borrow up to two years' annual rateable value; whether upon the same property the rural district would also be entitled to borrow up to two years' annual rateable value, in addition to unlimited powers of borrowing for the purposes of Acts, such as the Burial Acts, entrusted to the Rural District Council by Clause 47 of the Local Government Bill; whether upon the same property school boards would continue to exercise their unlimited powers of borrowing; and, whether upon the same property Poor Law Guardians would continue to exercise their unlimited powers of borrowing?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): As the Local Government Bill is at present framed, the County Councils would be empowered, with the sanction of the Local Government Board, to borrow such sums within the limit of two years' rateable value as might be necessary for purposes for which they could properly borrow. I have already stated that there will be no indisposition on the part of the Government to assent to a reduction of the limit. The powers of the Rural District Councils of School Boards and of Boards of Guardians with regard to borrowing will not be affected by the powers which it is proposed to confer on the County Councils.

Mr. FIRTH (Dundee) said, he would ask a Question which was not of a controversial character with respect to Clause 13, as to compensation being assessed upon the difference of value at the time of the passing of the Act? In order to show the difficulty they had in the town which he had the honour to represent, he might say it was estimated that it would take 200 years to buy the houses down to a proportion of 1 per 1,000 of the population; and the question arose, how were the persons buying—say 100 years hence—to ascertain the value at the passing of the Act?

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) rose to Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is in Order.

Mr. FIRTH: I simply rose to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he would inform us whether he suggests—because it is not in the Bill—that there should be a valuation of all the public-houses in England made forthwith?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie)

(Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I must ask the hon. and learned Gentleman to allow me to reserve what I have to say on the matter until the Committee stage of the Bill.

NORTH AMERICAN FISHERIES—BEHRING'S STRAITS.

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, What measures Her Majesty's Government, in conjunction with that of the Dominion Government, have adopted for the purpose of preventing the crews of armed Canadian sealing schooners, recently assembled at Victoria (British Columbia), from carrying out their threats of resisting the authority of American cruisers in the prohibited waters of Behring Straits; and, when the correspondence, regarding Alaska's Fisheries Disputes, will be laid on the Table of the House?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: I am informed that the Government of the Dominion have cautioned persons engaging in sealing expeditions in the Behring Sea from using force in the event of their being interfered with by the United States officers. The questions involved are the subject of consideration by the Governments of Her Majesty and the United States; and it would not be convenient or usual to present the Correspondence before it is concluded.

In answer to a further Question from Mr. Gourley,

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, that the Correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the United States was being conducted diplomatically and in a friendly manner, and he deprecated any discussion upon the matter at present.

VENEZUELA—ENCROACHMENTS ON BRITISH GUIANA.

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government are aware that the President of Venezuela has recently published an official map for 1887, claiming the whole of British Guiana, west of the Essequibo River, as forming part of the United States of Venezuela; and, if so, what steps the Government propose to take in the matter?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government are aware that such a map has been published; but a map does not confer any title to the territory; and it is not necessary, therefore, that Her Majesty's Government should take any action.

DEPRESSION OF TRADE—THE NAILMAKERS OF WORCESTER AND STAFFORDSHIRE.

Mr. BROOKE ROBINSON (Dudley) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, considering the lamentable state of the large population of nailors and small chain makers in East Worcestershire and South Staffordshire, the Labour Correspondent of the Board of Trade will inquire into the average weekly earnings of these persons, and their present condition, with the view to reporting the results to Parliament, if so directed, in the same way that has already been done in connection with those employed under the so-called sweating system?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): The matter referred to by the hon. Member appears to merit careful attention; and I will direct the Labour Correspondent to make the inquiries suggested as soon as his engagements admit of it.

TRUCK ACTS—ALLEGED BREACHES.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether any prosecution has been actually commenced in the case of the breach of the Truck Acts reported at Bristol, and what has caused the delay; whether any, and what, prosecutions have taken place in the several cases of breaches of the Truck Acts reported at Armagh, Belfast, and Rhymney; and, in any case where prosecutions have not taken place, if he will state the reasons for the non-enforcement of the law?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed that the delay in commencing proceedings in the case of the breach of the Truck Acts at Bristol has been caused by the great difficulty in inducing persons to give evidence. Two cases have now been investigated, and the necessary evidence procured, and proceedings will be taken immediately. At Armagh the Inspector reports that he found the principals entirely ignorant of the provisions of the Truck Act and of its application to Ireland; and that after full investigation it does not appear to him a case for prosecution. In the Belfast case the only illegality was the absence of a written assent of the subscribers to the sick fund. This has been rectified. At Rhymney there is as yet no complete breach of the Act; and negotiations are in progress between the owners and men by which I hope all differences will be healed.

Mr. BRADLAUGH inquired, whether at Bristol the complete evidence would not be ready for more than 10 days?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he was unable to give a definite answer.

EGYPT—EXPENDITURE—CIVIL AND MILITARY.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What was the average annual and total civil expenditure, including Missions of all kinds, in connection with Egypt during the 12 years preceding November 1, 1875, and the amounts of the like expenditure during the 12 years since that date; and, what was the average annual and total military, naval, and other warlike expenditure in connection with Egypt, including expenditure charged to India, and including re-conveyance of troops and special freights, during the 12 years preceding November 1, 1875, and the amounts of the like expenditure during the 12 years since that date?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): It is impossible for me to answer the hon. Member's Question. To prepare a complete answer would require a very careful examination, involving much time and labour, while an off-hand answer would be worse than useless. Under the form of a Question he is really asking for a Return, and a Return necessitating very complicated calculations.

ARMY—THE QUEEN'S REGULATIONS—SALUTING AUXILIARY FORCES.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether a Memorandum has been issued to officers of the Auxiliary Forces attached to the 2nd Battalion of the Grenadier Guards that they are to salute all officers in the Guards irrespective of rank; and, if this is so, if he can state under whose authority this Order has been issued; and, whether this Order is in conformity with the Queen's Regulations, which provide that officers shall only salute those of senior rank?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): An Order has for some time been in force to the effect that Auxiliary officers attached to the School of Instruction shall salute the commanding officer when he comes on parade; but there is no intention that anything contrary to the custom of the Service shall be thereby introduced, and care will be taken to prevent it.

THE CAPE COLONY—OFFICES OF HIGH COMMISSIONER AND GOVERNOR.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Secretary of State has received any reply from the Rev. John Mackenzie to the Despatch of the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson (C. 4,890, No. 24), on the subject of the separation between the offices of High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape Colony; and, if so, whether there is any objection to its publication?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry de Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The letter referred to by my right hon. Friend shall be presented to Parliament; but as the question has been re-opened, it is desirable to ask Sir Hercules Robinson whether he has any further observations to make, which should be presented with Mr. Mackenzie's letter. My right hon. Friend will have learnt from my answer to the hon. Member for Leith (Mr. Munro-Ferguson) on March 27 what are the views of Her Majesty's Government on this question.

COLLIERY EXPLOSIONS — THE ST. HELEN'S COLLIERY—THE INQUEST.

MR. W. CRAWFORD (Durham, Mid) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, How soon the Report on the St. Helen's Colliery Explosion will be presented to the House; also, if the right hon. Gentleman will order a Return of all the notes of evidence taken by the Coroner of West Cumberland as the cause of the explosion at the St. Helen's Colliery, together with the categorical questions submitted to the jury, and their replies thereto?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I expect to receive the Report on this explosion at an early date, and I will lose no time in laying it upon the Table. It is not usual, in the absence of special circumstances, to print the notes of the evidence taken before the Coroner. I should, of course, be happy to show them to the hon. Member. I hope that will satisfy any object he may have in view.

NAVY (SHIPBUILDING) — "THE BARRACOUTA."

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the statement in *The Times*, of Tuesday, May 29, is correct, that instructions have been received at Sheerness Dockyard, for preparations to be made for building a fast cruiser, to be named the *Barracouta*, whose speed under forced draught is to be 16½ knots, and that six cruisers of the *Barracouta* type are also to be built for the Royal Navy during the present financial year; and, if so, where are these six ships mentioned in the Naval Estimates for 1888-9?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): It is intended to lay down this year four ships of the *Barracouta* class, as described at pages 138 and 139 of the Navy Estimates, and at page 10 of my Memorandum which accompanied them. They are not called fast cruisers by the Admiralty, but are classed as third-class protected cruisers, and are intended to take the place of the present gun vessels. Two other vessels of a somewhat similar type, the *Barham* and *Bellona*, but with greater speed, are also included in this year's building programme, and are shown on pages 140 and 163 of the Estimates, and described on page 10 of my Memorandum. There has, in these respects, been no departure whatever from the programme of shipbuilding assented to by the Board of Admiralty last year, when my noble and gallant Friend was a Member of it.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—FIRST-CLASS TELEGRAPHISTS.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Postmaster General, If he will state the number of senior and first-class male telegraphists in the Metropolitan Districts at present engaged on purely clerical duties which are usually performed by clerks on the major establishment, also the number of first-class telegraphists in charge of branch offices; and, whether he could recommend an addition to the senior class to relieve the present congestion at the maximum of the first-class?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): There are five senior and two first-class telegraphists in the Metropolitan District engaged either wholly or in part on clerical duties of a minor character as distinguished from ordinary manipulative duties. In the Metropolitan District 12 first-class telegraphists are in entire charge, and nine are in partial charge of branch post offices. The minor clerical duties, upon which certain senior and first-class telegraphists are, as already stated, employed, are duties proper to the officers in question; and, indeed, at the general re-adjustment in 1881, the number of senior and first-class telegraphists in the Metropolitan District was increased in order to make provision for these very duties. It would not be for the public interest to make an addition to the class of senior telegraphists merely with a view to provide a more rapid flow of promotion for officers on the first-class, the number of officers on each class being fixed strictly in accordance with the number of superior duties to be performed.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS — THE ROYAL HOLLOWAY COLLEGE.

MR. COURTNEY KENNY (York, W.R., Barnsley) asked the hon. Member for Penrith, as a Charity Commissioner, If the Commissioners will have any objection to lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the Deed of Foundation of the Royal Holloway College, and of any Orders or Schemes which have been made by them for carrying out or for varying the purposes declared by that deed.

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The Charity Commissioners have no objection to lay upon the Table any of the documents referred to by the hon. Member. I desire, however, to point out that the documents can be seen at the Office of the Commission by any person applying to see them during office hours; that all the steps taken by the Commission in this matter have been made fully public from time to time in the London daily papers; and that the cost of printing the documents would be considerable, and hardly, perhaps, commensurate with the results sought to be attained.

LAW AND JUSTICE—DR. BURKE, CONVICTED OF MURDER—COMMUTATION OF SENTENCE.

Mr. COURTNEY KENNY (York, W.R., Barnsley) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can inform the House as to the grounds upon which the sentence of death passed at the late Leeds Assizes upon Dr. Burke for the murder of his daughter has been commuted to one of penal servitude?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): After personal consultation with the learned Judge, and in consideration of the medical testimony which I received after the trial as to the mental condition of the prisoner, I felt it my duty to advise the Crown to exercise the Prerogative of Mercy in this case.

LAND COURTS (IRELAND)—FAIR RENTS—CO. WICKLOW.

Mr. BYRNE (Wicklow, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a great many notices of application to have fair rents fixed were lodged in the Land Courts by tenants in the County Wicklow on the 28th and 29th of September last; and, if so, could he state how many; whether these applications ought to have been listed for hearing at the recent sitting of the Sub-Commission in that county; and, when these tenants, who are now eight months in Court, may expect to have their fair rents fixed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that the number of fair rent originating notices from the County Wicklow received at their office on the 28th of September last was 388, and on the 29th of September four. As already stated, in reply to a previous Question, the cases listed for hearing by the Sub-Commission now sitting in the county were those received up to and on the 27th of September, it being necessary to fix this limit, having regard to the claims of other counties. The Commissioners are not at present able to state the date of the next sitting of a Sub-Commission in the county. Two hundred and nine cases are listed for the present sitting, which commenced on the 8th of May, and will be continued for a portion of June.

ARMY—THE ROYAL FUSILIERS—PROMOTION.

Sir JOHN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) (for Mr. Dixon-Hartland) (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the senior captain of the Royal Fusiliers is for the third year in succession called upon to do the duty of major at the training of the battalion now just commencing, providing horse and equipment for the work; whether his non-appointment to substantive rank was merely for the purpose of saving the difference in pay and allowances; and, whether, in view of the discouragement to take commissions in or to remain in the Militia which will probably be caused by such suspension of promotion after 25 years' service, he will reconsider his decision in this case?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I presume that my hon. Friend alludes to the case of Honorary Major Roe, of the 5th Battalion Royal Fusiliers, concerning whom he asked a Question last month. The appointment of major in this battalion is at present vacant, because the commanding officer is endeavouring to find a suitable officer to recommend for it. Honorary Major Roe has not been selected; because, in the opinion of the officer commanding his battalion, the officer commanding the Regimental District, and the General Officer commanding the District, it would not be for the good of the Service that he should be promoted. If, on former occasions, Honorary Major Roe temporarily performed the duty of regimental major under the authority of the General Officer commanding the District he would have been entitled to receive the forage allowance for a horse, if he provided one for public duties; but he does not appear to have made any claim for such allowance. There is no foundation for the statement that the non-appointment of this officer to the rank of major was for the purpose of saving the difference of pay.

WALES—THE TITHE AGITATION—DISTURBANCES AT LLANEFYDD.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has made inquiry into the circumstances of the attack by the police on the people attending tithe sales at Llanefydd, County of Denbigh, on Thursday morning, May 17; and, whether he can state to the House the justification for ordering and making the attack?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have made inquiry, and received a Report from the Chief Constable of the county, from which I gather that there was not an attack by the police on the people, but, on the contrary, that an angry crowd rushed in a body upon the bailiffs, who were around the collecting agent; a fight began; the police thereupon interfered in order to protect the bailiffs and were themselves assaulted by the mob, and had to draw their truncheons. The action of the police appears to have been fully justified under all the circumstances of the case.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS inquired, whether the disturbance did not begin by an attack upon a man in the crowd by Mr. Stephens, the distraining agent of the Charity Commissioners; whether he did not rush at the man's throat; and whether three or four "emergency men," with whips and bâtons, did not beat him down; and whether the police and "emergency men" did not then make an attack on the crowd?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is now rather making a counter statement than asking a Question.

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he would make further inquiries.

WALES—THE TITHE AGITATION—THE DENBIGHSHIRE MAGISTRATES.

Mr. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether certain magistrates in Denbighshire have issued a Proclamation regarding the conduct of the people at tithe distraint sales; whether the same Proclamation contains a condemnation of the conduct of the people at Llanefydd as riotous and disorderly; and, whether such condemnation is founded upon the decision of any Judicial Tribunal, before which evidence was duly produced and taken?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The answer to the first two paragraphs is in the affirmative. The Proclamation refers to tumultuous and riotous proceedings at Llanefydd. It does not condemn the people of that or any other parish. No decision of any Legal Tribunal has yet been taken on these proceedings. They are alluded to only by way of example and warning, with the view of preventing similar breaches of the public peace.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked, whether these were not the magistrates before whom persons in the crowd would bring their cases against the police; and whether they had not already condemned the action of the crowd and had not condemned the action of the police?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he could only repeat that he could not gather from the Proclamation that anybody at all was condemned.

LEGACY AND SUCCESSION DUTIES ACT—THE COLONIES.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has received a Memorial from the Royal Colonial Institute as to the effect upon Colonists of the English Legacy and Succession Duty Acts; whether, in regard to Legacy and Succession Duties, in the case of a person who dies domiciled in England, his personal property situate in England, and his personal property situate in a Colony, are alike liable to the English Duty, the latter property being also liable to the Colonial Duty, if any; whether this liability to pay double duty, and other anomalies of the present system, can be put an end to by the adoption in all parts of the Empire of the principle that the locality of the estate, and not the domicile of the testator, should determine the liability for Legacy and Succession Duties on personal property, as is already the case with those duties in regard to real property, and with the Probate Duties; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will take steps to exempt personal property not situate in the United Kingdom from liability to pay the English Legacy and Succession Duty, and to make liable for those duties property situate within the United Kingdom but owned by those domiciled elsewhere?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): In answer to the first of the hon. Member's four Questions, I beg to say that I have received such a Memorial from the Royal Colonial Institute. My answer to his second Question is also, in the main, in the affirmative. Upon the death of a person domiciled in England, his personal property, other than settled personalty, pays Legacy Duty, whether it be situate in England, in the Colonies, or abroad. In the case of settled personalty, which is subject not to Legacy but to Succession Duty, the liability of the property to duty depends not upon the domicile of the settlor, but on the question whether the property is vested in English trustees, and can only be recovered by an action in England. With regard to the third Question, I can only say that the great change which it contemplates could not be effected except with the approval of every Colonial Legislature as well as of the Imperial Parliament, and that that change is one which I should certainly not accept without the gravest consideration. And, in answer to the fourth Question, I am certainly not prepared to take steps to exempt personal property not situate in this country from Legacy Duty. Such an exemption would cause heavy loss to the Revenue; while the compensation suggested by the hon. Member—namely, the subjection to Legacy Duty of the personal property situate in this country of persons domiciled abroad—would not only not make up that loss, but might involve us in very awkward controversies with Foreign Governments. I have done my best to answer these Questions as explicitly as I could; but the discussion of a difficult financial problem like this is plainly quite beyond the scope of an answer to a Question in this House.

THE CHANNEL ISLANDS—THE MINQUIER ISLETS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can give the House any information as to the alleged hoisting of the French flag on the Minquier Islets off Jersey?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): We have no reason to believe that the French flag has been hoisted on the Minquier Islets; but it seems that some Frenchmen lately placed a beacon on the principal rock, and some white patches on some others. While so employed, they asked permission to take shelter in the huts of the Jersey fishermen as usual resorting there.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPLICATION FOR LOANS.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the notice issued by the Irish Land Commission, bearing date 19 May, 1888, stating that the Commissioners have received applications exceeding in the whole the sum of £5,000,000 provided by the said Act; and, what steps does the Government intend taking to immediately provide funds to meet the applications received prior to the issuing of the notice?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I believe some notice of the kind indicated has been issued. Any steps which the Government may intend to take to provide further funds would require legislation, and the Government will give ample notice to the House if any proposal of that kind is to be made.

WAR OFFICE (AUXILIARY FORCES)—CINQUE PORTS DIVISION, ROYAL ARTILLERY.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding) asked the Secretary of

State for War, What are the adjutant's expenses of the 3rd Volunteer (Kent) Brigade, Cinque Ports Division, Royal Artillery, annually, in visiting the Blackheath and Sandgate detachments of the corps; and, what reason there is, if any, why the Blackheath detachment should not be transferred to the 3rd Kent (Woolwich Arsenal), under Colonel Hozier, and the Sandgate detachment to the 4th Brigade, Cinque Ports Division, under Colonel Court, under which arrangement no adjutant's expenses would be incurred, and a considerable saving of money effected?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford): The expenses incurred by the adjutant of the 3rd Volunteer Brigade, Cinque Ports Division, Royal Artillery, in the year 1887-8 were—for visiting the Blackheath detachment, £4 15*s.*; and for visiting the Sandgate detachment, £19 7*s.* 2*d.* It would be very inadvisable to amalgamate the Blackheath detachment with the 3rd Kent Artillery Volunteers, as the men composing the latter corps are almost entirely *employés* in Woolwich Arsenal. The question of transferring the Sandgate battery to the 1st Cinque Ports Artillery Volunteers is under consideration.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND) — COLONEL KING-HARMAN'S ESTATE, CO. LONGFORD.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the following from *The Freeman's Journal* of May 25:—

> "Longford, Thursday.—Yesterday 100 police proceeded on cars to the townland of Corley, in the parish of Mountcashel, and assisted at the eviction of a man named Dooley on the estate of Colonel King-Harman. With reference to the evictions at Tang on Monday, I learn that the names of the evicted men were Fox, and that the landlord was Colonel King-Harman, emergency-men being left in possession. I am also informed that it is Colonel King-Harman's intention to place emergency-men in each evicted homestead;"

And to the following from *The Freeman's Journal* of May 30:—

> "Keenagh, Co. Longford, Tuesday.—For the past seven days the forces of the Crown have been employed in evicting tenants from their holdings, principally on Colonel King-Harman's property. To-day five families, consisting of some 30 individuals, were evicted in this locality;"

how many persons in all were evicted on this property; and, would there be any objection to a Return being granted showing the number of processes and ejectments issued in the last 12 months on this estate, and the cost of the assistance given to evicting parties thereon by the forces of the Crown? The hon. and learned Gentleman also asked if the Chief Secretary could say when the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel King-Harman) would resume his Parliamentary duties?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I will answer the Question on the Paper. The Divisional Magistrate reports that no person of the name of Dooley appears to have been evicted as alleged. Nine families, consisting of 80 persons, have been evicted. These tenants owed large arrears, had had liberal offers made them, and appear to have been able to pay, but dare not. There are on this landlord's Longford property some 850 tenants; and during the 36 years before the Land League movement 21 evictions only took place. An objection would exist to such a Return as that indicated in the last paragraph, inasmuch as, if granted, a similar one could not well be refused in regard to any other estate.

LAW AND POLICE—SUICIDES FROM THE CLIFTON SUSPENSION BRIDGE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that two suicides from the Clifton Suspension Bridge have just occurred in five days, bringing the total record of suicides from this bridge up to 26 in 24 years; and, whether, in order to abate a public scandal, he will communicate with the Local Authorities or the proprietors, with a view to provide a protection for the sides of the bridge, similar to that by which suicides from Highgate Archway have been stopped?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have communicated with the Mayor with reference to this matter. He informs me that this bridge is in the hands of a private Company. They have obtained additional powers by an Act passed this Session; and, moreover, the bridge has been brought under the control of the police of the City of Bristol. I hope these provisions will tend to prevent the recurrence of suicides; and I will take care to bring the hon. Member's suggestion to the notice of the Local Authorities.

CROWN RENTS AND ROYALTIES—GOLD AND SILVER MINES.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Government have been advised by their Law Officers as to their powers to abate the claim of the Crown for the value of all gold and silver found in the United Kingdom in view of existing statutes; and, if not, whether the Government propose to introduce a Bill enabling them to encourage private enterprize?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Law Officers advise that mines royal belong to the Crown; but the Crown is, of course, not proposing to claim the value of all gold and silver found in the United Kingdom, but only a royalty upon what is obtained. The royalty charged upon gold and silver, like that charged on coal, lead, and other minerals, will be fixed with reference to the value of minerals and the cost of obtaining them, and, like other royalties, will be susceptible of variation to suit the circumstances of each case when those circumstances become known by experience. No legislation is necessary to enable the Crown officers to give every reasonable and legitimate encouragement to private enterprize; but there are four parties to be considered in the matter. There is the Crown, which means the general public and the taxpayer; the private speculators, who will be anxious to obtain these licences without payment at all; the landowners, who likewise put in a claim; and then there is the neighbourhood, which is, doubtless, interested in the mines being worked. All four have to be considered, and not only those who claim to work the mines, and who are naturally anxious to obtain the licences at as low a rate as possible.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked, whether the terms were not absolutely fixed by statute?

MR. GOSCHEN: No; I should say certainly not. The Crown exercises the right of abatement if necessary; at least, so I am advised.

INLAND REVENUE — EXEMPTIONS FROM INCOME TAX—THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is aware that the Commissioners of Inland Revenue have reversed their Rule observed for 30 years past, of exempting the Church Missionary Society, and other like Societies, from payment of Income Tax; whether he is aware that the Law Officers of the Crown, in 1856, gave their opinion that the funds of Charities, such as the Church Missionary Society, are exempt from Income Tax, and that a Minute was issued by the Treasury on September 30, 1863, to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to give effect to such opinion; and, whether he will lay a Copy of the said Minute upon the Table?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The refusal of the Special Commissioners of Income Tax to allow the claim of the Church Missionary Society to repayment of Income Tax is in accordance with the principles laid down in a recent judicial decision in Scotland. Notice of appeal has, however, been given against that decision. I think the hon. Baronet is under some misapprehension as to the nature of the Law Officers' opinion of 1856 and the Treasury Minute of 1863. The point then raised was not whether a Missionary Society was a Charity, and, as such, entitled to repayment of Income Tax, but whether a Trust for parochial purposes, the income of which went in relief of rates, was a Charity and entitled to repayment. The decision was in the negative; but I do not suppose that after this explanation the hon. Baronet will wish me to lay the Minute upon the Table, though he is welcome to see it if he wishes.

COAL MINES, &c. REGULATION ACT—STOPES COLLIERY, BOLTON.

MR. LEAKE (Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that at the Stopes Colliery, Little Lever, near Bolton, belonging to Messrs. Fletcher and Sons, the workmen are required to saw, at the pit brow, their own timber for propping, and to send it down the shaft to the working places; whether such a practice is a breach of Rule 22, Section 49, of the Coal Mines Regulation, &c., Act, which sets forth that

> "Where the timbering of the working places is done by the workmen employed therein, suitable timber shall be provided at the working place gate end, pass by, siding, or other similar place in the mine convenient to the workmen;"

whether, under Section 42, it is the duty of the Inspector to give notice in writing of such a practice to the owner, agent, or manager of the mine, and to require the same to be remedied; and, if a remedy be not provided, to report to the Secretary of State; whether any Report has been made to him of this case; and, whether he can suggest a remedy for the grievance of which complaint is made?

THE SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I understand that at the Stopes Colliery the colliers cut their own props, which are then marked and forwarded by the owners to their destination. The statute, as I read it, only makes it incumbent that, in fact, suitable timber shall be provided at the working places; but is silent as to the persons by whom, and the manner in which, that timber shall be prepared and selected. The duty of the Inspector is, as stated, where he finds anything dangerous or defective in the mine. No Report has been made to me under that section; but I have received a detailed Report from the Inspector as to the practice complained of. It seems to me that the difficulty can only be solved by arrangement between employers and employed.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked, whether it was not the intention of Parliament to throw the responsibility upon the mine-owner; and, if that was not the intention, whether the right hon. Gentleman would be prepared to take such steps as might be necessary to make the men in the mines perfectly secure?

MR. MATTHEWS said, the Act as it stood made the owner liable to a penalty if the timber was not provided; but the rest was purely a matter of contract.

In answer to a further Question from Mr. FENWICK,

MR. MATTHEWS said: The owner is criminally responsible if timber is not put in the proper place.

SEA FISHERIES—REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the President of the Board of Trade, When the Annual Report of the Inspector of Sea Fisheries, and the Statistical Tables and Memorandum relating to the same subject for the year 1887, will be in the hands of Members; and, if they will be presented to the House before the Votes in the Estimates bearing upon them are taken?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.), in reply, said, the Report would be laid on the Table to-day, and he hoped all the Papers relating to the subject would be in the hands of hon. Members in a few days.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) — THE DUDLEY COUNTY COURT—FEES.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked Mr. Attorney General, What sum, if any, is due from the late Registrar of the Dudley County Court on account of fees and unclaimed suitors' money; and, what sum was due from the late Registrar of the Wolverhampton County Court on like account?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): No sum whatever is due from the late Registrar of the Dudley County Court on account of fees and unclaimed suitors' money; neither was there any sum on like account due from the late Registrar of the Wolverhampton County Court.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS (REPORTS) BILL.

MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of his statement made in the House on July 21 last year, that—

> "The highest legal authorities see no objection to the Legal Proceedings (Reports) Bill;"

and the hope then expressed by him that—

> "An opportunity would be found of passing the Bill into law in the course of the Session;"

the Government will afford facilities for passing the Bill during the current Session?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Having regard to the amount of Business which the House has before it, I regret that it is out of my power to promise facilities for passing the Legal Proceedings (Reports) Bill this Session.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—INSPECTED SCHOOLS —AVERAGE ATTENDANCE, &c.—RETURNS.

MR. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the Government have any objection to lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing the number of scholars on the register of all inspected schools in England and Wales, the average attendance, the numbers under and over 14 years, and the average age at which scholars left school in each year from 1874 to 1887, both inclusive; and the statistics of juvenile and adult crime in England and Wales in each year of the same period?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I must refer the hon. Member to the Returns published annually by the Education Department for the information he wants in regard to schools. There would be great difficulty in giving any reliable figures in regard to the duration of school life. With regard to juvenile crime, I think the hon. Member will find the information required at page 23 of the 30th Report on Reformatory and Industrial Schools.

SCOTLAND—GOLD DISCOVERIES.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the alleged discovery of alluvial gold in Scotland; and, whether the Government will authorize an expert to investigate the matter on the spot; or what steps they propose to take so as to test the accuracy of the statements which have recently been made on the subject?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): As to the alleged discovery of gold in Scotland, gold has been known to exist there for several centuries, and Reports on the subject, drawn up in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, are in the Record Office. No information has reached the Government with reference to any recent discovery of gold in Scotland; and there is apparently therefore no need for making any official inquiry into the matter.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: May I ask how Queen Elizabeth came to inquire in Scotland?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am sure the hon. Gentleman will see that it is not my part or duty to inquire into that matter.

THE MAURITIUS — SUSPENSION OF THE GOVERNOR, SIR JOHN POPE HENNESSY.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, What was the date of Sir John Pope Hennessy's suspension from the Governorship of the Mauritius; whether he drew his salary or any part of it during that suspension; and whether since his re-appointment in July last he has drawn his full salary?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Sir John Pope Hennessy was suspended on December 15, 1886, from which date, pending the Secretary of State's decision, he drew half salary. On July 12, 1887, the Secretary of State decided to reinstate him, and he was then allowed the other half of his pay for the period of his suspension—namely, from December 15, 1886, to July 12, 1887. Since the latter date he has been on leave of absence with half salary. I may observe that the hon. Member is inaccurate in speaking of Sir John Pope Hennessy's "re-appointment," inasmuch as his original appointment had never been revoked. He was suspended, and the suspension was afterwards removed.

CHARITY COMMISSION — CHRIST'S HOSPITAL SCHEME.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the great importance of the Christ's Hospital scheme and the necessity for its passing immediately, he would take steps towards securing that object?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, that he would use all the influence he possessed to get the scheme passed without delay.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE WINE DUTIES.

In reply to Sir George Campbell (Kirkcaldy, &c.)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he had quite hoped to be able to make a statement to-day on the subject of the Bottled Wine Duties; but he should be much obliged if the House would allow him to postpone it till to-morrow.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC [SALARIES, &c.]

COMMITTEE.

MATTER—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of the Consolidated Fund, of the salary and pension of any additional Judge that may be appointed under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for the better regulation of Railway and Canal Traffic and for other purposes, and the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the salaries of the Commissioners, Officers, Clerks, and Messengers appointed under the said Act, and of all expenses of the Railway and Canal Commission, and also of remuneration to any person appointed by the Board of Trade for communicating with Railway Companies with respect to charges complained of in pursuance of the said Act."

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked when the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade proposed to make a Motion for the introduction of the Bill?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, E.): On Thursday.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

IMPERIAL DEFENCE [EXPENSES].

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 15th May.*]

MATTER—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it is expedient to authorize the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums, not exceeding £2,600,000, as may be required for the defence of certain Ports and Coaling Stations, and making further provisions for Imperial Defence." — (*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport) said, he wished to say a few words on this very important subject, which was one in which he took a very great interest. The matter was debated a short time ago, but there were many questions connected with it which were not brought before the Committee. He, therefore, trusted that the Committee would indulge him for a very few minutes while he made some remarks on the subject. It was well known that there was a considerable agitation going on out-of-doors upon the whole subject of the defences of this country. That agitation also had been taken up in that House, and the result was that there had been some kind of promise given by the Government that an inquiry should be made. Hon. Members, however, were not acquainted with the scope of that inquiry. It was quite certain that his right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) was not a man who, having once promised to do a thing, would, if he could possibly help it, draw back from his word. But the House was very considerably in the dark as to what the real nature of the inquiry was to be. He had put a Question to his right hon. Friend a short time ago as to whether the Committee or Commission which had been promised would inquire into the sufficiency of the naval defences of the country, and his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Eastbourne Division of Sussex (Admiral Field) asked a similar Question, and they were answered in animated terms by the right hon. Gentleman, who repudiated the idea of any responsibility being taken off the shoulders of the Government and placed on the Committee or Commission which was about to be appointed. The right hon. Gentleman rebuked himself (Captain Price) and his hon. and gallant Friend in warm terms for having made such a proposal, and he was bound to say that the observations of the right hon. Gentleman met with the approval of many hon. Members. Under these circumstances, he would now endeavour to show, both by precedent and argument, that the removal of the inquiry to a Committee or a Commission would not in any way relieve the Government of the day of one iota of its responsibility, nor was it against the

Parliamentary usages of the country. As to precedent, there were many, but he would only quote two. First of all, the Commission known as the Fortifications Commission of 1869. The terms of the Reference of that Commission were as follows:—

> "Whereas we have thought it expedient that a Commission should issue to make inquiry into the present state, condition, and sufficiency of the fortifications existing in our United Kingdom," and so on.

He laid special stress upon the word "sufficiency," because that was the principal argument in the present case. They were always being told that the Navy was thoroughly efficient. He did not intend to dispute that assertion, except in such small matters as that many of our largest ships had got no guns, that some of our armour-clads had their armour below the water, and other details of that kind. No doubt, both officers and men of the Fleet were thoroughly efficient, but what he wished to know was whether the fleet was sufficient in numbers and in strength. The second Commission he intended to refer to was Lord Carnarvon's Commission appointed to inquire into the defence of British Possessions and commerce abroad, especially into the sufficiency of the means taken for that purpose, and for which surely the Government were entirely responsible. What was wanted now was a Commission that should inquire into the defence of British Possessions and commerce both at home and abroad, and that the Commission should inquire into the means and the sufficiency of the means provided for that purpose. He proposed to quote one small short sentence from the Report of Lord Carnarvon's Commission—

> "We are deeply impressed by the Returns provided by the Admiralty, and to this and other evidence we invite the attention of the Government, being bound to express an opinion that the naval defences should be proceeded with as rapidly as possible."

He wanted to know whether that sentence, as reported, relieved the Government of the day from any responsibility concerning the matter? They were told that although a Commission of that kind could not be granted, yet there was to be a Commission of the Cabinet themselves to sit on the question. Was the Cabinet to consist of a Committee or a Commission, and were they to issue a Report to be laid before the country, so that all might see what the result of the inquiry had been? He imagined not, and, if not, he could not understand what the nature of the inquiry was to be. What could the Cabinet do in this way which it was not already their duty to do year after year? The Cabinet was already collectively responsible for the estimates, and to appoint a Committee of the Cabinet to do what it was their bounden duty to do was only an ingenious way of evading the responsibility which ought definitely to attach to certain persons. What was necessary was to force the responsibility upon the Government of the day, and not to relieve them from any portion of it. They wanted to know how the responsibility was to be brought home. He would give an illustration that was well known to the House only a few years ago. In 1884, the First Lord of the Admiralty, from his place in Parliament, said, as all First Lords did, that the Navy was never in such a highly efficient condition, and that all the apprehension which was felt in regard to it was a mere scare. He added that the Navy was in such a satisfactory state, that if he had £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 offered to him, he could not make use of them, or know what to do with them. Nevertheless, within a few months of making that statement, Lord Northbrook asked for £5,000,000, in order to make good the deficiencies of the Navy. History repeated itself, and the same case had just occurred again. The present First Lord (Lord George Hamilton) told them in exactly the same way that the Navy had never been in a more complete and efficient condition. He should not be surprised, however, to find the noble Lord yielding to the agitation which was now going on, and that before long he came to the House with a demand for more money, in order that the Navy might be placed in a proper condition. There was a time, however, when the responsibility would be brought home; when a seething mob of starving citizens of the country would be seen blocking up the entrance of Downing Street and Whitehall, and demanding bread at a time when it might be very difficult to give them bread. It would be in vain then for the heads of the Government to come out on their balconies and tell the people that they had done more than the last Government. The fact was, the First Lords of the Admiralty failed to take the people into their confidence. Lord Wolseley had noticed this the other day, when he said in "another place,"—"We do not take the people into our confidence; we never tell them what are our shortcomings." That was what we had to complain of, and was why he asked for a thorough inquiry into the whole matter. First Lords of the Admiralty appeared to him to vie with each other in hoodwinking the public. They talked to them about tonnage, and compared our Navy with that of other countries, but the people did not understand tonnage; they talked about torpedoes and big guns, but the people understood neither torpedoes nor big guns, and nobody but the manufacturers themselves knew much about them. He regretted to express his opinion that the Admiralty pursued a policy with respect to the people which was not only one of mystification, but of positive misrepresentation. He saw sitting below him the Secretary of the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood), who went down to Liverpool, not long ago, and told the people there that the Navy never was in such a state of superiority. He knew that the hon. Gentleman did not think very much of naval officers, and he was afraid that the hon. Gentleman did not think very much of our naval history. It seemed to him, however, that it was part of the duty of officials in his position to make themselves acquainted with the naval history of the country and of the nation. If the hon. Gentleman had done so, he would never have made such statements as those which he did make at Liverpool the other day. It was the fashion to say that every question which was introduced for discussion was a working man's question. This was essentially a working man's question. He was told by competent authorities that there were in this country, at the present moment, only three or four months' supply of corn—that was to say, that at the average rate of consumption for the supply of the people it would only last three or four months. It was the duty of the First Lord of the Admiralty to make himself acquainted with the true state of the case, because he must know that in the event of a war, this country might occupy the position of a beleagured fortress, more or less completely cut off from any other supply, and the noble Lord ought to be in a position to say, if that statement was anything like tho truth, what provision had been made in case of a prolonged war to secure an adequate supply of corn and other imported necessaries of food for the people of this country. For this reason, he laid down the maxim, which he did not think would be controverted, that the Fleet of this country should be vastly superior to the Fleet of any other country, not for the purpose of aggrandizement, or for the ideas of carrying out Colonial conquest, but simply for the purpose of ending a war in a short space of time, or for insuring an adequate food supply to the country. He had never contemplated any idea of the Fleet of this country being defeated; but he confessed that he had a strong feeling of uneasiness when he came to consider what might happen if our food supply was cut off or hampered in any way. He, therefore, desired to know from the Government what the position of the country would be if we were engaged in a prolonged war, and when he said a prolonged war it was not necessarily an unsuccessful war. Any prolonged war, however it might result, must occasion great distress throughout the country. Within a comparatively small area round the House of Commons there were nearly 5,000,000 of people, a large proportion of whom were always only a few degrees removed from want. He would ask the First Lord of the Treasury, or even the Lord Mayor of London, to contemplate what would be the effect on the Metropolis, in the event of the food supply of the country being hampered so that the fourpenny loaf might go up to two shillings or half-a-crown, as assuredly it would within a few weeks after a great naval war broke out. Would they ensure that quiet would be preserved in the Metropolis? If they did, he thought they would be most sanguine. A few weeks ago, in a debate which occurred in that House on the Naval Question, the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald), in a singularly able and well-delivered speech, put a most pertinent question to the First Lord of the Admiralty. He asked if he could guarantee that the Fleet of the country was sufficient to protect our shores from invasion, and sufficient also to protect our food supply and the import of raw produce for manufacture? That speech up to the present time remained unanswered. He wished he could induce some Member of the Opposition to put the question direct to the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War, and insist upon getting a straightforward and truthful answer as to how the matter really stood. Then, again, in regard to our commerce. They were told that the sea-borne trade of the country was valued at the stupendous sum of £1,000,000,000 sterling—a sum that was almost beyond their comprehension, and far beyond the wildest dreams of any prize which Cortes or Pizarro thought they might gain. When the First Lord of the Admiralty was asked what steps had been taken to protect this commerce, he told the House that experience alone could decide what measures ought to be taken.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing) said, the hon. and gallant Member was mistaken. He had never said anything of the kind.

CAPTAIN PRICE said, he had no wish to misinterpret the noble Lord; but his impression was, that what the noble Lord said was, that we could only tell from experience what was required, meaning thereby, that the experience of war could alone decide what measures ought to be taken for the protection of our vast commerce. He had hoped better things of the noble Lord. He should like to see the noble Lord a great First Lord of the Admiralty; but he never would be unless he rose above the mediocrity of his Predecessors, and determined to go forward and put the Navy of the country in a better condition. The opportunity of success was said to come once in a man's lifetime, and if the noble Lord had never had it before, he had it now. He had everything in his favour; he had youth, courage, and ability, and he had behind him a devoted Party; around him a people whose history showed that they had never yet failed to provide the means demanded for the defence of the country; but it was necessary that he should take the people into his confidence. If he did that, they would not refuse all needful supplies. He hoped the noble Lord would not take in bad part the appeal he had made to him. The Navy of this country ought not only to be vastly superior to that of any other country, but it ought to be sufficient to ensure one of two results. Either that any war in which we should be engaged should be brought very shortly—within a few weeks—to a successful conclusion; or that we should be able to ensure that the imports of corn into this country should continue in the same manner as at present. He knew that the noble Lord had the supreme responsibility in this matter; but he felt that he and those who acted with him had also a responsibility, not only to their constituents, but also to the whole people of the country. It was because they felt that responsibility that they were making this effort, because they were not willing that when a time of danger and, perhaps, of disaster come upon us, the people should be able to point to them and say—"You also shirked your responsibility; you knew what would happen, and you knew what things were being left undone, but said nothing about them." It would be added —"You had nothing to gain, because your bread and butter did not depend upon making things smooth for the Government." He trusted that all Parties would join in the effort they were making, so as to insure that the defences of the country should be such that there could be no doubt as to the ability to defend the noble inheritance which had been handed down to them.

MR. C. H. WILSON (Hull, W.) said, he could not accuse the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Devonport (Captain Price) of not giving warning enough as to the present state of the country. When a debate took place nearly three weeks ago he (Mr. C. H. Wilson) stood up to make a protest on the other side of the question, and that protest he now repeated. Those who had been Members of the House for some years had often heard almost precisely the same story which hon. and gallant Officers opposite were now repeating to them. Some of those noble and gallant Officers had not been as long in that House as he had, but others had; nevertheless, however long they had been in the House of Commons, their story was invariably the same. They were told that we were unprepared for war. Well, he thought it was a very good thing if we were unprepared for war, and he hoped in the eyes of some hon. and gallant Members we should never be prepared for war. Unfortunately, he had had a long experience, and he knew what the cost to this country had been after a series of wars, beginning with the Crimean War, and followed by the Ashantee War, the Abyssinian War, the Zulu War, the Transvaal War, the Afghan War, and that hopeless matter in Egypt. What good had this country derived from that large expenditure of money and life? They were now told that the country was in danger. Whom was it in danger from? If it was in danger at all, it was in danger from the enemies we had made in those former wars. As a country, instead of setting an example of war scares, we ought to endeavour to create an entirely different feeling, and to lessen the armaments which were now producing ruin to nearly every Foreign Power in Europe. We were told by one great authority in "another place" that if France built one ship of war we ought to build three, and, judging from the pressure put upon the Admiralty at the present moment, that seemed to be the course pursued. He thought the probability, or rather the certainty, was that the expenditure recklessly going on now in building ships of war would produce the reaction which had already been produced in former times, and it would be found that that expenditure of money had been to a great extent, if not entirely, a waste of the national resources. We were using every effort to produce ships and guns of the most destructive character, and yet they had been told, after that miserable affair, the bombardment of Alexandria, that our old wooden ships would have done much more injury in one quarter of the time than the modern guns and modern ships of war employed on that occasion; and, further, that guns with large conical shot should not be fired at a short distance, and it was necessary to give them an elevation, the result of which was that, instead of doing the damage they ought to have done in most cases, they passed over the fortifications, and it was astonishing to see the small amount of actual injury done by that large expenditure of power on the part of the British Navy. That statement he made to the House on the authority of a naval officer, and he believed that there was a large amount of correctness in it. We were now building ship after ship, and with regard to most of them we finished we were told that for some reason or other they were not suitable for the purposes for which they had been designed. There were half-a-dozen vessels built with belted armour, and, when they were finished, it was found that the armour was underneath the water. And then, again, when a ship was armoured, enormous guns were put into her, and there was great doubt in his own mind whether in action such vessels would not be more dangerous to our own people than any enemy they could possibly be brought against. His own impression was, that if they wanted powerful ships, they should provide them of such a character that they would be almost unsinkable. There was a possibility that our guns themselves would soon become as unsuitable as the old wooden ships, and that we should have to rely in the future more upon the chemist than the gun manufacturer. We had heard a great deal lately about torpedo vessels. From the first they had been a sort of mechanical plaything; but nearly every naval officer had now come to the conclusion that they were useless, and ought not to be built. This was, in fact, one of the passing follies of the day, and he was afraid we should have continuous repetition of it. We talked about our defences; but if we really wanted to defend the country we should not have Squadrons all over the world wasting their power in simply flaunting the flag of England in the eyes of foreign countries, but we should keep them on our own coasts. We should have them manned by men who were capable of working them, and when the time came, if we wanted ships to defend our commerce, we should organize them in the same way as our ships for our own defence. They talked of defending the coaling stations. There was no necessity of defending the coaling stations, as our ships might take all their coals with them. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members opposite laughed, but probably they had not had the same experience in matters connected with the Marine that he had. At the same time, he must tell hon. Members that he and others who paid the taxes of the country had not much to be thankful to the Government for. They were always told whenever there was a war-scare, that matters were not in a satisfactory condition, and that the money asked for was absolutely wanted. No doubt, the same thing would be repeated over and over again; but, in his opinion, a Fleet properly organized ought to carry its own coals; it ought also to have its hospital ships, its storeships, and the means of repairing damages incidently to any contest which might occur. At present, we had nothing of the sort, but the one idea seemed to be to build ship after ship simply because it was necessary to spend so many millions of money, and by that means we should be saved from foreign invasion. Hon. Members got up in that House and said—"You have got an enormous population, and immediately a war breaks out you will be cut off from your supply of food." He maintained that the mercantile marine would always be able to provide the country with food, and they should be brought by the railways to a central depôt. They were told the same thing about the Army—that the Army was too small, but it was forgotten that they had a ready means of increasing the Army of this country. There were some 40,000 men, soldiers, and police in Ireland; and, if we gave the Irish people Home Rule, and satisfied their wants, we should be able, not only to take away that force from Ireland, but to increase the Volunteer Force of this country by thousands of loyal Irishmen. He believed that by such means we should be able to increase our available Army by almost 100 per cent. At present, we could not send out of the country a single Army Corps, but in Ireland itself there were men enough to supply two Army Corps. At present the Government were destroying the military organization by turning the troops employed in Ireland into policemen, and compelling them to assist in evictions, and to do work which was by no means calculated to increase the popularity of the Service, and against which he knew that many of the officers strongly protested. The Volunteers were a force this country was proud of, and ought to be proud of, and every confidence could be placed upon it. It ought, therefore, to receive every encouragement; but when Volunteer officers went to Woolwich they were placed in an inferior position to the officers of the Militia. He was told that this was felt as a grievance by Volunteer officers. All these little matters tended to diminish the popularity of the Service. At this moment there were only two enemies we ever talked about. One was Russia and the other France. We had a considerable guarantee for peace as far as France was concerned in our interest in the Suez Canal, although his own opinion was that the very best thing that could have happened to this country, was that Arabi Pasha should have been left alone and the Suez Canal destroyed. The ships that were employed in conducting the commerce of India were considerable in number and gave a large amount of employment to the seamen. We had now a short cut to India, and instead of London being a depôt for the Eastern commerce, as it was before, that depôt stood in the Mediterranean, and the trade of this country was suffering in consequence. We need, therefore, entertain no fear of the attitude of France, whose interests in the Suez Canal would keep her from war with this country. Personally he had a large interest in the commerce of the country, but he entertained none of those fears which had been entertained by hon. and gallant officers opposite. He knew that it was easy to stir up a war feeling either in this country or any other. Our real enemies were not abroad, but here, near at home—the discontented in Ireland, and the demoralized and unemployed population we saw in our large towns. If they went to Manchester they would see a miserable undersized population who were not fit to be soldiers, and hardly citizens, and it was the result to a great extent of the liquor traffic of the country—they were our enemies. If they could do away with our enemies at home, such as he had pointed out, he did not think they need be afraid of our enemies abroad. What we wanted was our money's worth for all that we spent. We were going now to spend £35,000,000 or £40,000,000 a-year, for the Army and Navy, and if they were properly expended it ought to make this country safe and impervious to those war scares which were periodically got up, which were not only expensive, but most injurious to the interests of a country. Only a few years ago there was a Russian war scare, and the result was most injurious to the Baltic trade· Nevertheless, these scares were constantly initiated by naval and military Gentlemen, especially on the opposite side of the House, although he confessed they were participated in on the Opposition side. Hon. Members who held a contrary opinion did not speak out as loudly as they ought to do. Connected with commerce as he was, and knowing he had justification for what he said from the experience he had gained for a considerable time, he entirely deprecated these scares, and felt it his duty to speak out. He objected to the proposed expenditure, which he believed would be of no service to the country, and one which in every way would be injurious rather than beneficial.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said, he was of opinion that what the public required chiefly was not that money should be spent, but rather that the money voted should be properly spent. The public were not taken into the confidence of the Government upon this important matter. He did not believe that the public cared to know that 2½*d*. had been saved on the Navy Estimates, or that two men and a boy had been added to the Army. They complained, as the hon. and gallant Member for Devonport (Captain Price) said, and as Lord Wolseley had said in "another place," before he was converted by the Prime Minister, that they were not taken into the confidence of the Government. He knew there were arguments used by official persons against letting the public know official secrets, but practically that argument would not hold water ; because there was not a man in the War Office at St. Petersburg who did not know the secrets of our War Office as well as nine out of ten Members of that House, nor was there any official *attaché* who did not know the state of things just as well as the officers in command of their forces themselves. The public, however, did not know the real state of things. They did not know that the stores of powder in the country would not last six months, and that there was no possibility of getting a further supply, except from abroad. They did not know that the heavy guns mounted in the Thames and the Medway were, with the exception of 10 of them, incapable of piercing the sides of a first-class iron-clad; they did not know that our guns consisted of about 2,500 muzzle-loaders, of cast-iron small-bore Pallisters, converted about 20 years ago, which were practically obsolete, those being all the guns we possessed, except a few 30-ton guns, which those in charge of them did not know would fire or not; nor did the public realize the fact that, although £16,000,000 a-year had been spent on the Army for 20 years, it was only armed with a weapon that was to all intents and purposes obsolete, and that we had transport for only 20,000 men. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) came down the other day with a plan of mobilization. He proposed to mobolize the Yeomanry and the Volunteers. Now, he (Major Rasch) could not think that the right hon. Gentleman was in earnest in suggesting the mobilization of the Yeomanry. The other day the right hon. Gentleman received a deputation from the Volunteers, and told them that, if possible, he proposed to get together a third Army Corps to be composed of Volunteers and Militia.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, he had made no statement with regard to the Volunteers.

MAJOR RASCH said, he accepted the correction of the right hon. Gentleman ; but with reference to the Militia, the right hon. Gentleman appeared to have overlooked the fact that the Militia Estimate of 130,000 men ought to be cut down to 90,000, owing to the number of men who did not really join, and that this 90,000 ought to be further reduced by 30,000, the number of men who belonged to the Reserve. Deductions had also to be made for men who, by means of fraudulent enlistment, enlisted in half-a-dozen regiments, and were counted as half-a-dozen men, so that the same men were enumerated half-a-dozen times over. As to the Volunteers, they were deficient in pretty well everything. They had no transport, no magazine rifle, no adequate hospital arrangements or adequate supply of great coats. As a simple agricultural Member, he did not think he would be doing his duty to his constituents if he were to depend entirely on what the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord

Randolph Churchill) called the other day "historic memories," and refrained from ventilating the question.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT (Manchester, (S.W.) said, the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. C. H. Wilson) had spoken a great deal of common sense. The subject before the Committee that day would not have been under discussion at all but for the scare which had passed, not over the country, but over some portions of the Metropolis. He was not surprised at the present excitement in the Metropolis about the security of the country, or that there should be this scare. Scares come almost with the regularity of the seasons; we had them from time to time, and unfortunately the result was a considerable increase of expenditure, but no increase in the security of the Nation or the efficiency of the Services. We were told now, as we had been told years ago, when demands for increased expenditure were made, that the Services were in a most unsatisfactory position, that the country was really defenceless, and, in fact, it was feared that unless a large addition to the Estimates was made something serious would happen. The country was told that there was danger of invasion, and the country which was to invade us was France. It was always France. He could never recollect the time when we were not in danger from an invasion by France. He did not understand why this should be so, because France was not a country composed of men who were absolutely without sense. Only 18 years ago France provoked a great war which ended in humiliation and disaster for her, and it was not likely that the people of France were in a state of mind now to provoke another great war without probably securing a single Ally. It was impossible that France could contemplate anything like an invasion of this country. No doubt, in the time of the First Napoleon, the greatest soldier of modern times, an invasion of this country was contemplated, but, notwithstanding all his military genius, he shrank from the undertaking, and it was hardly likely that France would attempt a project Napoleon dared not undertake, seeing that she had not a soldier or a sailor of any reputation whatever. How were these scares created and extended? The hon. Member for West Hull spoke of the food question, and only recently his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the South-East Division of Durham (Sir Henry Havelock-Allan) told them that we got one-half of our supply of food from abroad. That was true enough, but his hon. and gallant Friend went on to say that if we sustained any naval check we should be powerless to obtain our food, and that a large portion of the people of this country would be in a starving condition. It should, however, be remembered that neutral ships were now perfectly safe at sea, and could enter our harbours without difficulty. It was said that they could not enter blockaded harbours. That was quite true, but it was much more difficult in these days of steam to blockade a harbour than it was in the days of sailing vessels; but even if that were not so, and we were unfortunate enough not always to be successful at sea, how many of the ports of this country could be blockaded? All around our coasts many such ports and harbours were to be found, and, therefore, if we could not secure the same supply of food as we had now, we should probably have the same as we would get if the fair traders had their way, and imposed a duty on the importation of corn. It might, however, be said that the British mercantile navy would not be safe at sea, and would not contribute to our supply of food. That was our own fault. It had been in the power of England to make commerce, both in regard to neutrals and combatants, safe, and he believed it was in her power now to bring about a great change in that respect in the law of Maritime States. If that were so, nobody need get up a scare as to any difficulty to supply the people with food. There was nobody in that House who was careless about the defences of the country. Every man wished the country to be adequately defended and rendered secure, but a good many did not believe that any additional security would come from additional expenditure. Something like £30,000,000 a-year was being expended, and it ought to give us adequate security without entailing additional expenditure. The hon. Member for West Hull had spoken of enemies at home as well as enemies abroad. He believed with the hon. Member that we had enemies at home, to whom no direct reference had been made—he meant the great spending Departments of the country. It appeared to him that there was either corruption or incapacity in those great Departments, and secondly, that the country did not get their money's worth for what it spent. There was a great want of confidence throughout the country in the administration of the Army and Navy, and, so far as he understood, the Government was unwilling to inquire into the condition of things which brought about that want of confidence. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), who led the Government not two years ago and the Tory Party in that House, and who spoke with great authority, having studied the question of expenditure probably as much as any Member of the House, had spoken more loudly of the unfortunate condition of our spending Departments than perhaps any other Member. He (Mr. Jacob Bright) agreed with the hon. Member for West Hull, and he would not vote for the additional expenditure of a single penny, although he would do all he could to assist those who would reform the Departments, and give the country their money's worth for the money that was spent.

MR. TROTTER (Colchester) said, that as he took great interest in the question, he would ask the indulgence of the House while he made one or two brief remarks. He entirely deprecated all idea of panic. Although he spoke as one who had no source of information, he thought all the circumstances abroad pointed to the continuance of peace, and that there was no present cause for alarm for the invasion of the country. Still, at a time like the present, when Continental countries were increasing their armaments to an enormous extent, and we were on amicable terms with all our neighbours, it seemed to him to be a favourable time for stock-taking in regard to the National defences, in order to ascertain where we were open to attack. He held that while the temporary landing of a small force might be possible, a successful invasion of this country would be more difficult now than when that famous Armada threatened our coasts 300 years ago, for much as steam and electricity had increased the power of attack, they had infinitely more, in a country like ours, increased the power of defence. He could not agree that we ought to keep our forces at home, because we had interests in every sea, and were open to attack all over the world. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Devonport (Captain Price) had referred to the uneasiness which prevailed and the perplexity which existed in the public mind at the present moment, as to the difference between the experts and the official view of the question, and he (Mr. Trotter) believed the country was quite prepared to see any necessary expenditure undertaken, provided it was satisfied that it would get full value for the money spent. The question whether England had increased in strength of late years was largely a relative one. Probably our resources were really stronger and more effective now than they had ever been before, but in view of the increased powers of attack of our neighbours, it was possible that they were still not sufficient. His own belief tended in the direction that it was desirable to spend a large sum on our coast defences and coaling stations, and also probably upon guns and ships. In regard to our Navy, he thought it ought to be not only within the knowledge of ourselves, but of the whole world, that we were in a position to meet any force that could possibly be brought against us, and that we had sufficient fast cruisers to protect our carrying trade. That was the insurance, the large but necessary insurance, we were bound to pay, in consequence of our inability to grow our own food supply. He admitted that the difficulty was as to the quarter from which the money was to be obtained if the expenditure was proved to be necessary. But the present generation has made large and successful efforts in reducing the National Debt, and he had long thought that if national emergencies were such as to demand it, there would be no impropriety in suspending for a time the payment of the whole or part of the sum devoted to that reduction. The country, it must not be forgotten, fully appreciated the value of its freedom from conscription, and in consideration of that fact was willing to pay liberally for its defences. It must also be remembered that in undertaking more work, we should be able to employ labour in the country which now sadly needed employment. The want of work was, he knew, a difficult subject to enter upon; but still he held that it was a reproach to the civilization of the 19th century that there should be in this country so many men able and anxious to work who were unable to find employment. Allusion had been made to the Volunteer Force. He did not think the Volunteer Force had much to be grateful for to any Government. For many years it had been continually subjected to snubs. Perhaps it might have become overgrown, but the Force had been created by the energy, and to a large extent at the expense of, patriotic men. It appeared to him, although he had no great opportunity of rendering service to the Volunteer Force, that what the Volunteers had done for the country had been very little appreciated by any Government. It was especially unfortunate that at a time like the present an order should have been made that the Volunteers going into Camp should not be able to take anything like their full strength in consequence of the lack of sufficient Government grant. He was very glad that a Committee of the Cabinet had not shrunk from taking upon themselves the enormous responsibility of inquiring into and deciding upon what was necessary to be done under the circumstances upon this great subject. The country, in his opinion, would wait with great interest for the decision of the Government as to what was needed to complete our defences and the means to be employed to give effect to the recommendations of the Cabinet. He did not doubt that when the inquiry was completed the House would be put in possession, as a matter of course, of the result. Lord Wolseley had stated that the insufficiency in the state of preparedness was very largely due to the evils of Party Government. Without doubt there was much truth in that, but it did not cover the whole ground. It was once said by Horace Walpole that the decline of Party meant the growth of faction, and the latter would be a very much greater evil. He did not believe that Party spirit would decline in this country, but where there could be so much agreement as in the matters of foreign affairs and national defence, he regretted that there was not at the present permanency and continuity in the management of those great Departments of the State. It did seem desirable that in matters of such great importance they should not entirely depend on change of Government, but that such questions should, to some extent, be entrusted to permanent management. He had thought of speaking somewhat fully to his constituents on the subject, but after what had occurred elsewhere, he felt it his duty to say those few words from his place in the House.

ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke, &c.) said, the reason he rose to take part in the debate was that they had been told on the highest authority that if they did not speak in the House of Commons when criticizing the naval and military defences of the country, they had no right to speak on the subject anywhere else. He intended to speak on every possible opportunity, in every possible place, and under every possible circumstance, until he arrived at the conclusion that the Navy was in some sense what it ought to be, or until he and those who agreed with him were proved to be utterly wrong. He was surprised to hear the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. C. H. Wilson) introduce into the debate the question of Home Rule, the liquor traffic, and various other questions, entirely apart from the subject now before the Committee. The hon. Member said that an invasion of this country could be prevented by giving Home Rule to Ireland, and withdrawing the troops which were now stationed there. What we were more mainly concerned in was to prevent an army from ever being landed in England. Of course, after it was landed, the Fleet would have very little to do with it. The position they took up was a very simple one. The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), speaking at Derby the other day, said that he did not say, and had never said, that the Navy was in that condition in which it ought to be; but the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) had said that the Navy was equal to any two other navies, and was becoming daily stronger in proportion to the navies abroad. That was the point on which he joined issue with the First Lord and his hon. Friend. He denied that the Navy was becoming stronger. It was possible that it was just keeping pace with the navies of foreign countries, but even that fact they were inclined to deny. Only to-night they had heard the First Lord say, in answer to a Question from the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), that they were still building 16½ knot gunboats, although it was known that that speed was considered insufficient for the Australian cruisers, and that the French were building double the number capable of steaming at the rate of 19½ knots. He wished he could think that he was wrong in this statement, because he did not wish to under-rate our Navy; but, at any rate, the First Lord of the Treasury had told them that the speed of the ships which we were building was not considered sufficient for the Australian cruisers. The consequence would be that they would have to be laid up in the event of war, because they could not satisfactorily do the duty required of them, or escape capture by faster foreign cruisers. The Navy generally desired to know in plain English, how the First Lord made out that we had a force superior to even France alone, because he (Admiral Mayne) and several other of his friends estimated that if they had, apart altogether from the protection of our commercial interests, to fight the French to-morrow in the Atlantic, we might manage to muster an equal number of ships, and possibly one or two more at the outside. Our vessels were deteriorating with as much rapidity as those of France; six or eight of them could not be driven at full speed now, but could only be made to go at reduced boiler power. He should be happy to hear that statement denied upon official authority; but he believed he was correct in stating that it was a fact that we were quite unable to go as the French squadron did the other day, at a speed of 11½ knots in the Mediterranean. It was also known that the *Téméraire*, before going out to reinforce the Mediterranean squadron, had to take guns out of a fort at the entrance of the Thames in order to make up her complement of guns. In these circumstances the position of the Thames defences, as represented by military men, was not what was supposed, and, as far as could be judged, it was highly probable that all the guns would have to be taken if more guns were to be put in the Fleet. But if we had a slight superiority in number of ships, we certainly were not superior in guns or quality of vessels. He did not undervalue the courage and the seamanship that would be displayed by his brother officers and seamen, but he maintained that it was unfair to put our Navy to too severe a test. The hon. Member for Hull, who was a large shipowner, had spoken of the protection of commerce; and he thought the hon. Member would be one of the first to cry out if his ships were not properly protected. The admirals and captains in the Naval Service always got the blame if the commerce of the country was not protected, and if the enemy's fleet was not thoroughly defeated. It was wrong and unjust to say that all naval and military officers desired merely that more money should be granted, no matter how it was spent, or that they desired to create a scare. On the contrary, their object was to prevent a scare, to prevent the number of ships, guns, and men being allowed to fall so low that it became necessary to ask Parliament to vote sums of £5,000,000 or £10,000,000 of money to do that which less than half the sum would have accomplished if judiciously spent. There was no attempt to raise a scare, but all they desired was to place the Navy in a proper position to defend the country. It might be said that they were playing into the hands of Ministers, in order to enable them to raise the money. He was sure that his noble Friend—if he might presume to call him so—the First Lord of the Admiralty did not regard the matter from that point of view. It was not a Party question, and they were not speaking in any Party sense. On the contrary, they took equal exception to the measures—or more properly absence of measures—adopted by both sides. They hoped to see something more intelligent and intelligible in the administration of the Admiralty; and he had no doubt that when the necessity was shown, the House and the country would ungrudgingly grant the money that was asked for. He should conclude the few observations he had thought it his duty to address to the House by saying that unless our system of naval administration was entirely reorganized, the country could never hope to see the Navy made thoroughly efficient. Upon this they were thoroughly of one opinion, and looked forward with the greatest eagerness to the recommendations of the Commission, which they trusted would be of such a nature as to lead to a complete change in the system of our naval administration.

Sir CHARLES PALMER (Durham, Jarrow) said, he should very gladly support a Vote for more money for the purpose of our defences if he were convinced that it was really required, that it would be judiciously expended, and that the arrangements of the Departments were sufficiently well organized; but he feared that they might assume that the latter was not the case, especially with regard to the War Office. No doubt this question had been brought forward under a feeling of scare or panic throughout the whole country, and to vote money while such a feeling prevailed was, in his opinion, to be deprecated. The meeting which had been held the other day under the presidency of the noble Lord opposite, and assisted by naval officers, had the fixed idea in their minds that it was necessary for the security of the country that we should build more ships of war. As far as he was personally concerned he would not take exception to that proposition. But he happened to know that shipbuilding, whether by private contract or in the dockyards, had very greatly improved within the last few years. For instance, ships which formerly took six years to build were now turned out in three years, and cruisers that formerly took three years to build were now completed in a year-and-a-half. Moreover, the cost of vessels had been largely decreased, and, therefore, the money that was annually voted for purposes of the Admiralty would certainly produce a greater number of ships than it had formerly. He had heard that the dockyard system could be greatly improved if the Admiralty would take a strong course with regard to it by placing a good practical administrator at the head of the Department, and with power to discharge and take on men as occasion might require, as well as exclude them from coming to that House to make complaints through their Members when they were discharged. In this sense I would suggest that the dockyards should be disfranchised. He had shown that we could increase our shipping at a very short notice and at a small cost, but the difficulty in the matter was the question of guns. It was of no use to build ships if they were to lie for years waiting for their guns. There had been a great cry got up and created by some naval men with regard to the food supply of the country in time of war, but he pointed out that they had no longer wooden ships to deal with; they had mercantile steamers now which almost equalled in speed any foreign cruisers, and it would be difficult for those cruisers to intercept our merchant ships in the way referred to by those naval officers. It must be remembered that the cruisers must carry coals which would compel them to enter harbours or coal stations to replenish their coals, so that their position was more critical and dangerous than it was in former years. With regard to the coast defences, he happened to have been the first to have taken up this question as Commander of a Volunteer Engineer Corps. He represented that if the Volunteer Engineers were to be of any service whatever, it must be in connection with our coast defences and commercial harbours, and he submitted to the Government of the day a scheme with regard to the defences of the harbours in the North of England. Owing to the broad views of the Inspector General of Fortifications, Sir Andrew Clarke, his suggestion was carried out so as to enable the Volunteer Engineers to go through their submarine mining drill at Chatham as well as receiving the necessary material in the north. But the fact was, that whenever our Volunteers took any step forward of their own motion they were immediately snubbed by the Authorities of the Regular Services, and although pretty speeches might be made, and although the Volunteers were, so to speak, patted on the back and encouraged in that sort of way, they were not looked upon by the Regular soldier in the light in which they ought to be. In this question of home defence, however, he looked to our Volunteers. There had been alarm caused by the marvellous statements put forward by the Adjutant General with regard to the consequence of a large Army landing on our shores, and he regarded them as our best coast protection. But the

Volunteers must have more consideration shown them—more money voted for equipment and drill halls and other purposes than they had at present. With regard to guns, he was aware that proposals had been made to extend the area of gun factories, and that subject might be now under consideration; but he was convinced that we should never be free from the difficulties in which we were now placed in relation to guns until the area of manufacture was widened and a better supervision brought to bear upon the gun factories. The manufacture of guns was practically a monopoly; and he doubted whether his right hon. Friend the Minister for War would get up and say that he had confidence in the guns as they were now being manufactured. We were being left behind by France and Germany in this matter; and he was satisfied that the Government would take a wise course by giving orders to large firms to manufacture guns, which orders he knew that some firms were already in a position to carry out. He should be prepared to support the Resolution if he did not think the Votes for both Departments of the Service were amply sufficient. It was the organization of the Departments themselves that was, in his opinion, more important than the expenditure of the larger sums of money now asked to be placed at their disposal.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.) said, he quite agreed with some of the remarks that had fallen from hon. Members opposite, that the House ought not to vote money under the influence of a scare; but the object of himself, and of those who thought with him, was not to create, but to prevent panic, and to lay the facts as they actually were before the House and the country. The hon. Member for West Hull (Mr. C. H. Wilson) and other hon. Members had said that these cases of panic and these demands for money had occurred over and over again. That was quite true, and they would occur again and again until they altered the system of naval administration. This was the object they had in view. They asked that there should be an inquiry into the system of administration for the purpose of seeing whether it could be altered, and the Government had given way to a certain extent and appointed a Committee. Those who had taken part in this movement did not ask for increased expenditure for itself; they wanted a better naval administration and a definite standard of defence to be laid down. Experts had made statements, and those statements had not been contradicted; they had been met on the part of the Government by an argument which had nothing to do with the issue. The Government argued that we had more ships than the French. But that was not the point. What they had to consider was the work to be done by the different Navies, and it was this point that he and his hon. Friends wished to be threshed out. He for one would be strongly opposed to money being voted until they knew what it was voted for. There were two points of great importance to be considered: First, whether our line-of-battle-ships, upon which the ultimate issue must necessarily fall, were sufficient; and, secondly, whether we possessed a sufficient number of cruisers for the protection of our mercantile marine. On this point he would ask the Committee to listen to a few statistics. In 1793 we had 185 cruisers to protect 16,800 merchant-ships, having an aggregate tonnage of 1,589,000 tons; in 1814 we had 489 cruisers to protect 24,441 ships with an aggregate tonnage of 2,616,551 tons; in 1888 we had 42 cruisers. In calculating that number he did not take into account vessels of under 15 or 16 knots, for the simple reason that they were of no use to us. Unless they had cruisers of the same or superior speed to those of the enemy, they would not be able to catch the enemy's ships. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Jarrow Division of Durham (Sir Charles Palmer) had remarked that the enemy's cruisers, being steam vessels, would easily be caught, bcause they would have frequently to run into port for coal. The hon. Baronet was quite correct in that, but how much damage would an enemy's cruisers have done before they were caught? That was the point which told with practical men. Every vessel bringing over food supply that was destroyed, prevented the owner from sending others to sea, so that our communications might be very largely interfered with in the first three weeks of war. And, further than that, it was a point of great importance that in time of war the rate of insurance ran up and very largely interfered with enterprize in our mercantile marine. In the present year, then, we had 42 cruisers to protect 36,725 vessels, whose aggregate tonnage was 9,135,512 tons, and if to this was added the colonial marine there would be another 1,500,000 of tonnage. In the old days, when we had cruisers to protect our shipping, we were not dependent upon food supplies from abroad; but we were so now, and if our commercial communications were stopped it would be impossible to feed the people. There was another matter in connection with cruisers that he wished to refer to. Great Britain had only one cruiser to every 100 steamers over 100 tons, while France had one cruiser to every 10 steamers of the same tonnage. With the hon. Member opposite of course he hoped there would be no such thing as war, but if we were to lose three ships in war it would be equivalent to the loss of two Army Corps to Germany; but if France lost her whole Fleet her people could still eat, drink, and dance—it would not so much matter to her; while, if we lost a squadron, our Imperial or National existence might be imperilled. He would call attention to one paragraph in the Memorandum of his noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), who said that the conditions of naval warfare were so changed and changing from day to day that nothing but actual experience could show how complete protection could be given to a commerce double that of the rest of the world. It was that sort of idea to which naval officers outside the Admiralty altogether objected. They pointed out that the question was grave and required immediate attention; but the statement of his noble Friend meant that they were to wait to allow things to take their course and then see what could be done That, at any rate, was the way in which naval officers read the noble Lord's statement. The noble Lord had frequently said that in the matter of cruisers we compared very well with France. But he (Lord Charles Beresford) pointed out that the French had built seven ships which they called by the name of commerce-destroyers, and we had nothing that we could oppose to those vessels. His noble Friend would not deny the statement that the French had 13 ships with a speed of 19 or 19½ knots, and that we should have only eight, because vessels of the *Orlando* class could not go 19 knots. His noble Friend began his speech by saying exactly what he (Lord Charles Beresford) and his hon. Friends said, namely, that the Navy was not strong enough. If once we lost the command of the sea, there was no question but that we could be starved out. On the Naval Estimates, he had distinctly asked Vice Admiral Sir A. H. Hoskins—one of the Lords of the Admiralty — whether the shipbuilding policy adopted by the Board of Admiralty was suited to the necessities of the case of defence, or according to the requirements for a popular Budget, and he refused to answer his question. He (Lord Charles Beresford) wanted his late Colleagues at the Admiralty to answer it, and to give their reasons for thinking that our plan of defence was sufficient; and until they did so, the country would not be satisfied. A certain statement was made by the Prime Minister, and repeated at Derby by his noble Friend, with reference to shipbuilding and their armaments. What they said was true, but the inferences drawn from it were entirely incorrect. It was said that in 1880 the Vote for naval construction and armaments amounted to £2,100,000, and in 1887 to £5,467,000. But, if the amount for armaments was deducted, the Vote in 1880 was £1,664,000, and in 1887 only £3,118,000, so that the increase in shipbuilding in the two years was represented by £1,454,000. In 1876 the shipbuilding was £2,496,000, and in 1884 at the time of the last scare, it was £2,206,000, while for 1888, which might be called the next scare, it is £2,463,320, so that after 12 years there was £33,000 less in the estimate for shipbuilding purposes. That was how the matter stood in fact, but not according to the inference drawn by the Prime Minister and his noble Friend. His noble Friend had spoken of the Navy being stronger now than it was before. That was perfectly true, and a great deal of this was due to his noble Friend who had made a number of improvements, and in particular he referred to the enormous improvement owing to which ships would not now be turned out of greater draught than was originally intended. His noble Friend had said, that if the existing gun factories failed to carry out what was required of them, he should go outside. He trusted that his noble Friend would fulfil this promise, and if the existing factories failed, that he would go to Krupp or some other manufacturer who could supply guns of the kind wanted. In his opinion they should keep touch with recent inventions by appointing an experimental Committee belonging to both branches of the Service, to enable the Government to take advantage as soon as possible of all the latest inventions in gunnery and other inventions for warlike purposes. Illustrative of this, he might say that it was a great feature, that they might have to engage foreign vessels which could throw a 30lb. melinite shell equivalent in destructive effect to a shell of our own weighing 100lb. His noble Friend the Secretary of State for War had promised a Committee which should thoroughly try this new explosive, particularly as against the unarmoured ends of our vessels, and he hoped to hear that this was not being delayed. He demurred altogether to the tone which his noble Friend had adopted at Derby. He (Lord Charles Beresford) earnestly hoped that whatever might occur in the Debate, whatever differences of opinion might arise between the Government and those with whom he acted, there would be no Party feeling allowed to enter into this question, but if his noble Friend desired him to enter that arena he was ready to meet him either with or without the gloves on. With regard to the question of guns, he would ask for the names of the firms which in some cases were 12, 18 and 20 months behind the time at which the guns were promised to be delivered; also whether during that time they had supplied any guns to foreign Governments, and if so what was the character of those guns? He would also ask what was the procedure now relative to fines or some kind of punishment inflicted on firms who did not fulfil their contracts; and further, whether the noble Lord would guarantee that the guns for which they were waiting would be got at the date they were promised? It made a great difference in expenditure if the ships were kept waiting for their guns. It was details of this kind which required to be thoroughly looked into, and the authorities should fix direct responsibility upon somebody, whether soldier, sailor, or civilian; and when a person was discovered to have failed in his duty, he should be sent about his business and get no half-pay. What he and his hon. Friends held, was that first of all our administration was at fault. It was upon that fault of the administration they held that all these and other consequent extravagances were based. If there were a thorough-going system of administration our Estimates for the Navy were amply sufficient for the defence of the country. He and his hon. Friends did not want anything done in a hurry; what they wanted was that the naval work of the country should be done in a business-like way. They did not want the Government to come down and ask for an enormous sum of money, and he for one should vote against such a demand unless he knew to what it was to be applied. He believed that the Committee of the Cabinet was most useful, and had gone a long way in the right direction, but the Services and the country would not be satisfied if it adopted the same line as had been taken by his noble Friend at Derby. The Committee of the Cabinet ought to have the evidence of experts before it, and the experts should say what the country wanted. The Government had now a splendid chance; the country was with them, or rather with his hon. Friends and himself in their anxiety about the National defences. If the Government were ready to spend the money he was satisfied the country would agree to it if, as he had said, the thing were done in a business-like manner, and he believed it could be done without taxing the people. We might use the £7,000,000 of the Sinking Fund employed to pay off the National Debt, and this would be a good use of the money, for if we were to meet with disaster the National Debt would be doubled. He believed that the cause of the present state of things was that Governments were frightened and did not like to look the matter in the face; the sum of money required would be, they thought, enormous, and they asked themselves the question whether, if we were to be attacked, it was after all worth while to spend so much money. He was certain that if we built five line-of-battle ships and 24 cruisers, it would be the minimum required to make us safe; but he hoped the Government would build no ships and spend no money until they had a distinct programme before them. It was said that those who took the line which he had followed were influenced by personal considerations, but on the 14th of April 1885, the present First Lord of the Treasury said—

> "We appeal to the country to examine this question for themselves. At all events our consciences are clear. If war breaks out we are not ready. . . . We have at least done our duty in attempting to fix your attention on a grave danger which might be remedied with moral resolution and a comparatively small expenditure of money."

It might be also said that ours was a policy of peace. But other countries might do something totally opposed to our policy. France might insist upon our getting out of Egypt, and it might be a very good thing if we were to get out of it. He did not think his noble Friend would say that our ships and cruisers would be able to cope with the combined Navies of France and Russia. If his noble Friend should say so he would be ready to meet him on the subject publicly or privately. Supposing such a combination, the question was—"Are you ready?" If his noble Friend could answer that question in the affirmative, he would put an end to the speeches that were being made throughout the country in a contrary sense.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: My noble and gallant Friend objects to an expression which I made use of the other day in a speech in which I described the agitation that was being conducted on this question as sensational. I repeat that observation, and now tell my noble and gallant Friend that the only possible hope which he and his Friends could have of making that agitation successful was by making it sensational. I must confess that I was very much puzzled by the concluding part of my noble and gallant Friend's speech. He stated that he did not want any more money to be spent. If the object of my noble and gallant Friend, and those associated with him, is not to increase expenditure, I do not understand with what purpose their speeches are made.

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD said, he never stated that he did not want any more money to be spent. What he said was, that he did not want any more money to be spent until the Government issued a distinct programme of what was necessary for the defence of the country. He said that when that programme was made out, money would have to be spent.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: My noble and gallant Friend only wants the money to be spent when the programme is settled. Now, it is a very favourite statement of my noble and gallant Friend, that if the Admiralty were reorganized, and a better system of administration instituted, there would be enough money for naval wants. Well, Sir, whoever puts forward that statement simply misleads the public. For nearly the last two years I have been aided by the most able advisers and shrewd men of business, and they all confirm me in the view that, although £1,000 might be here and there saved, the whole sum would not exceed £100,000. Therefore, it is misleading the public to say that any reorganization would place at the disposal of the Government any large sum of money for the public service of the Navy. My noble and gallant Friend contested some of my figures, and found fault with a statement which I made in my Memorandum, to the effect that the conditions of naval warfare were so changed and were so changing from day to day, that nothing but actual experience could justify any confident assurance as to our requirements. That is a statement I deliberately made and to which I adhere; and I go further, and say, that I think that any naval officer who asserts the contrary will find it difficult to prove his case. Sir Geoffrey Hornby delivered a lecture the other day on the subject in the City. Everything that Sir Geoffrey Hornby says is entitled to the most careful consideration, as coming from one who is admitted upon all sides to be one of our most able naval tacticians and strategists. He did not guarantee immunity from capture to our merchant vessels. He wished to try to establish a system of protection of our commerce, on the old lines adopted in the great war between England and France. But even then, when the conditions were more favourable for the protection of our commerce, the force we possessed being six or seven times greater than that of France, we were not able to protect a certain portion of our commerce from attack, and now, when the conditions have all changed, I am not going to mislead shipowners and the public by saying we can guarantee absolute immunity to the whole of our commerce. The noble and gallant Lord fought rather shy, I think, of the conclusion at which Sir Geoffrey Hornby arrived. Sir Geoffrey Hornby said that he wanted 140 fresh cruisers —that that was the minimum of our wants. If I emphasize that statement it is in order to show what the ideal efficiency is which is wanted by a distinguished naval officer. But what would the cost be of this addition to our Fleet? With the high speed, coal-carrying capacity, and sea-going qualities which would be required of them, they could not be built at less than £150,000 a-piece. That would mean an immediate outlay of £21,000,000. But besides that immediate outlay, there would be the money necessary for the men who were to man these ships and their maintenance, and that would mean an extra sum of £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 on the Estimates. Why does Sir Geoffrey Hornby wish for this enormous number of cruisers? Sir Geoffrey Hornby said very truly that a vessel of 13 knots could not catch a vessel of 16 knots speed, and that, therefore, every one of these vessels would have to possess a speed of over 16 knots. The arrangements contemplated by Sir Geoffrey Hornby were clearly made for the protection of our commerce against France, not that our relations with that nation are not most friendly, but because he naturally selected that country which is the greatest naval nation next to ourselves in speaking of the power of a foreign country to injure our commerce. He took France as the criterion in the matter. Well, does my noble and gallant Friend know how many 16-knot cruisers France possesses? We are to have 186 cruisers with a speed of 16 knots. France, at the present moment, posseses five, and I will take the relative strength in this respect of the two countries in 1890. In that year France may have 21 16-knot cruisers—in addition to 7 belted cruisers—and we shall have 41. Assuming that Sir Geoffrey Hornby is right, and that it is necessary that we should have 186 cruisers, when France has only 21, we should then have to keep eight times the number possessed by her. Does anyone believe that the taxation necessary for that would be borne by the nation, or that such a system of defence would be maintained for any time? It seems to me a waste of time for any naval officer, however capable he may be, to base his system upon such an expenditure. What is a curious fact is, that at the very moment these demands are being made on the English Government, almost identical demands are being made on the French and Russian Governments. Lord Brassey, in his *Naval Annual*, quotes the report of a French Committee on the Naval Estimates for the year 1887, in which complaint is made of the scarcity of vessels possessing a speed of over 16 knots, while a comparison is drawn in this respect with the British Navy. Since that time a considerable number of ships have been laid down by France. But the test of a shipbuilding programme is not the number of ships laid down, but the progress made. We have deliberately kept our building programme well within our financial compass, and we are building 50 per cent more rapidly than any other nation. In France, on the other hand, the building programme is much in excess of the money voted for the purpose, and, consequently, her programme is very slow; and although we have a great deal of lee way to make up, assuming that there is no further alteration in the Estimates, we shall have, in 1890, a large number of cruisers. But I will take the figures as quoted by Lord Brassey. Lord Brassey estimates that in 1890 England would only have five cruisers of over 19 knots, while France would have 15. But Lord Brassey arrives at that conclusion by including a number of vessels which have since been struck out of the French Estimates, and excluding the whole English building programme of the present year, which includes something like 32 vessels, most of which have a high speed. Including these, we shall stand thus in 1890:—England will have 15 cruisers of over 19 knots, as against 10 belonging to France, and 18 over 18 knots as against nine belonging to France. I do not say that that is sufficient, nor is that the view of the Government; but what I do say is, that we shall be stronger then than we have been for many years past; and, under the policy which we are pursuing, by which we are maintaining our shipbuilding programme at a rate much in excess of the annual depreciation and waste of the Fleet, we shall year by year add 40 per cent more in the shape of new ships, guns, and cruisers than we shall take out in the shape of old ships, guns, and cruisers. If we can maintain this policy over a number of years, I believe that, at the end of that period, we shall have more judiciously and more effectively raised the strength of the Navy than if we had entered upon any hasty and spasmodic expenditure with the certain knowledge that a portion of the expenditure would be wasted by the very haste requisite. The noble and gallant Lord and a number of other naval and military men have always impressed upon the Government the necessity of giving more authority and control to professional experts. I quite agree; I have the utmost confidence in my professional experts, but it is a most curious fact that, in the very same breath, they are always expatiating upon and exaggerating the failings and shortcomings of the Ordnance Department of the War Office. The one Department which has absolutely and exclusively been under the control of military experts is the Ordnance Department, and, therefore, it does seem to me a most extraordinary conclusion on their part that, because that system of employing professional experts has, according to them, produced bad results, therefore a similar system should be applied to every other Department both of the War Office and Admiralty. My noble and gallant Friend discarded all cruisers which had a less speed than 13 knots. Why were those vessels built? At the present moment, in the minds of most naval men —and I believe it is a correct view— speed will be the more important factor in naval warfare. But a few years ago we did not hold that view; handiness was to be the qualification of our ships. [Lord CHARLES BERESFORD: And wasted ships.] They were deliberately built short for the sake of handiness, in deference to the opinion of naval experts. When I first accepted Office in connection with the Admiralty, expenditure was pressed upon me in connection with torpedoes. The torpedo at that time happened to be the naval fad, and a most distinguished and able writer, M. Gabriel Charms, impressed upon the French Government the importance of this weapon. I was then urged to rush into a wholesale expenditure on torpedo boats and torpedo boat catchers. I had then the advice of wise and sagacious naval Lords, who told me that, in their opinion, the efficacy of torpedoes was over-rated, and I think I acted wisely in taking their advice. My naval advisers now do not advocate this enormous expenditure upon cruisers, and I intend to abide by their advice. Let the noble and gallant Lord just think the matter out. A 13-knot cruiser cannot catch a 16-knot cruiser, therefore we are to build 140 16-knot cruisers. Suppose in order to build these 16-knot cruisers you suspend the Sinking Fund, and raise loans and occupy to the utmost the producing power of dockyards and gun-making factories; and then suppose the French built four or five cruisers with a speed of 22 knots. The whole work would have to be done over again. I will do everything in my power to prevent wholesale expenditure such as that. There is no single instance in which ships laid down by the dozen have not shown defects common to all of them, which would have been avoided if they had been laid down gradually and continuously over a series of years. Recently, statements of a somewhat sensational kind have been made with regard to the state and efficiency of the Navy. There was a statement, in particular, made by a distinguished officer in the Army, which, perhaps, has caused greater commotion and perturbation in the public mind than any other—namely, the danger which this country would run if 100,000 men were landed within a reasonable distance of London. Several hon. and gallant Gentlemen have alluded to that statement. Now, do we run at the present moment any real risk of invasion? I felt it my duty, as that statement has been made, to estimate the amount of tonnage which would be necessary to convey an invading army to our shores. I felt that if that statement was correct, it was only right for all of us at the Admiralty to take the greatest precautions to prevent its accomplishment. It happens that the Admiralty had had enormous experience in recent years in the transit of troops, and I obtained calculations from the distinguished officer who has had most to do with transport operations during those years. He informs me that to convey 100,000 men, packed as close as they could be, for 48 hours, would require 120 steamships of 4,000 tons, or an aggreate of 480,000 tons. If smaller steamships were used, an increase of from 10 to 15 per cent in the tonnage would be required. I next considered what nations were likely to invade England. There are only two nations which have a large army, and could suddenly ship 100,000 men to England, and those two nations are Germany and France. Now, the total steam tonnage of the German Empire is 420,000 tons, or 60,000 tons less than would be required for the operation, and the whole steam tonnage of France is a little under 500,000 tons, so that the Committee will see that, in order to carry out an invasion, France will have to bring together every single steamship she possesses, leaving her Mediterranean Coast and her various possessions abroad unprotected, and then concentrate them somewhere in the Channel, and when she got them there, there is no port where she could locate them or find sufficient wharfage for them. I am further informed that even with our enormous resources we could not bring together a similar amount of tonnage under three weeks. That being so, my noble and gallant Friends will not be surprised to hear that the Government in one sense cannot give countenance to the sensational statements to which I have adverted. We thoroughly sympathize with the objects of those who make them—namely, to increase the strength of the Navy. If, however, on the strength of these statements, we propose to increase taxation, or obtain money, we should be obtaining it on false pretences. We would be placing ourselves in a position in which we would be certain to be attacked afterwards, and it would cause a reaction of public opinion which would operate not merely against those who started a sensational policy, but permanently against the cost and efficiency of the Navy. Therefore, my hon. and gallant Friend will understand that when I was obliged, the other day, to put myself in opposition to what he said, I did so in no unfriendly spirit. I recognize the kindly manner in which my hon. and gallant Friends have spoken of the work which the present Board have done, all the more because we had an unpopular task to take in hand. We had simultaneously to reduce redundant establishments, and to increase the amount of our shipping—two by no means easy operations. Of that task, I think we have now got over the most unpopular part. My hon. Friend has dwelt with just emphasis upon the risk to the efficiency of the Navy which has arisen from the long delay in the delivery of guns. I can assure him that we will leave no stone unturned to prevent a repetition of such delay. It was a relic of a system which I think my right hon. Friend at the head of the War Office has, to a very large extent, reformed. Probably, it will interest my hon. and gallant Friend to know that, although we have a large number of ships building, and about to be laid down, the guns of every one have been ordered; and, as far as the subject of ammunition is concerned, we are limited in making good deficiencies by the producing power of the country; and if we find, as we proceed, that those deficiencies are greater than we expect, we will not hesitate to shape our action accordingly. I am much obliged to the Committee for having allowed me to make these observations. I conceive there is no graver or heavier task to which men could be called than to be made responsible for the efficiency of the Navy; and, on the other hand, I contend that of the functions which are imposed upon the Government, there are none as to which they should act more jealously or guardedly than those which relate to national defence and national expenditure. We are ready to act by the light of experience and the advice of our friends. Any communication made to us will receive most careful and respectful consideration. We know from past experience something of the unreliability of public opinion, and my hon. and gallant Friend has alluded to what he called the scare of 1885. A very large increase in the Estimates was voted, when it seemed we might be engaged in hostilities with Russia, and a large Vote of Credit was spontaneously placed at the disposal of the Government of the day. The present Government succeeded to Office shortly after that Vote of Credit had been passed, and at a time when the whole programme of shipbuilding which had been agreed to with the practical assent of both sides of the House had not been executed.

Then certain of my naval Friends recommended me to make hay while the sun shines, and to lay down a number of extra ships and to promote in every way an increase of the programme assented to. Well, I declined; but, with the assent of the Board of Admiralty, I did commence to lay down two of the most powerful iron-clads that any nation has ever yet built. A change took place in the Government of the country and a reaction in public opinion, and the new Board of Admiralty had the greatest difficulty in obtaining from the Government the money to carry on the iron-clads. Clearly, that money would not have been obtained at all if I had embarked upon a wholesale expenditure, for the new Government would have gone to the other extreme. What is really necessary for the efficiency of the Navy is a stable public opinion, and to maintain, for a series of years, the naval expenditure at a high level. That is our object. We agree that the Navy at the present moment has not arrived at the standard of strength which we hope it will attain, and when attained will be kept. But in carrying out that policy we must be allowed to exercise our own discretion and our own judgment; and when I recognize the loyalty and confidence with which my hon. Friends on this side of the House have supported the Government in the arduous undertakings to which they have set their hand, I feel that, so far as the efficiency of the Navy is concerned, we shall not ask in vain for a continuance of that loyalty and confidence.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, he wished to express the satisfaction with which he had listened to the statement of the noble Lord, and had noted the firm stand which he had made against the pressure brought to bear upon him by the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) and high authorities outside the House, that he should incur very large expenditure in the shape of cruisers. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) agreed with every word that the First Lord had said on that subject. The fact was that at the present moment immense improvements were being made from year to year in the building of ships of this kind, and the limit of improvement had not yet been reached. If a large number of cruisers of a certain pattern were built, there could be no doubt that in a very short time, owing to the development of improvements in the machinery and design of the vessels, most of them would be absolutely useless. He should like the Committee to recognize what we had done in the last three or four years in consequence of the programme of Lord Northbrook. Since 1885, when the immense addition was made at the suggestion of Lord Northbrook, we had expended upon ships and guns no less than £8,500,000 in excess of the normal Estimates of previous years. Of that money £4,000,000 had been spent on iron-clads and £4,500,000 on guns, and the result of that expenditure was, to his mind, conclusive to this effect—that we had brought the iron-clad vessels of this country to a point at which we were stronger relatively to the vessels of France and of every country in Europe than we had ever been at any previous period. While this country had been spending increased sums upon iron-clads, it was undoubtedly the fact that France had somewhat slackened her expenditure. She had apparently been rather disheartened by the feeling that we had so completely distanced her, and had come to the conclusion that the best way of defending herself, and possibly attacking this country in the event of war, was to build cruisers to harass our ships, rather than to attempt to meet us on the high seas with more powerful vessels in the shape of iron-clads. He thought that was a wise policy on the part of France. He did not, however, think that what France had done was calculated to cause the least alarm in this country. He listened to the figures given by the First Lord with satisfaction, and he felt quite certain that if we progressed with the same amount of shipbuilding in the future as we had during the last two or three years, rather laying down cruisers than iron-clads, we should not only maintain our position, but should find ourselves, in three or four years' time, as superior to France in respect of cruisers as we were now in the matter of iron-clads. He could only, therefore, express his satisfaction that the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty had not given way to the tremendous pressure which was brought to bear on him for a large increase in the number of cruisers. The general policy which the noble Lord had indicated was in his (Mr. Shaw Lefevre's) opinion on the whole satisfactory. He thought they ought, sometimes, to look at the question from the point of view of their opponents as well as from their own point of view. He believed that France had more to fear from us, in the event of naval hostilities, than we had to fear from France. He knew it was the view of many French naval officers that, make what exertions they could in the way of bringing up their naval resources to as high a pitch as they could, in the event of war with this country they would suffer very severely in every direction. There was no question that in the event of war between this country and France, France, in the first place, would lose the Newfoundland fisheries; those fisheries would altogether be lost, and in all probability would never be recovered. Then, again, the communications between France and her Colonies would be cut off. In all probability the communications between France and Algeria would be cut off, and he knew that many French officers feared that an insurrection would occur in Algeria which would give considerable trouble to the French Government. Furthermore, the communications between Tonquin and other Colonies would be cut off. He merely pointed that out to show that France had great interests which would suffer very severely in the event of war with us. His own impression was that those considerations were certainly worthy of entertainment. He knew that they were entertained at that moment by French officers, and that was, perhaps, the reason why the French Government endeavoured to bring up their fleet to something like an equality with our own. He understood from the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) that, in the event of better organization at the Admiralty, it would be possible to maintain a very much larger force. He understood the noble and gallant Lord to say he would not vote any additional money unless he was satisfied of better organization at the Admiralty. Although the noble and gallant Lord disclaimed the suggestion that he was not prepared to vote any money at all, he said that in the event of the Fleet being put in a proper position, the money we now spent would be sufficient to maintain it in a proper condition. The noble and gallant Lord did not, however, explain what expenditure would be necessary to put the Navy in a proper position. He presumed the noble and gallant Lord would desire very considerable expenditure in that direction. He agreed with the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty that it was a mistake to suppose that by any considerable reorganization of the Admiralty they could effect any great saving. No doubt, something could be done by improved organization. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) would be glad to lend his aid in that direction, as he had always done previously. He had, no doubt, some thousands of pounds might be saved by better organization in the Dockyards and improved administration at the Admiralty; but to suppose that with that improved organization they could secure such economy as to enable us to increase their Fleet very largely, was an idle dream.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD said, that he had stated that his belief was that if the Navy was once put into a state of thorough efficiency and organization, the amount of money now voted would be enough to maintain it at its proper strength and efficiency.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he understood the noble and gallant Lord to suggest a large increase of the Navy.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD thought it would be found out such was necessary.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that to suppose that a large increase of the Navy could be maintained at the present cost, would be altogether an idle dream. Suppose the recommendations of the gallant Admiral, Sir Geoffrey Hornby, were adopted, and a large number of cruisers added to the Navy, the result must be an enormous increase in the cost of the Service; the cost could not possibly be defrayed by the normal Votes year by year; an immediate addition to the ordinary naval expenditure would be required. Nor did he believe that any reorganization or any improvement in the administration of the Admiralty could make up for that increase of expenditure. What he did think was that by better organization in the Dockyard, and by better administration possibly in the Admiralty, no inconsiderable saving might from time to time be effected. But that would not materially affect the naval armaments of the country, and we could not look in that direction for any large increase of iron-clads or cruisers. The fact was, that in these days a single iron-clad or a few cruisers cost an enormous sum of money which could not be provided for by improved administration. He would conclude by saying he agreed with the general policy as laid down by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty. He thought the noble Lord right in making a stand against this enormous increase of cruisers, and he approved generally of the reductions which had been proposed this year in the Naval Estimates. There was one other point, however, to which he must allude. They were now being asked to vote money for coaling stations and the fortifications of our naval ports. The debate had taken a turn on naval expenditure generally, but the immediate question before the Committee was the provision of money for coaling stations and fortifications. What he objected to in this proposal of the Government was that, at a time when we were reducing our Army and Navy Votes by no less a sum than £1,000,000 sterling, we should be called upon to borrow money for the purpose of meeting this extraordinary expenditure, amounting to about £2,500,000 sterling. He ventured to say that never in the financial history of this country had we been called upon to borrow money to the extent of £2,500,000, at a time when we were reducing military and naval expenditure. That was a proposition against which he must enter his protest. It appeared to him that we ought to provide for this extraordinary expenditure out of the ordinary Estimates of the year.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The question which the right hon. Gentleman is now discussing would arise on the next Resolution.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he thought he might possibly be allowed, as the debate had taken rather a wide turn, to introduce the subject at that point, but, as the Chairman was of opinion it would more properly be discussed on the next Resolution, he would defer any observations he had to make until they came to that Resolution. What they were now called upon to vote was money for coaling stations and the fortifications of naval stations, and that was a somewhat different matter to the question of the increase of the Navy, which had really been discussed.

CAPTAIN BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, that the Motion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), upon which that debate was founded, had nothing to do with the expenditure of money. The hon. and gallant Baronet simply urged that inquiry should be made. Surely that was rational. It was so rational that to some extent it had been conceded. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), if he took part in the debate, would be good enough to tell them what was to be the nature of the inquiry, and by whom it would be conducted. Were some Members of the Cabinet going to conduct it alone, or would there be associated with them certain officers in whom the public had confidence? Why was it that no assertions of the Government could allay the uneasiness in the mind of the public, when great authorities like Lord Wolseley and the Commander-in-Chief struck some uncertain note about our National Defences. It was undoubtedly true that the public paid almost no attention to the speeches of the Government, or those who represented the Government, and the reason was patent. The public knew and felt that it was owing mainly to the present system of Government—Government by Party—admirable in most respects, but no doubt unsatisfactory in relation to the Army and Navy—that the Government of the day were disinclined to ask for the money which really ought to be spent. The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) had somewhat misunderstood the Paper to which he alluded. Sir Geoffrey Hornby, in writing his Paper, wrote as a specialist, and he pointed out what we should require if we went to war now. Sir Geoffrey Hornby, however, never maintained that his Paper had to be taken as a complete guide; nothing of the sort. Moreover, Sir Geoffrey Hornby's Paper had not been criticized. He certainly, for one, had criticisms to urge in respect to some portions of the Paper, as well as to the deductions which were drawn from the Paper by the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) and others who had spoken.

He thought the public were very much misinformed about our Mercantile Marine. Figures were constantly placed before the House and the country about the Mercantile Marine, which largely consisted of millions of tons being thrown together. There was no sort of inquiry into the figures, or anything done to divide them into their component parts. If hon. Gentlemen went into the figures closely, they perhaps would see that the difficulties were not quite so formidable as some seemed to imagine. The interest of this question seemed to have considerably shifted since the Whitsuntide Holidays. Before the Holidays, had he spoken on the Motion of his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), he should have sought to make out a *primâ facie* case for inquiry. He should have shown that we were not strong enough; he should have had to make out a case by which the Government might have appointed some Committee of Inquiry. But it was no longer necessary to do that. The First Lord of the Admiralty had told them we were not strong enough. He (Captain Bethell) and his hon. and gallant Friends desired that we should be made strong enough, but not by rushing into any exaggerated expenditure. The First Lord of the Admiralty and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) rested upon the argument that if we built too rapidly and hastily, most of what we built would presently become obsolete. No doubt that was perfectly true; but the same argument applied to everything that was now being built. The noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone was sanguine enough to hope that the day would come when there would be a standard of expenditure for the maintenance of the Fleet. But progressive expenditure would continue to exist as long as progressive thought existed, and the same science which required us to spend additional money would make it easier for the country to bear the burden. The First Lord of the Admiralty also made some observations upon Lord Wolseley's speech, and asked them to believe that it was quite impossible to suppose that an invasion of this country could take place. The noble Lord's remarks, however, did not display the same care and anxiety to master the subject which generally characterized his utterances. Before he sat down he should like to remark that two years ago there was a most interesting chapter in the First Lord of the Admiralty's Memorandum on what was called the depreciation of the Fleet. When that chapter appeared he thought it was merely a monument to the mercantile ability of his hon. Friend the Member for the Ormskirk Division of Lancashire (Mr. Forwood); he certainly never thought that any one would make proposals for the future of the Fleet upon that calculation. Was it possible the noble Lord intended to act upon that calculation? [Lord GEORGE HAMILTON assented.] Then it was really possible. He was sure the Committee would receive with astonishment the news that the First Lord of the Admiralty accepted that interesting theoretical statement as being of the slightest practical use. He only regretted that that was not the occasion on which one might criticize it more closely, and that when he had wished to do so, he had not had an opportunity afforded him. No doubt his hon. Friend (Mr. Forwood), if he spoke in this debate, would indicate what was the use to which he could put such calculations.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, that the debate had resolved itself into an internecine fight between the Government and its own supporters. He listened with great interest, as he always did, to the speech of the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), because he knew that the noble Lord was a practical seaman, and he was acquainted with these subjects. He had also listened to the speech of the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), who was not a practical seaman, and after listening to the two speeches, he was convinced that it was the duty of the Committee to reject this Vote. The noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone insisted that they ought not to vote money until they knew how the money was going to be expended, and until they had an efficient man to expend it. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty explained to them that the money was really not wanted in any sort of way, that it was perfectly ridiculous that there should be these panics and alarms on the part of his naval Supporters, and that it was impossible that an army should land in England. He had expected that the noble Lord would conclude his speech by withdrawing the Vote, and he was very surprised he did not do so. Now, what he wanted to know was how much money in all is it proposed that we should spend. They were aware that the most able naval expert in England had suggested that we should spend £21,000,000 immediately, and that we should spend £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 annually beyond what we did now in the maintenance of the Fleet. The noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone, so far as he (Mr. Labouchere) could gather, suggested that we should spend £7,000,000 per annum; the noble and gallant Lord wished the Sinking Fund to be done away with for a certain number of years, and the money to go towards increasing the Fleet and defences. The noble and gallant Lord wanted more money than even the eminent naval expert who had been alluded to. This large expenditure was based upon two grounds. They were told by the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone that we ought to have a Navy at least equal to that of France; in fact, that we ought to have a Navy stronger than France, because we might in case of war lose a few ships, and the consequences would be that we should be on equal lines with France. He (Mr. Labouchere) naturally objected to that. We were not masters any longer of our own expenditure; we had to enter into a competition with France. France had got a certain number of ships, let us build some more. France said "England's got some ships, let us build up to England." Where, he asked, was this insane competition to stop? The noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone himself pointed out the absurdity of it; because, he said, that the First Lord of the Admiralty would never for a moment suggest it, nor would he suggest that we should build a Navy able to cope at the same time with the Navies of France and of Russia. But, if we were to be perfectly safe, we ought to do that, and not only should we be able to meet the Navies of France and of Russia combined, but the Navies of France, Russia, Italy, and all other countries combined, because large possible alliances might take place. If we were to be absolutely safe, it was clear we must have a Navy not only equal to the Navy of any one particular country, but to the Navies of all countries collectively; and yet no one asserted that such a thing was possible, or that the country would stand it. Another argument was used by the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone. The noble and gallant Lord said, what about our food supplies, and he pointed out that while our commerce had vastly increased, our means of defending it had not increased in equal proportion. The noble and gallant Lord said, "You have got Free Trade; you do not raise enough corn in your own country to feed your own people; you are dependent upon foreign corn, therefore it is absolutely necessary you should have a Navy large enough to enable you to import as much corn in British bottoms as is necessary for the requirements of the inhabitants." Did the noble and gallant Lord remember what took place at the Congress of Paris? Did he remember that we agreed to free ships and free goods? What would be the consequences of that, supposing that a war did break out between us and France to-morrow? There would be no necessity for the French Fleet to be equal to ours; all they would require would be half-a-dozen cruisers on the ocean to deprive us of our carrying trade. The result would be that the insurance on British bottoms would go up. Commercial people were practical people, and they would send their goods in the cheapest and safest manner possible. It would be cheaper and surer to send goods in foreign bottoms, and, therefore, without the slightest question as to whether we could or could not defend ourselves against France, all this carrying trade would go into the hands of foreign countries; but against that we should have the advantage, if we could only keep our ports unblockaded, of having a sure supply of food. It was, therefore, by no means necessary, as hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to contend, that we should have a Navy able to defend our commerce in order to feed our population in case of war. By the mere operation of the laws of supply and demand, that food would come in, unless the whole of the inhabitants of the world were banded against us, in which case we might as well give up the game. There was, he thought, a consensus of opinion on the part of everybody, except those who were officials and those who had been officials, that our naval and military administration was as bad as any administration possibly could be. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty said—

> "Why do you go on talking about the Admiralty? We could not effect an economy amounting to more than £100,000 per annum; and I tell you that would be a mere flea-bite in comparison with what will have to be paid if you want this very efficient Fleet."

Let us first of all save this £100,000 per annum. Our Admiralty costs about four times what the Admiralty of France costs. If France could do the work of the Admiralty for one-fourth, surely England could? Our War Office cost about five times what the War Office of Prussia cost, and yet everybody admitted that the Army of Prussia was better organized than the Army of this country, everybody admitted that money was not grudged in Prussia when it was required. Let us first make this preliminary economy, and reduce the cost of the Admiralty and War Office to what it was in France and Germany. He was a mere civilian, and he always found that military and naval experts agreed with each other in asking for money. They agreed that our ships were not fit to be sent to sea, that the guns in the ships would not go off, and that our soldiers were armed with weapons which were useless. All this was exceedingly serious, and he congratulated hon. Gentlemen in the military and naval professions on bringing the matter before Parliament; but he warned them that they must not run away with the notion that they were going to have unlimited supplies of money. They would be given a reasonable amount of money; but Parliament would look strictly after the expenditure, and expected the country to be defended for the sum of money granted. The noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone said he did not aid in getting up the present scare. He (Mr. Labouchere) did not think the noble and gallant Lord did; but, undoubtedly, we were face to face with one of those panics which recurred every four or five years. Civilians had a right to complain of what had taken place. Lord Palmerston asked for £20,000,000 in order to fortify the Channel. What had become of that money? No one knew; it was entirely wasted. [*Cries of* "No, no!" *and* "Not a bit of it."] Not a bit wasted. He was glad to hear that, because there was an additional reason why they should not vote the sum now asked for. Anyhow, he would take it that some of the £20,000,000 which Lord Palmerston got had been properly expended, and that a good deal had been wasted. Now, in 1878, what occurred? There was then the "Jingo" craze that took place when Lord Salisbury was in power. We spent a vast amount in strengthening our Fleet; we bought ships here, there, and everywhere; ships which we were told we were to retain in order that they might be used as transports. Another waste of money. In 1885, what occurred? £11,000,000 sterling were voted by this House. Another panic! What had become of that money? He supposed it was expended in purchasing ships. [An hon. MEMBER: It was not expended.] Not expended! Perhaps the hon. Gentleman would say what had become of the £11,000,000. He (Mr. Labouchere) said that it had been in the main wasted. He maintained that every five, six, or seven years down came the military experts, and a little scene took place between the Government and those experts. The Government said the experts asked for too much; but really there was a good deal in what they said, and, therefore, they would give a certain sum of money. He was opposed to all Governments in these matters, because one was precisely as bad as the other. We spent £30,000,000 annually upon our Military and Naval Services, and he thought it was enough; he did not believe they ought to vote any more. Certainly they ought not to vote any more until the administration, which, they were told, was execrable, was entirely altered. He agreed with the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone that they ought not to vote a single penny more until they had received the Reports from the two Commissions which had been appointed. If it could be shown that money had been wasted and squandered, that it was absolutely necessary for defensive, not for offensive purposes that we must buy guns, that we must fortify our coaling stations, and that this could not be done by the money already voted, then let them vote a moderate sum. It did seem to him perfectly ridiculous that, while it was admitted that the administration was thoroughly bad, and two Commissions were sitting to inquire into the question, and before those Commissions had reported, Parliament should be asked to vote £3,000,000, which was only a portion of what it was intended to spend upon our defences. He observed that Lord, Wolseley in a speech which had attracted considerable attention, pointed out that the Army had increased by 25,000 men, and stated that that was not enough; he wanted more. He (Mr. Labouchere) found that there were 28,000 men in Ireland keeping the Irish quiet. That was naturally the army of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He found also that there were 10,000 men engaged in annexing Burmah; and he also found that there were about 6,000 in Egypt, crushing the Egyptians for no earthly reason. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, what were they for? [The FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. Brodrick) (Guildford): 3,500.] Well, 3,500; he was not very particular. There were, therefore, 28,000 men in Ireland, 10,000 men in Burmah, and 3,500 in Egypt. If the Government ceased coercion in Ireland, if they ceased their occupation in Egypt, and if they would not attempt to annex Burmah, it was obvious they could reduce the Army by 41,000 men, and then be in precisely the same position as they were now.

MR. BRODRICK: The men engaged in Burmah are on the Indian establishment.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he did not care whether they were on the Indian establishment or not, he would reduce them. If they had not these men in Burmah, they would not have to send so many men from England, because they had to send men to Burmah from India, and they had to replace the men sent from India by troops sent from England. They always would have to ask for more so long as they went in for a policy of coercion in Ireland and annexation abroad. He was disposed to think that we ought to pay a reasonable rate of insurance to guarantee us against successful hostile attacks; but we must remember that the policy of Her Majesty's Government at the present time was to utilize 28,000 men in Ireland, to send 10,000 men into Burmah to annex the country, and to have 3,500 men uselessly employed in Egypt. Moreover, one of the allies and guides of the Conservative Government—he alluded to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain)—stated the other day that he was in favour of a grand Imperial policy in Africa. It appeared the right hon. Gentleman would have us go about in Africa carrying out the views of the late Sir Bartle Frere. While these doctrines were in the air, while the present state of things existed as regarded Burmah, Ireland, and Egypt, and while Lord Salisbury was in Europe allying himself with various Empires against other Empires, and seeking in every way to drag us into any war which took place, we ought not to vote in favour of any increase of the Army. Give these Gentlemen more soldiers, and they would use them; give them more ships, and they would use them. Let us stick to the £30,000,000—he spoke in round figures—which we now paid; let us hear what the Commissions which had been appointed had to say; but do not let us vote one single farthing of increased money to be given to men who, they knew, had squandered and wasted that which had already been granted.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said, he was sorry for once to find himself in opposition to the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). He always looked upon the hon. Gentleman as a real friend of the Navy; for on former occasions when they talked about naval defence, the hon. Gentleman had said—"Oh, I will give you another £1,000,000, I am all for a strong Navy, but you must take it out of the Army." He (Admiral Field) did not think that military men would agree with that proposal; but he held the hon. Member to the promise to give them another £1,000,000 for the Navy, of course on cause shown. It was not difficult, if he only took, as his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Holderness Division of Yorkshire (Captain Bethell) had done, the speech of the First Lord of the Admiralty, at Derby, who had admitted that the Navy was not strong enough, and, that being so, his hon. Friend opposite must grant them the extra £1,000,000. They wanted a little more money. He agreed with the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) that they did not demand any fixed sum. They did not feel themselves competent to say what the sum of money ought to be, but they maintained that the First Lord was, according to his own showing, bound to ask for money which was required. In the speech of the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton), which he made at Derby, there were very important admissions. He said that, by a gradual process, they would bring the Navy of the country to a condition that, as a responsible Government, they considered it ought to be brought. But what was to happen in the meantime? If they admitted that the Navy was deficient, and not up to the standard of excellence they said it ought to be, what was to be done in the meantime? On the Government's showing, it would take a series of years to put the Navy in a proper state and condition. What was to happen if a war broke out during the period of improvement? He would put against the opinion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) that of an authority who would be respected—that of the Radical, Mr. Cobden. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] He and his hon. and gallant Friends intended to quote that authority whenever they were opposed by the Radicals. The hon. Member talked as if hon. and gallant Gentlemen had some personal motive in advocating what they now did; but they had no motive except the good of the country. Civilians did not realize the danger as naval men did; but they would be the first men to come, cap in hand, and ask, in case of need, for a gun, boat to be sent to such and such a place to guard their blessed commerce. Naval men were called experts. If they were considered experts, why were they not trusted, especially when, as he had said, they only desired the good of the country? He would make an appeal to another Radical Member, the hon. Member for the Haggerston Division of Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer). He remembered that, not long ago, when the Vote for £850,000, to be spent on the Australian cruisers was taken, the hon. Member said that if anyone could show him there was a real danger he would vote for the grant. It was his (Admiral Field's) good fortune, a few years ago, to visit the Australian Colonies, and, on the way out, the steamer called at King George's Sound, the most important coaling station on the Australian Coast. What did he learn there? That a Russian Squadron had been there; that an Admiral had gone there with two or three ships, and had left one or two ships outside. The Admiral remained for nearly a week, taking soundings and bearings in every spot. So important did he (Admiral Field) regard the matter, that he wrote home a Report. So important did the Australians consider it——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. and gallant Member is referring to a debate on a Resolution which has been passed.

ADMIRAL FIELD said, he bowed to the Chairman's ruling. He only wanted to claim the vote of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Haggerston Division of Shoreditch. It must be borne in mind that the place he had spoken of was a coaling station, and that this Vote had reference to it. At the time he was there, there were no defences at all, yet it would have been easy to hold the place against all comers by one cruiser. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) said he was against this Vote. He (Admiral Field) maintained that money was wanted now, because the right hon. Gentleman and the Government to which he belonged did not do their duty. The Commission which was appointed in 1879 reported in 1882. The Government of that day knew the weakness of our coaling stations, and if they had done their duty, as they ought with the facts before them, they would have asked Parliament to grant the necessary money to defend the coaling stations, without which it was admitted the Navy could not carry on successfully its operations in the different parts of the world. But the Government of the day would not ask Parliament for the money. He contended that as right hon. Gentlemen opposite failed to do their duty then, they were bound to support the Government now. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman, if he had a conscience, to remember what happened in the past;

if he did, he must certainly vote for this grant. [Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I never said I would vote against it.] He was very glad they would have the support of the right hon. Gentleman; but certainly he regarded the right hon. Gentleman's speech as an opposition speech. He never heard or read a speech of a Minister's couched in more moderate or courteous terms than that in which these Resolutions were introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), and it must be very hard even for Radicals to vote against so moderate a proposal to render our coaling stations and fortifications efficient. He did not understand that there was any provision made for the garrisoning of the coaling stations and fortifications. If there were men to handle the guns, there must be barracks in which the men could live. The question of garrisoning the coaling stations was a very important one, and he, as a naval man, might be pardoned for uttering a naval view in respect to it. He considered that our coaling stations—such stations, for instance, as Hong Kong—should be garrisoned, as far as possible, by Marine Artillery and the Royal Marines. He was fully persuaded that such duty would be very popular amongst the gallant corps he had mentioned. He regretted the view which was taken by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty of the lecture delivered by Sir Geoffrey Hornby. As had been pointed out, that essay or lecture was not given forth as binding the Naval Service to every opinion expressed in it; but it was put forth as a very able statement, a statement showing the danger to which our commerce was exposed. He admitted that no naval man would like to pin himself to every word in that lecture; but there was no doubt that the lecture was a very clear and able statement of the danger which was ahead of the country, and no one in the British Navy was more competent to point out that danger than the gallant Admiral (Sir Geoffrey Hornby). The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) looked upon expenditure as an insurance; but he was against any increased expenditure. Upon the question of insurance, he (Admiral Field) asked the hon. Gentleman's attention to a very able statement made some time ago by Admiral Fanshawe, who made a comparison between the state of things in 1837 and 1887. The gallant Admiral showed that, in 1837, the Naval Vote was under £5,000,000 annually, but that then our commerce only amounted to the value of £124,000,000. In 1887, however, the Naval Vote amounted to £12,700,000, but our exports and imports were of the value of £645,000,000. The proportion of the Naval Vote in 1837 to the commerce of that time was 3·56 per cent. The proportion of the Navy Vote in 1887 to the then commerce was under 2 per cent; so that we were really spending 1½ per cent less upon the Navy in proportion to the commerce than it was deemed necessary to spend in 1837. One was almost ashamed to stand up and defend the Government in proposing such a small Vote as this. This Vote needed no defence. Every thoughtful man must know it was right that this Vote should be passed. A very well-known French writer had said it was astonishing that the richest country in the world should be behind all Continental nations in the manufacture of its guns. Who was responsible for this? His (Admiral Field's) words were of very little value; but he maintained that somebody was responsible, and that somebody deserved impeachment, if not hanging, for the present state of things. Here was the richest country in the world, and we had got no guns to put into some of our first-class ships. At the present time, the Channel Squadron was composed of three ships and a gunboat, and every one of the three ships was of an obsolete type. Two ships, the *Sultan* and the *Téméraire*, were to be sent to the Mediterranean. If war came upon us, we should not have sufficent battle ships to hold the Mediterranean and to do duty in the British Channel. That being so, he and his hon. and gallant Friends asked, first of all, the First Lord of the Admiralty, who, by his own speeches, said he was not satisfied with the present condition of the Naval Forces of the country, to meet them half-way. All they asked for was an efficient and exhaustive inquiry. They wanted the Government to consent to some kind of inquiry. The First Lord of the Treasury had said that this was a Cabinet question; but he (Admiral Field) maintained that the First Lord of the Treasury and his Colleagues, as a Cabinet, were not competent to deal with a question like this. He did not assume that they would attempt to deal with it by themselves, for he conceived they would call in the assistance of experienced naval and military men. He took that as a necessary deduction from what they proposed to do. All they wanted was an inquiry, and they were not satisfied with the inquiry which had hitherto taken place. They maintained that the Government had no definite naval policy, and that no Government before them had ever had a definite naval policy. All Governments since 1805 or 1814 had been living on the *prestige* of the Navy of England, and the grand deeds done by our forefathers, the great giants of those days. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; *prestige* was a grand thing; but it was not a thing to live upon when the whole state of things was completely changed. Science had advanced by leaps and bounds, and the problem was altogether different from that which had to be discussed in 1805 and 1814. He contended that civilians were not competent to discuss, by themselves, such matters. Naval men had no definite proposal to make. It was not their duty to make one. They admitted that the Government were responsible; but they said—"You are not alive to the changed condition of naval warfare, and although you are keeping the Navy ahead of the French Navy, it is nothing like what it was ahead of the French Navy in former days." What was the proportion 50 years ago? In 1837 England had built, or building, 90 line-of-battle ships and 93 frigates. France at that time had 49 line-of-battle ships and 60 frigates. In other words, we had 41 more line-of-battle ships and 33 more frigates; but what was the proportion now? The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty could not say that the present proportion was satisfactory. It was nothing like the proportion which our forefathers, who were responsible for the naval policy of the country, thought it necessary to observe. He contended that the Government had to make a strong case indeed before they could show they ought to change the naval policy of old. He said that the Government had nothing to guide their judgment. The Government had had no naval war, the fate of the country had never been imperilled, and he and his hon. and gallant Friends asserted that if the Government lived on the *prestige* of the past, they ought to adopt the policy of the past. Until they adopted something like the policy of the past, they had no right to rail at naval officers, and call them panic-mongers. They had not much sympathy with the Chief Magistrate of the City of London, who wrote letters to the newspapers about naval men—men who were as honest as the Lord Mayor himself, men who possessed knowledge on the subject, and men who had but one desire, and that was to wake up the country to the real danger besetting it. It was only by bringing pressure to bear upon the Government that they realized their responsibility. It was not until the scare of 1885 fell upon the late Government that they had the courage to come to Parliament and ask for £11,000,000, about which the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had been railing. The late Government were driven to do that by the pressure of public opinion; and he believed that after the meeting was held in London to-morrow, the present Government would be driven to examine more closely into the question. They would be driven, he hoped, to come to Parliament, and, if necessary, ask for more money. He did not ask the Government to adopt Sir Geoffrey Hornby's policy; and it was not fair for the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty to attempt to pin all naval men to the view of one naval officer, however eminent he might be. It was something, to his mind, shocking and revolting to hear the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton talking about the commerce of England passing under a neutral flag, because when once we lost our commerce we should find it very difficult indeed to get it back again. In the time of the great Civil War, America was not able to defend her commerce on the high seas; it passed away from her, and now she had no commerce worth mentioning. He wished to emphasize all that had been said by his noble and gallant Friend the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford). It was the duty of patriotic men to create a better opinion upon this subject in London, the great centre of progressive thought, because until they did that it was impossible that the country could be roused from its present position of reckless indifference upon this question.

Mr. R. W. DUFF (Banffshire) said, he was glad to hear the statement of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty that, in future, we should not have so much delay in the delivery of heavy guns; and he thought the House was entitled to some congratulation on the subject, partly in consequence of the Return moved for by his noble and gallant Friend the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford). He thought, however, that the House would require to have some further information on this subject. He found from the Returns that only 15 guns above 9 inches diameter were delivered between January and December, 1887. He did not think that we ought to rely solely on the firms of Whitworth and Armstrong and on Woolwich alone for our guns. His hon. Friend the Member for the Jarrow Division of Durham (Sir Charles Palmer) had made an appeal to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty as to the intentions of the Board with regard to these guns. He (Mr. R. W. Duff) did not know where the money was to come from, as sufficient was not taken for the purpose in the Estimate. [The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) (Lancashire, Ormskirk): Yes.] But when the Estimates were introduced the First Lord replied to his criticism by saying that it was of no use taking more money, because the ships could not be supplied with any more guns at present. He was glad to see the improved tone adopted by the noble Lord in his speech at Derby. He said that we must have these guns, although he had not given them any information as to where the guns were to come from. They required at least 30 or 40 guns to be delivered in the course of 12 months for the supply of the Service. [Lord George Hamilton: They are ordered.] They might be ordered; but they had no guarantee that the guns would be supplied within the proper time, and he wanted some assurance that the delay which had occurred would not again arise. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) told them the other night that the time had now arrived for action. That was a good sentiment; but he wanted to know what action the Government had taken? He should have expected them to say that, finding there was a deficiency of guns, they had gone into the market, and thrown tenders open to some large commercial firms. The Return before the House showed conclusively that Sir William Armstrong and Messrs. Whitworth had failed to supply the guns required in the specified time; and he thought that the House and the country would not be satisfied unless they had some definite information as to the source from which the guns were to come. The Return showed conclusively that those two firms could not supply the guns wanted; and unless the Government were prepared to throw open the competition for guns to other firms besides those now employed, he did not think they would be able to make up the large deficiency which at present existed, and which rendered many of our vessels quite useless. He hoped the Government would, before the debate closed, give the Committee some assurance that active steps would be taken to redress the scandal he referred to.

General FRASER (Lambeth, N.) said, military men quite admitted that the first line of defence was the Navy; but, from what they had heard with regard to its state that evening, they thought it was time to claim an inquiry into the organization of the Army, and that the country should be taken into confidence on many points connected with it. They had the evidence of the Commander-in-Chief with regard to the defence of the country, and he would like to read a few words from the evidence.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: I rise to Order, Sir. The evidence of His Royal Highness is not before the House, and I object to any quotation from that evidence taken from the newspapers.

The CHAIRMAN: I would point out to the hon. and gallant Gentleman that evidence given before a Committee is not admissible until it is presented to the House.

General FRASER said, he understood that the Committee was an open Court; but if the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War did not wish him to refer to the statement of His Royal Highness, he would reserve his remarks until another opportunity presented itself.

Colonel BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince) said, they might hope, and even confidently believe, that they might never again be involved in war with France or Germany by any direct cause; but they must remember that those great Powers were kept in a state of unnatural tension by their mutual antagonism. The old line, "*Tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet*," applied in a certain sense to us, even though our party wall was a stretch of blue sea. Great was that bulwark and fortunate was our position compared with that of a Continental nation; but in the very greatness of our sea bulwark there lurked a danger that we should regard our position as absolutely impregnable, which it was not. Anyone who read the history of the American War must be certain that the demands of our Navy to protect our commerce in time of war would be enormous. If we ever became involved in any great naval war we should have our ships drawn away in all directions, and might find our Naval Force in the vicinity of these Islands inferior to that of our antagonists, and might temporarily lose command of the Channel. If an independent inquiry were held, it would establish two things—one, that in the present day it was impossible to rely upon the Navy alone, and that the Government must organize those large forces which the spirit of the country had given; and the other, that the administration of the Navy was absolutely unfitted to cope with a future great naval war. Not only was the question of tactical arrangement in the future very difficult to gauge, but it was certain that the control of the Fleet would lie very much more at Whitehall than it had done hitherto; the Admiral would never be able to get away from the wire; he would always be receiving messages to say—"My Lords, order this," or, "My Lords, order that." He hoped that the Committee presided over by the noble Lord the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington) would seriously consider the position of the Admiralty with regard to any great naval war in the future. He could not sit down without entering a distinct protest against the frivolous way in which the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty had dealt with the question of the possibility of invasion. He was certainly surprised to hear the tone taken up by the noble Lord. Everybody who had considered the question had felt that the only chance of an enemy would occur if and when they gained temporary command of the Channel. However difficult that might be, they must not regard it as impossible; and, at the same time, it must be borne in mind that the force which might be landed in the first instance, need not be a very large one; a comparatively small force might land and effect a lodgment behind defensive ground protecting the disembarkation of the mass of the Army. He was bound to say that, in his opinion, a Committee of experts would tell the House that this opinion was correct, and he believed that the country would make a great mistake in accepting the words of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty. He wished to give every credit to the Government for applying for the Vote on Account of the coaling stations, because it was a most necessary one, and he trusted some steps would be taken to secure a better supply of guns in the future. It appeared to him that in dealing with that most treacherous material, steel, no margin, or at any rate, no sufficient margin had been allowed for failures in ordinary guns. He had no doubt that if the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War applied his energies to meet the difficulty, we should soon find ourselves in a much better position. The history of modern artillery resembled a game of leap frog, the nation which was behind profiting by the improvements of those before it passed to the front.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) said, this question appeared to him to have been treated entirely as a question for specialists. They were asked for £2,600,000 for some indefinite object, and he could imagine that many men who read the report of this debate would do so with a sensation of fury and despair that so much time should have been wasted, and so much money voted, to defend them against an enemy which might not, perhaps, be to them very tangible. It seemed to him that all Members of the House were united in the object of making the country strong; but he contended that a tithe of the money now asked for, if it were applied in assisting the poor and unemployed, would make the country far stronger than £30,000,000 spent in armaments. He took it that they could not have a strong country while the majority of the people were miserable and discontented. What could it possibly matter to hundreds of thousands of their fellow-subjects whether they were under the rule of Prussia, or Austria, or France? They could starve equally well under any rule. It was, therefore, a bitter satire that the Government would not stop for one hour a discussion on this subject to consider the position of the unemployed in the country. He presumed that when the Government got that money they would use it for some object, and that that would be to provoke a collision with other nations. But the danger was not from collision with foreign nations; and if either of the Front Benches were ill-advised enough for Party strife to go to war with foreign nations, the real danger would not arise from that cause, but from the hopeless multitudes in this country. He, therefore, hoped a Division would be taken in order to show that there were, at least, a few Members of that House who had some regard for the condition of those multitudes.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) said, he observed a tendency in several speeches to ask the House and the country to rely for the safety of their commerce on neutral ships. It was said that if we went to war we need not have cruisers or armaments, because under the Declaration of Paris we could carry on the commerce of the country in neutral ships. But he wished hon. Members who used that argument to remember that there were not enough neutral ships in the world to carry our commerce, and that, in order to carry out such a programme, we should first have to part with our own shipping property to neutrals. He did not think the country would agree to do that. To part with our shipping, by which a vast proportion of the population got their living, and by which national trade operations were carried on, meant, in fact, parting with something, perhaps, more valuable than territory. But there was another point to which those who held this doctrine would do well to pay attention—namely, that it was not at all certain that the neutral flag would secure our food supply, because we had the recent experience of France in the operations in China, when, for purposes of war, she declared rice and food to be contraband of war. We had accepted that doctrine, and should, therefore, be bound by it ourselves; and, however this question might be regarded, he thought a thorough examination would show that if the safety of our food and commerce was to be secured in war, it could only be effected by our own exertions and the strength of our own right arm. Another argument used was with reference to the question of coaling. It was said that the armed raiders of an enemy could not keep the sea, owing to the necessity of replenishing their coal. But in certain parts of the world there would be no difficulty whatever in a belligerent getting as much coal from a neutral Power as was necessary to carry on the operations of war. At many ports on the South American Continent, for instance, hostile cruisers could obtain coal, and if we used those ports we should be at a positive disadvantage as compared with our enemy. Supposing we were at war with Russia and the squadrons of the two countries went into Monte Video for coal; according to the arrangements of International Law, the Russian Squadron could get enough coal to carry it to Sebastopol, while ours could only get enough for a few days steaming to the Falkland Islands—the Russian Squadron would then be able to take up a position on the Equator and hold it with an ample supply of coal. He thought that a careful and impartial investigation into the condition of the Empire in regard to its defences had never been made. They had only had patchwork inquiries. A Royal Commission inquired in 1859 and 1860, within narrow limits, as to the fortification of certain ports named; but that was not an inquiry into the defences of the Empire, but only into a small portion of them. Then they also had a Royal Commission in regard to the Navy; but its inquiry was held entirely separate from any inquiry as to the Army, whereas both Services ought to have been taken in connection with each other. In 1879 there was another

Royal Commission, which dealt with the protection of British Possessions and commerce abroad, but excluded all other branches of the subject. They had never had a Commission to take up the whole question in its entirety and say—"Here is the geographical and economic position that we occupy; and the question is, what are the naval and military arrangements necessary to secure it in case of war?" It was because he felt the importance of abandoning this patchwork system that he heartily joined in and supported the action of so many Members of the House in urging on the Government the necessity of such an inquiry as would enable the country really to understand this great and complex question. It was impossible that this Empire could ever be engaged in any operations of war, offensive or defensive, in which both Services would not be engaged. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty had made no case whatever against the necessity for comprehensive inquiry, and had made no allusion whatever to the important question of battle-ships. He had passed in silence over the objections of the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) and of the hon. and gallant Member for Pembroke (Admiral Mayne) on that point; but, after all, the key of the whole naval problem was the battle-power of the nations who might be engaged in war. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty had referred to remarks which had been made as to an enemy being able to throw 100,000 men on these shores, and he proceeded to quote the information that he had received from the Transport Office. He was glad the noble Lord had obtained that information, and made the statement he had made, because he had always felt that the idea of throwing 100,000 men quite casually on our shores would be found not to rest on a firm footing of possibility; but he begged to point out to the noble Lord that he had put the saddle on the wrong horse, because the head of the Intelligence Department of the War Office had stated publicly and officially before a Select Committee of that House that in three weeks 150,000 men could be landed on our coast. On a former occasion, he had challenged the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) to state the source of that information, and the data upon which it rested, and the right hon. Gentleman was unable to tell him. It amounted to this—that the War Office was assuming naval conditions without inquiry. He would point out that they were now asked to vote £2,600,000 for military demands which had been based on naval assumptions that had not been examined.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I beg the hon. and gallant Gentleman's pardon. As a matter of fact, the Army Intelligence Department and the Naval Intelligence Department are in constant communication.

SIR JOHN COLOMB said, the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty had stated that it was impossible for 100,000 men to be conveyed across the Channel without absorbing the total carrying power of France, and that the operation would consume weeks. On the other hand, the head of the Intelligence Department of the War Office had stated that 150,000 men could be landed on the shores of this country in three weeks. Well, what he wanted to know was this. If these two Departments were in such close communication, why did they not agree in their data and their facts? This was his point—that working the defence of the country under two Departments without central contro they never got at the truth, or at a correct basis as to how they should proceed. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War to say whether he repudiated the statement of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, or whether he repudiated the statement of the head of the Intelligence Department of the War Office? Here was to be found ample justification for the position taken up by those men in the House and in the country who demanded that there should be an inquiry into the whole system on which they relied for the defence of this country and our Colonial Possessions. He did not wish to detain the House, but he desired, if possible, that there should be some clear issue raised as to the expenditure of this £2,600,000. This money was to be voted for the purpose of defending certain ports from naval attack; but naval attack was a matter entirely dependent on naval conditions. The possibility of attack rested upon reasonable probabilities of the result of war between two Maritime Powers, one of them being Great Britain; and, in the Memorandum in which these proposals were ushered in, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State said that in preparing the Estimate for the present year the Government had felt it to be their duty to carefully consider the position of our defences in all parts of the Empire. He was bound to say that we were getting on better with the defence of our Colonies than ever before, as the Government were apparently determined to face the whole question, and not to fiddle with bits of it at a time. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, in his Memorandum, seemed to deal with the question of our naval superiority as a matter of popular feeling. Well, the Navy was not the right hon. Gentleman's business. He maintained that the amount of superiority which we were to possess in order to give us security was not a matter of popular feeling at all, but a subject for calculation; and he, therefore, asked for an inquiry that a satisfactory result might be arrived at. The next thing as to the result of this view of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War was this—that they were asked to grant this £2,600,000 for the construction of military works, and a Committee, partly composed of Members of the House, had been called to aid the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War to consider the question. It was assumed that the Channel might be temporarily lost to us, owing to the fact of the Channel Squadron being absent or disabled. Now, that was a very large assumption. What he wanted to know was whether the collateral facts of our loss of the Channel had been at all considered, because such a condition of things involved a great deal more than a possible attack upon certain military ports. It involved the suspension of all exports and imports, and of all business and commercial transactions. It involved the assumption that the Channel Squadron was not a Channel Squadron, but a Squadron for general service anywhere and everywhere beyond the Channel. That was what was covered by this assumption. It involved the assertion of our naval inferiority, and that our naval means did not admit of our having a reserve Squadron behind the Fleets and Squadrons necessarily advanced to more distant areas beyond the Channel. These were very broad assumptions, and they were all governed by the one assumption which the Committee was ordered by the War Office to accept. The general assumption to which he referred also involved an assumption as to time, for the period of three weeks was mentioned. Now, he wanted to know, if they were going to assume the loss of the Channel, why they should assume a limit of time at all; and, furthermore, an arbitrary limitation of 21 days? Having started that assumption, which was not substantiated by inquiry into the naval condition of this country, a whole lot of arbitrary assumptions were involved, and it was on the basis of these arbitrary assumptions that the Committee were asked to spend £2,600,000 upon military works. The Committee were told that the military ports—that was to say, principally those at Portsmouth and Plymouth, and the works on the Thames — might be attacked by a powerful Squadron of iron-clads, and that it was therefore desirable to spend this money to put these places in a position to resist that attack after we had lost command of the Channel. But why was it presumed only necessary to resist an attack by a Squadron? Why not by a whole Fleet? For when we lost command of the Channel we would be liable to such an attack. What was the use of only preparing for an attack by a Squadron? Then they passed on to the military ports in the Mediterranean; and here, again, because they would not face an inquiry as to the actual condition of things in order to ascertain the relative strength of the Navies of the world, they had got into a regular tangle of arbitrarily assumed conditions which would not be of any real advantage. The Committee declared that on the maintenance of the fortresses of Malta and Gibraltar depended our position in the Mediterranean, and they said that we must be prepared to face a possible attack by powerful iron-clads at Malta, and an attempt to land a large land force. But if we were unable to maintain a naval superiority in the Mediterranean necessary to render improbable such an attack on Malta and Gibraltar and an attempt to land a large force, we must assume a great deal more than an attack upon Gibraltar and Malta. These very iron-clads and transports, with these large bodies of troops which the Committee had in their mind, were not bound to go to Gibraltar and Malta. It was proposed that we should spend our money to defend Gibraltar and Malta against such an attack; but what might happen? Why, instead of attacking these fortresses, the enemy might go to Port Said, and, coaling there, pass through the neutralized Canal to Aden, which they would only find fortified to resist an attack of cruisers. They might master Aden, and then the whole of our supremacy in Eastern waters would be at an end. He thought we might very well pause to examine the condition of things which this would bring about, and refuse binding ourselves to accept any remedy until we had carried out our investigation. Driven from one assumption to another, we were brought to consider the defences of our mercantile ports. Having assumed the loss of the Channel and the absence of our Fleet, we were asked to spend money on fortifications in order to secure our commercial ports — against what? Not against the attacks of powerful iron-clads, not against the attacks of a squadron, but only against the attacks of a couple of armed cruisers with torpedo boats and other small craft. We should bear this in mind—that if we had lost our command of the Channel it would be the enemy and not ourselves that would determine the amount of force that would be brought against these commercial ports. The matter would not be left to chance by a Committee of the House of Commons or a Committee of the War Office of this country; and he therefore declared that that was another and stronger proof of the necessity for a real inquiry into the whole of the requirements, military and naval, of this Empire. Such an inquiry as he asked for would not regard this subject in a piecemeal way, considering a bit of defence here, and a bit of defence there, but would go into the whole matter of the protection required to insure the real safety of the country; and the Committee might rest assured that until such an inquiry was set on foot, and steps were taken to settle this matter as a whole and once and for all, they would find these scares continually arising; they would find weaknesses staring them in the face, and be continually wasting money and finding themselves further than ever from economy and efficiency. He did not blame the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War and the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty for anything they had done in connection with the Services under their management. On the contrary, he thought that they deserved every credit for what they had done since they had been in Office. The faults lay not with them, but with the system of dealing with so great a problem as that of the defence of the Empire by fits and starts. For what the First Lord and the Secretary of State for War had done he cordially thanked them; but he believed that not all their efforts, nor the efforts of all the men as able as themselves at the War Office and the Admiralty, would be able to prevent waste and weakness and danger in the event of war, unless something were done to bring about a more thorough system of the application of fixed principles of defence.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he would not stultify the vote he gave the other night by voting for the Government on the present occasion. He would endeavour to be as consistent as he possibly could in opposing the waste of the national resources in the manner proposed by the Government. He would repeat what he had said the other day upon this subject. He appealed to hon. Members opposite, who assumed to be thoroughly *au fait* with this subject, to tell the House where the danger was likely to come from, and where the enemy was to be found. Notwithstanding the repeated appeals he had made to those hon. Members, no attempt had been made to prove that any real danger existed, or that any attempt was likely to be made on our shores, especially if we minded our own business. The only country to which reference was made, and from which danger seemed to be apprehended, was France. Well, he had hoped that we had lived down that folly. Twenty or 30 years ago we were periodically frightened out of our propriety by French scares. The people of this country were then made to believe there was a real danger to be apprehended from France. But even if there had been it had passed away now, and the people of France, who were now supreme in that country as they were here, were pacifically disposed. There was not the slightest desire or intention on the part of the people of France to invade our shores, any more than there was on our part to invade theirs. It was stated by one hon. Member that the people of France were responsible for the last great war that took place there; and it was more than hinted that if the people of France had been responsible for that war they might at some time or other, perhaps at no very distant date, make another effort of that kind, and direct it to our shores rather than in the direction in which it was previously made. He (Mr. Cremer) challenged that statement altogether. He denied emphatically that the people of France were responsible for the last war. It was not a war entered into by the people of France, but by the Emperor of France. The people of France were altogether opposed to it. He did not know if it was in the recollection of hon. Members, but, if not, he would recall their attention to the fact, that when the Government of September took possession of the Government archives they unearthed a number of documents of a most remarkable character, which threw a most remarkable light upon the war and on the way in which it was entered upon. It was then proved—and hon. Members could see the documents themselves whenever they chose to ask the permission of the French Government to do so—that, some weeks prior to the breaking out of the Franco-Prussian War, the Emperor applied to the Prefects of Departments for information as to the state of public opinion in the various Departments. Everyone knew that the office of Prefect was one of considerable honour and emolument; and, notwithstanding that the Prefects at this time knew that their Imperial Master wanted them to say that a war would be popular, they risked his displeasure and their own dismissal, for 90 per cent of them told the truth, and declared that the war would be by no means popular, and that the people did not want it. Those documents were never published to the world by the Emperor. They were withheld, and their existence only became known after the fall of the Empire. This was a remarkable proof of the fact that the people of France were not responsible for the Franco-German War. But it was said that the people cheered the troops as they marched out of Paris. He denied that the French people did any such thing. It was true that there was a cry of "On to Berlin!" but that was a manufactured cry, as people now knew. There were, however, thousands of people who cried "Vive la Paix!" but they were laid hold of by the police and dragged into the station-house and barracks, which were full of peacefully-disposed citizens. As he had said, the cry for war was manufactured and the cry for peace was suppressed. Well, if the people of France were peacefully inclined in that day they were more so now. Monsieur Ollivier — who was Prime Minister of France in the time of Napoleon — was now the most unpopular man in that country, and why? Because of the support he gave the Emperor in his war projects. Monsieur Jules Ferry was almost equally odious in the eyes of the people on account of the Madagascar and Tonquin Expeditions. Everyone knew how the people of France had swept M. Jules Ferry and most of the Opportunists away a short time ago. But they had another person to the fore now in France—there was the Boulanger scare. He (Mr. Cremer) did not know whether hon. Members generally had noticed it, but he himself had noticed that, in all the addresses General Boulanger had delivered to the French people in the Department in which he had been wooing their suffrages, he had been careful to tell them—and he knew well the pacific character of the people—that his election meant peace. What did that mean but a tribute on the part of Boulanger and his friends, and an acknowledgment of the pacific character of the French people. If that was the case, where was the danger to this country likely to come from? No reference had been made to any other country than France; and with regard to that country, besides the facts he had adduced, there were many others which could be mentioned which would prove that no danger whatever was likely to come from that quarter. He again, then, asked where the danger was likely to come from, and where was the enemy? Unless he received a satisfactory answer to the question—to him and to a large number of people out-of-doors a very important question—he should not support the Government in their demand. He did not believe the people of England were in that state of fear and anxiety which they were said to be in by hon. Gentlemen opposite—which they were said to be in by those representing the Services, and he denied that a handful of Gentlemen connected with the Army and Navy represented the people of the United Kingdom. Some years ago, when most of the people were unenfranchised, the Representatives of the Services and a handful of Ministerialists had things pretty well their own way; but now millions had to be reckoned with. A very different state of things now existed; and when he remembered that not a single Petition had been presented upon the subject, and that the only meeting which had been got up in support of the alarmists was composed almost exclusively of men belonging to the Army and Navy, it did not look as if the people of the country were very much alarmed, or thought that there was any likelihood of an invasion of the shores of our country. If any such dread really existed, we should not only have demonstrations in London, but every town, village, and hamlet, would hold demonstrations, and call upon their Representatives to do their duty. In such an event, Parliament would not find the people grudging £2,600,000, or 20 times that sum; but until the Government proved to the people that there was an enemy likely to invade our shores, they were not the true exponents of the feelings of the country when they asked for this sum of money to pour into the military abyss. The last time he had spoken on this subject he had referred to the Palmerstonian craze or scare, of the money granted at the time of the Franco-Prussian War, and also to the Penjdeh scare, and the fact that £11,000,000 was wasted in the defence of a strip of land which all the world now knew not to be worth 2*s.* 6*d.* As to the alleged danger to our coaling stations, it was a remarkable thing that such a danger had only just been discovered. For centuries we had got along very well without taking extraordinary measures for the defence of our coaling stations; and was there any guarantee that if this money were voted it would be usefully applied? He had pointed out the other day, and he would now repeat the statement, that the £20,000,000 voted during the Palmerstonian craze or scare had been almost entirely wasted. For what was the fact? Take the forts round Portsmouth. These forts were erected at considerable cost, and when erected had from that time to the present remained almost empty. There had never been an ounce of gunpowder in any one of them. Four hundred guns had been dragged up to them, and for years were allowed to remain outside unmounted. When a Question was put in the House as to why these guns were allowed to lie in the mud outside these forts, an attempt was made to conceal the truth from the nation, and the guns were dragged into the forts; but from that day to this only about 25 had been mounted on the fortifications. These 400 guns, which had been dragged up to the fortifications at a cost of £5 a-piece, had been allowed to remain for 11 years without being mounted, and were then, at the same cost, dragged back again. What reason was there to think that this state of things would not be repeated in regard to the Vote now asked for for the defence of our coaling stations? He considered it likely that there would be a repetition of this waste from the fact that the noble Lord the then First Lord of the Treasury stated in the House, not long ago, that when he was at the Treasury three years back orders were given for a considerable number of guns, and that Her Majesty's Government were hoping that those guns would shortly be delivered. Well, if it took three years to manufacture guns to place on our fortifications, it seemed to him (Mr. Cremer) that the time had come when they should set themselves to work to devise other means of settling disputes than by the use of guns. It was not likely that an enemy would give us three years' notice of his intention to invade our shores in order to enable us to have guns ready to meet him. The burglar did not notify his intention to burgle; and he supposed that if either Russia or France intended to invade this country they would not give us three years' notice; but unless they did they would find us totally unprepared to meet them. This was an additional reason why he should vote against the demand made by the Government. He would not further occupy the time of the Committee than to say that we could learn a very good lesson in common sense from the people on the other side of the Atlantic. The United States had a much more extended seaboard to defend than we had in the United Kingdom. It was quite true that they had no Colonies; but when we took into account the vast seaboard of the United States, and the vast wealth of that country—there being more wealth stored up there than we possessed here—it would, perhaps, surprise some hon. Members opposite to learn that Brother Jonathan slept soundly at night without being frightened by the nightmare of invasion. How did Brother Jonathan manage to sleep so soundly and get along so well? It was simply because he minded his own business, and had not got it into his head that it was his business to go all over the world annexing every part of the earth that it was possible to annex, and showing everyone how they should govern themselves. If we had learned how to conduct our own business, and to leave other people to mind theirs, and to rule themselves in their own form and fashion, he believed we should have some rest from the scares which afflicted a portion of our countrymen from time to time. For the reasons he had given, and because he did not believe there was any danger to be apprehended, and because he did not believe the people outside the House cared one fig for the attempt that was being made to manufacture a public opinion on this subject, he should certainly vote against the proposal of the Government.

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, he rose to entreat the Committee to come to a conclusion upon the Resolution now before them. There were several Resolutions following the one now under discussion, and as the evening was pretty well advanced it would be seen that it was now desirable that a Division should be taken. There had not been, so far, any tangible opposition to the proposals of the Government. So far from there having been any, they had heard a good deal in the shape of suggestions—on the Ministerial side of the House at any rate—that the main fault which the Government were committing was that they were not asking for money enough. He could not help thinking, however, that the matter had been sufficiently debated, and that the Committee might now come to a conclusion. There were only one or two questions which had been addressed to him personally which he wished to deal with before he sat down. His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for South-East Essex (Major Rasch) had repeated a statement which he had dealt with more than once. In replying to this statement again, he was happy to be able to tell the House that at the present moment they had a better supply of powder than they had had for many years past, and that all the powder they were getting and hoped to get had been, and would be, manufactured in this country. As to the question of the supply of big guns, he fully admitted that that was the greatest difficulty of the present situation. That subject, beyond all others, had occupied the attention of the Government during the last few weeks; and he hoped to be able, before long, to prove conclusively to the House that they had been able to deal with the matter with a considerable amount of success. This deficiency in the number of big guns arose from a variety of causes, the first of all being the fact that the guns had not been ordered. With regard to the land service guns, in particular, there could be no doubt that up to the time, not many months ago, when he, with the authority of his Colleagues, ordered some of these guns, no guns of a modern pattern had been ordered for land service. The Government, therefore, could not be to blame, after having done their utmost in that direction, if they asked the country to wait a little before the guns were supplied. They had done everything they possibly could to facilitate the supply of guns both for land and for sea service. There was one difficulty in particular to which attention had been called by many people who had considered the question, and that difficulty was that the country had had no adequate and sufficient place for proving the big guns when they came to hand. It had been pointed out that the land they possessed at Shoeburyness was altogether inadequate for the purpose of the trial of those heavy guns. Well, the Government had applied themselves to remedy that defect, and they intended to acquire sufficient land at Shoeburyness to enable the trial of guns to be proceeded with as quickly as possible; and, without delay, it was their intention to make such provision for the trial of guns and projectiles at Shoeburyness as would obviate the delay which had occurred in the past. The Government had been forced more and more to place reliance for the supply of guns upon the trade, and not so much upon the Royal Gun Factory, and that was a policy they intended to pursue in the future. They could not reasonably expect to rely wholly on their Gun Factory, and they proposed to utilize to the full the resources of the trade so far as the interests of the country required. But when some hon. Gentlemen spoke about asking the great firms to tender for the supply of big guns, and dealt with the question as though it were only necessary to give orders in order to have several firms proceeding to supply heavy ordnance forthwith, they could not understand half the difficulties of the problem. With the exception of the firms of Messrs. Whitworth and Sir William Armstrong, firms could not undertake to accept contracts for the supply of big guns. It would take at least a year to lay down the necessary plant for the manufacture of those guns before the firm could turn out a single weapon. If, therefore, the Government wanted big guns for immediate service, they could not go to firms that would have to occupy 12 months in laying down plant before they could begin to manufacture. He hoped the Committee would forgive him for clearing up those two or three points. He did not believe that there were any other matters with which it was necessary that he should delay the Committee, because there would be other opportunities for making observations in the course of the discussion on the Bill on points which might arise. He did not think that anyone who had listened to the debate could have failed to observe that they had been going over ground which they had gone over on previous occasions when they had discussed the matter; and, considering that they were now only on the preliminary stage of this Resolution, he hoped that the Committee would allow the debate upon it to close.

MR. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) said, that it had not been his intention to rise to discuss this question, and he should not have done so had it not been for the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. He quite understood the anxiety of the right hon. Gentleman to have this question no further discussed. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman was anxious to have a Vote, and to have as little discussion upon it as possible. Now, he (Mr. Joicey) had not had the pleasure of listening to the whole debate upon this question; but he had heard the observations which had fallen from the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), and he was bound to say that he very much approved of the bulk of his utterances on this subject. The noble and gallant Lord was accused of making sensational speeches throughout the country. He thought if there was one question which the country ought to be well informed upon with regard to our national defences it was the question of our Navy. It had been said that we depended, to a large extent, for our food upon foreign supplies, and he felt sure that every section of the House wished that we should have these food supplies secured so far as we could secure them; for he could not think that, however we might increase our Navy, we should be able altogether to protect every ship bringing our supplies, whether it was a British ship or a foreign ship, from capture. The noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty had said he was anxious to give the commercial interests of this country immunity from danger; but he (Mr. Joicey) was satisfied of this—that however large our Navy might be, the noble Lord would find, in the event of a war breaking out, that there would be an *Alabama* here and there which would be able to do an immense deal of damage to our shipping. He (Mr. Joicey) objected to this Vote, although he was as much in favour of our having a strong Navy as any hon. Member in the House. He thought it absolutely necessary that we should have a strong Navy, a Navy stronger than that of any other country, because we had greater interests to preserve abroad; but he believed that our Navy could be made strong without this Vote. He believed that at the present time we did not get our money's worth for what we spent. He had been very forcibly struck, since he had had the honour of sitting in that House, on seeing that, whenever the Government intended to decrease the number of *employés* in connection with our Dockyards, that the Representatives of those Dockyards in the House immediately got up and protested against the proposed reduction. He failed to see why the taxpayers in the North of England whom he represented should be expected to provide large sums of money in order to keep a few men employed in the South of England, and he, for one, protested against the system; and he trusted that the Government in future would have the courage of its convictions, and would discontinue having work done in the Royal Dockyards when that work could be more cheaply done elsewhere.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: Will the hon. Gentleman allow me to say that not one shilling of the money now asked for is to be spent upon the Navy?

Mr. JOICEY said, it appeared to him, at any rate, that the coaling stations were directly connected with the Navy; and, whether or not, he felt that the Chairman would call him to Order as soon as he became irrelevant. He maintained that the country did not get its money's worth in our Dockyards. He had heard it said that 10*s*. spent in a private establishment was worth 20*s*. spent in connection with one of our public Departments; and he must confess that the longer he sat in the House the more he felt inclined to agree with that statement. He believed that the money spent in our Dockyards was spent most extravagantly, and that there was great room for economy. He often wondered why, when Her Majesty's Government were building four or five ships of exactly the same type, they did not give half the work to some private shipbuilding establishment and half to one of the Royal Dockyards, and then compare the cost of the two methods of shipbuilding exactly in every item. As the outcome of such a step, he should like to see a statement prepared by someone competent to prepare it, like the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood), showing the comparative cost of those two methods. When that account was properly checked, he believed they would get a better idea of the cost of building our ships than they had at the present time. Then he should like to see one Dockyard put in competition with another in this building. Some people thought economy should not be considered in matters of this kind; but, in his opinion, economy was a matter of vital importance.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Forwood) (Lancashire, Ormskirk): Will the hon. Gentleman allow me to say that if he looks at the Estimates he will find that a system already exists by which Dockyards are compared with one another and with private yards in building identical ships?

Mr. JOICEY: There is the charge for establishment expenses to be considered.

Mr. FORWOOD: All those charges are shown there.

Mr. JOICEY said, that the charge for the capital expenditure would not be shown. However, that was not his only objection to this Resolution. They had heard a great deal in the course of the debate about the £20,000,000 of expenditure asked for by Lord Palmerston, and spent in the defence of our Southern Coasts. Most of that expenditure, it had been admitted, had been practically wasted; and he thought that if the Committee would read the present Resolution very carefully they would come to the conclusion that a great waste of money would take place in connection with this proposal. It was proposed to spend money for stations where coal was to be obtained by Her Majesty's ships; but they must remember that great changes had taken place in the matter of motive power. We had no electric engines at work; we had tramways worked by electricity; and we all knew that there had been great discoveries of mineral oil in the United States and Russia, and that ships were being turned out of our private shipbuilding yards almost every month to carry oil to be used for steam purposes. Well, was the Government quite satisfied that oil would not supersede coal in time as fuel for the Navy? He must say that he himself had grave doubts upon the question. He should not be at all surprised to see, in a short time, oil used by the Navy instead of coal. Our naval experts admitted that it was of the utmost importance to avoid the production of smoke in our ships as much as possible.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is straying very far from the Question before the Committee.

MR. JOICEY said, he would not pursue that argument any further, but his object was to show that it was quite possible that in a short time it might not be necessary to have coaling stations—that, by a system of propelling ships by means of oil, it was possible that a ship might be able to carry a sufficient quantity of fuel without its being necessary to take in a fresh supply at one of the present coaling stations, and that, therefore, there might be no need for the stations to which this money was to be applied. That was one reason for opposing the Resolution; for, as he had said, no one was more anxious than he that we should have a strong and powerful Navy. Another reason was that he thought the money could be got in other ways, and by adopting economies in our Dockyards and in other directions.

CAPTAIN COTTON (Cheshire, Wirral) said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would not think him discourteous if, in spite of the appeal the right hon. Gentleman had made to the Committee to take a Division, he occupied a few moments in making some remarks upon the Vote. The naval and military Members of the House during the whole of last Session often sat like dumb dogs in their places in obedience to the wishes of the Government; and he thought that now, as this was said to be an English Session, it was only fair that they should have their say occasionally. All he wished to do was to say a few words upon the Royal Commission which the Government had said was to be presided over by the noble Lord the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington). As he (Captain Cotton) understood the matter, when his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) brought his Motion before the House, the Government refused their assent to it on the ground that they were themselves prepared to take the whole responsibility of determining what was to be the exact strength of the Army and Navy and military and naval munitions and necessaries of war which were to be kept up in this country. He (Captain Cotton) had felt that the Government were right in taking that responsibility upon themselves, and that his hon. and gallant Friend was justified in foregoing a Division upon his Motion. Well, he now congratulated the Government upon taking an initiatory step in the matter. A noble Lord a little while ago congratulated them upon the appointment of a Royal Commission, headed by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale; but he (Captain Cotton) wished to congratulate the Government upon what he thought a far more reasonable step. In *The Standard* newspaper, a short time ago, it was stated that Colonel Harrison, commanding the Engineers at Aldershot, should preside over a Committee to report on the exact amount of reserved stores and material required for the defence of the country. He (Captain Cotton) had thought that a most important announcement, and it was almost exactly what the military authorities in the House asked for. It was almost in the exact form in which the hon. and gallant Member for North-West Sussex had brought forward his Motion; and so impressed was he (Captain Cotton) with the importance of this Committee that, not wishing to rely upon the statement in the newpaper, he had made an inquiry at Aldershot and found what he had seen in *The Standard* was really the case, and that a Committee of that kind had been appointed. Well, if that Committee had been appointed, why was there to be a Royal

Commission, presided over by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale? He must say he could not see the necessity for the Commission, and he considered it quite an unnecessary and useless piece of expenditure. It was not what was asked for by the military and naval Members of the House. All those subjects which came within the scope of the inquiry to be instituted by the Commission had already, he thought, been fully inquired into by the various Committees sitting upstairs—that was to say, those on the Army and Navy Estimates. He hoped it was not too late now for the Government to drop this Royal Commission, which he was sure would only be a considerable expense, and would, in the face of the other Committees appointed, be of no use. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for war of the sympathy which military and naval Members of the House felt for the efforts he was making to promote Imperial defence; and if he would only consent to be guided sometimes by the advice of the military and naval Members, even when that advice was contrary to the official opinion at the War Office, he was quite certain that the right hon. Gentleman would find that the measures suggested would not only lead very much to the efficiency of the Services, but would in no way promote extravagant expenditure. Could not the Government in carrying out this scheme take one great plunge, which some Government would have to take in the future, and make up their minds boldly to initiate a policy which would entirely divorce the military and naval interests of this country from all Party feeling whatsoever? He believed that now was the time to do it, since a system of continuity of policy had lately been adopted in regard to foreign affairs by the Earl of Rosebery and the Marquess of Salisbury. He held that if a similar continuity of policy were adopted in connection with naval and military matters it would be found to conduce very largely to the promotion of efficiency and economy. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War and the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty would earn for themselves undying fame if they would only carry out such a policy as that he had described. As he had said, now was the time to do it. There were no burning questions of privilege in connection with the Army and Navy before the country. There never was such a time when the Army was opening its ranks to all comers, and when, he believed, the public were ready to back up any attempt to bring about a calm settlement of this matter, apart from all Party considerations. Some years ago a great controversy was happily settled by means of a joint conference between the Leaders of both sides of the House. The question concerned the admission into the voting power of this country of some 3,000,000 of people. It was a great question, and one which necessitated the putting forth of a great effort to settle it; but surely the insurance of hundreds of millions of property, the assurance of thousands of lives, and the security of thousands of homes was a matter of no less importance. He believed that when the Committees recently appointed made their final Reports the Leaders of both Parties, or of all Parties whoever they might be, should join together and determine that from year to year, no matter what Government went out or what Government came in, there should be rigid continuity of military and naval policy which should put an end to those continual scares which rose up in this country from time to time as to its safety.

Sir LEWIS PELLY (Hackney, N.) said, he rose to make only two remarks. He wished, in the first place, to assure the Government that, so far as he was aware, there was no wish other than to give them every possible and just support. He had not heard a single word of serious opposition spoken, nor did he think that any such opposition existed; and speaking for himself as one who was not a partizan, and was a mere outsider, it seemed to him that the country was not quite safe at present. His second remark was this—that one test in this matter, apart from speech-making—for it appeared that the matter would never be settled by Parliamentary eloquence—would be the adoption of some practical means of putting in a concrete way before the country the extent of our Naval and Military Forces. Let the Government bring out the Forces they had got. Let the country see its Forces by land and by sea. Let them suppose, what he hoped would never happen, that this country were attacked. If they were attacked, the attack might be made without any long warning, and let them see what the Government would do in such an event. Let them see where they would put their ships, and where they would put their men, including Volunteers and Militia. Let them not waste the time of the House by discussing whether the Forces under any former Government were inadequate, or whether their own exertions had not improved upon what had previously been done; but as "the proof of the pudding is in the eating," and "as seeing is believing," let them test their resources, and let them see what they could do. Let them see what would be the nearest approach to that which would seem to be the necessary quota of strength in order to avert disaster. Whatever the decision might then be as to the Force necessary, he did not believe that a man in the country would object to any reasonable expenditure which might be entailed. If it were found that the country was not strong enough, then, in the Lord's name, let it acquire such additional strength as was absolutely requisite. Let them also see what generals they had to lead their men. Napoleon used to say that the best troops were those led by the best generals. He believed we had now as good generals in this country as we had ever had, but they had not been tested. They had had small wars, too many of them; but these had not been sufficient to test the ability of our generals to command in war, as war was understood among European nations. Our generals had not had an opportunity of handling 50,000 or 100,000 men, either in the presence of an enemy or otherwise. Napoleon said he had generals who could command 2,000 or 3,000 men, others who could command 10,000, and others who could command 50,000; but he had very few who could handle 100,000. Well, let them give their generals a chance of doing that. Why should we not rehearse with our Army? Rehearsals took place even in theatres. He should hope that he would not be supposed to suggest that we should go to war with a powerful enemy in order to exercise our generals and our troops; but he should wish to impress upon the Government and the country the necessity of taking steps to familiarize our military leaders in times of peace with the handling of large bodies of men, so that in time of war they might not be found incapable of action.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland) said, the object of the present Vote was to provide protection for our military and naval harbours; but, so far as he had heard the debate to-night, it had turned almost entirely upon the ships we required to protect our commerce. He heard nothing so far as to the amount of money, out of the large sum that the Government required at the hands of Parliament, to be devoted to commercial harbours. He should very much have liked to know what the policy of the Government was with regard to commercial harbours. Were they going to spend money on forts and guns——

MR. E. STANHOPE said, that if the hon. Member had read his Memorandum he would not have asked the question.

MR. GOURLEY said, the Memorandum was not before them that night. What was before them that night was a Vote for money to be spent on military harbours and coaling stations, and also on commercial harbours; and he wanted to know how much money was to be spent under the latter head, as his vote in the Division would, in a large measure, depend upon that? The other day the illustrious Duke, the Duke of Cambridge, in his speech to the people of Liverpool, said that Liverpool was entirely unprotected and open to attack, and he hoped the people of Liverpool would contribute ample funds for the defence of the town. Well, he (Mr. Gourley) wanted to know whether the Government were going to depend upon local assistance solely, or whether they were going to make grants to Local Authorities for the purpose of enabling them to protect their towns? They had heard a great deal about building forts on the Thames, and at Portsmouth and elsewhere; and what he wanted to guard against was this—that they would not see a repetition of what was called the Palmerstonian folly. He was anxious to know what was to be done for the protection of the commerce in our harbours in the event of war. In his opinion, in the event of war, the commerce in our commercial harbours would only be in danger supposing an enemy's cruiser escaped the vigilance of our Fleet. How were our ships to be protected against the swift cruisers of an enemy? In these days we knew that cruisers could deliver effective fire at a distance of five miles. Well, how were we going to protect our military and commercial harbours from an enemy's cruisers should they escape the vigilance of the squadron and attempt to damage ports such as Liverpool, Leith, and those on the Tyne, Clyde, Wear, &c.? Had the Government any policy? The other day he had asked a question upon the point, but had only received an evasive answer. He should like to repeat the query now, and ask how much of this money was to be spent on the defence of our commercial harbours, and how much upon military harbours? Naval men that night had asked that we should have more ships. In the event of war, a great deal of our commerce would be diverted into neutral bottoms, and neutral ships would carry almost all our food, as our own ships, on the score of insurance alone, would be transferred temporarily to sail under neutral flags; and he wished, therefore, to know what the Government's policy of defence was, whether it was to be the construction of more forts, more guns and torpedo establishments, or a general reorganization of our Military, Naval, and Auxiliary Forces? Whilst in favour of a strong Navy, he deprecated the present scare. It was, to say the least, un-English. Long before an enemy could land troops, guns, and horses, we could bring all kinds of guns to bear upon his boats, &c. He could only land if covered by guns. Before doing this he would have to destroy our defensive and offensive squadrons. Surely we were not yet without our Drake, Nelson, and Wellington.

Colonel DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) said, he did not rise to stand between the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War and the Division desired, but he did not think that the remarks made by the hon. Member for the Haggerston Division of Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer) should be allowed to pass without some comment. He thought that the hon. Member forgot that this Vote was, in the main, for the defence of our coaling stations, in order to admit of our Mercantile Marine being protected, and to enable food to be brought to this country. The hon. Member had said that for centuries we had done very well without coaling stations. It was true; but for centuries we had not had as many Colonies as we had now, and certainly for centuries we had been without steam. Now, however, it was necessary for us to have stations where our ships could supply themselves with the necessary fuel. He did not think they would hear the severe criticisms which were sometimes uttered in that House if hon. Members would think of this question, not from the war point of view, but from the point of view that it involved the bringing of necessary food here in order to feed the people. If we could feed ourselves it would be a different matter. The hon. Member for Haggerston had said that the people of the United States could go to bed without any fear of scare. Naturally so, because America was capable of feeding not only her own population, but a large part of the rest of the world as well. This country, however, was not in that position. With reference to remarks made as to the naval and military officers who were Members of this House not speaking for the Services so much as for their constituents, so far as he had been able to observe, those officers expressed the views of the Services quite as much as anyone who could be named. The Army, he was quite sure, would accept the advocacy of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Birkenhead (Sir Edward Hamley), while the Navy would be equally ready to accept Sir John E. Commerell and the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) as expressing its wants and wishes. He was willing to acknowledge that in the past there had been lavish expenditure, and it was true that we had in our fortifications guns which had now become obsolete, and that we had ships which were no longer of any use; but he asked whether, in civil life, it was not frequently seen that machinery which had become obsolete had to be replaced with new machinery? Progress had been made in machinery in civil life; but he asked the Committee to believe that that progress in naval and military life had been infinitely greater. The Naval and Military Services had, in these days, become scientific professions, and when a demand was made by them for increased expenditure, what Parliament had to see was that that increase was not due to the greed of the Services, but to the change of conditions. He granted that much economy might still be practised in the administration of the Services, and he felt quite sure that one of the greatest economies that could be effected would be brought about by placing over the Army and Navy one great head—a Minister of Defence. That, however, was not the immediate question before the Committee. It was perfectly certain that if they failed to protect the Mercantile Marine which supplied the country with food—and they could only do that by means of the coaling stations which had been referred to—they would, if they lived, regret it to the end of their days, and their children would read the black record of as terrible a story as had ever been chronicled in the history of the world.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) said, he would ask the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War and the Committee for only a few moments. The demand for reforms in these matters came not from the Front Benches, but from independent Members of the House. It was the independent Members—whether they were called Radicals, or whatever their designation might be ——

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I claim, Sir, to move that the Question be now put.

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and *agreed to.*

Question put accordingly.

The Committee *divided:* Ayes 206; Noes 85: Majority 121.

AYES.

Acland, A. H. D.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Aird, J.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Baumann, A. A.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, H. F.
Beckett, E. W.
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bolton, J. C.
Bond, G. H.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Bruce, Lord H.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, J. A.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Cavendish, Lord E.
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Compton, F.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Captain E. T. D.
Cranborne, Viscount
Craven, J.
Cross, H. S.
Currie, Sir D.
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Darling, C. J.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Davies, W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Donkin, R. S.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Duff, R. W.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Ebrington, Viscount
Egerton, hon. A. J. F.
Elliot, G. W.
Elton, C. I.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. H. W.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fulton, J. F.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon A. E.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Gully, W. C.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Haldane, R. B.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hardcastle, F.
Heath, A. R.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hingley, B.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holloway, G.
Howard, J.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hughes - Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Jackson, W. L.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenny, C. S.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kerans, F. H.
King, H. S.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lambert, C.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Legh, T. W.
Lennox, Lord W. C. G.
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, J. W.
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclure, J. W.
Madden, D. H.
Mallock, R.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Matthews, rt. hn. H.
Mattinson, M. W.

Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Mildmay, F. B.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
Morrison, W.
Moss, R.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Murdoch, C. T.
Neville, R.
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Palmer, Sir C. M.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Richardson, T.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Royden, T. B.
Russell, T. W.
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. M.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stewart, M. J.
Swetenham, E.
Tapling, T. K.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Trotter, Col. H. J.
Vincent, Col. C. E. H.
Waddy, S. D.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
West, Colonel W. C.
Whitley, E.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Woodall, W.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Barry, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, W. L.
Burt, T.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, J. M.
Carew, J. L.
Chance, P. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Commins, A.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cox, J. R.
Crilly, D.
Dillon, J.
Ellis, T. E.
Fenwick, C.
Finucane, J.
Firth, J. F. B.
Flynn, J. C.
Foster, Sir W. B.
Gane, J. L.
Gilhooly, J.
Gill, T. P.
Gourley, E. T.
Graham, R. C.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.
Healy, M.
Hooper, J.
Hoyle, I.
Illingworth, A.
James, hon. W. H.
Joicey, J.
Jordan, J.
Kenny, J. E.
Kenny, M. J.
Lalor, R.
Lane, W. J.
Leake, R.
Lewis, T. P.
Lockwood, F.
M'Cartan, M.
M'Donald, P.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Marum, E. M.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
Pease, H. F.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Pinkerton, J.
Power, P. J.
Priestley, B.
Pyne, J. D.
Quinn, T.
Redmond, J. E.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reid, R. T.
Richard, H.
Roe, T.
Rowlands, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Schwann, C. E.
Sexton, T.
Sheehy, D.
Sheil, E.
Stewart, H.
Sullivan, D.
Sullivan, T. D.
Summers, W.
Tanner, C. K.
Tuite, J.
Wallace, R.
Warmington, C. M.
Wayman, T.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.
Cremer, W. R.
Labouchere, H.

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorize the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums, not exceeding £2,600,000, as may be required for the defence of certain Ports and Coaling Stations, and making further provisions for Imperial Defence.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That interest at the rate of three per centum per annum on such or so much of the said sum as may be borrowed shall be paid out of the moneys to be provided by Parliament for Army Services."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.): Sir, when the previous proposal came before the Committee embodied in the Resolution with regard to the Australian ships, I ventured to enter my protest against raising money for the purpose by way of loan, instead of making it a charge upon the ordinary Estimates of the year. And there are peculiar circumstances with regard to the money now asked for which would make it altogether unprecedented, that we should raise it by means of a loan. I am not quite sure how the Government make up this precise sum of £2,600,000. So far as I can see from the Estimate laid on the Table, the fortifications of military ports will cost £3,194,759, and of Commercial harbours £1,938,511; in all about £5,000,000. Then we have to add to that the balance outstanding, and not yet expended on the fortifications of the coaling stations, which amounts to about £835,000; so that the total expenditure which the War Office alleges to be required for the fortifications of our ports at home and coaling stations abroad is nearly £6,000,000. My point is that we have here a proposal to raise by loan a sum of £2,600,000 for the purposes of fortification, and according to the confession of the Government in these Papers the sum asked for is not anything like that which is required. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) says in his Memorandum, that the sum to be provided is £2,955,000, of which £799,430 is required for Ammunition, and then he goes on to say, that—

"It must be fully understood that the scheme about to be submitted does not pretend to be an exhaustive one, or to complete all the fortifications that the military authorities think necessary to be carried out."

I have always understood it to be an admitted canon that a loan should never be resorted to, except in cases of a great undertaking of a special, definite and complete character, so that the country may see exactly for what it is they are going to pay. If this money was required, it ought to be provided out of the Estimates. The work is to be spread over three years, so that the money might also be taken in three succeeding Estimates. It is not as if this was to be spent in one year; the cost is to be spread over three years, and I cannot see why the House of Commons should not be called upon to find the money for each year in the ordinary way. I do not know whether I am in Order in alluding to the next Resolution; but the arrangement there proposed does not commend itself to my judgment, on account of the extraordinary way in which the expenditure is to be hidden and concealed from view by the use of the Suez Canal money. At present, I shall call the attention of the Committee to one point, that in this instance a loan is being proposed to meet this charge, not to complete the final account, but avowedly for a partial dealing with a great undertaking, and including, as I have said before, money for the purchase of guns which certainly should be provided for in the Estimates, and not by means of a loan.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I cannot agree with the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, that this money is required for an incomplete scheme. It is a complete scheme. So far as it goes, it is a complete scheme which will fortify the coaling stations and military ports. It is as complete a scheme as that for the localization of the Forces, which was dealt with by means of a loan by the Administration of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in 1872. At that time, that special service was dealt with by a loan. The present is a special service, and we propose to deal with it in the same way, and we can see very little difference between the cases. If that mode of procedure was legitimate in one case, we consider it to be legitimate in this other. I will not dispute with the right hon. Gentleman that he has a fair point in saying that guns have not hitherto been provided for by means of a loan; but I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the guns which are to be bought out of this money are not ordinary quick-firing or field-guns, but are guns which are almost equivalent to fortifications; and, under the circumstances, I think it would be mere pedantry not to treat such guns as coming under that head. The right hon. Gentleman will also see that we do not propose to take any money by loan for ammunition or for quick-firing guns, or for any purposes of a merely temporary kind. But we think that these larger guns may fairly be brought within the purview of the same principle which has been applied by previous Governments to the provision for special schemes. My right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) began to deal with a question which the Chairman ruled that he was not in Order in alluding to, and he then went on to criticise the Government, because, after reducing the Army Estimates, it now asks for a loan for so small an amount. It is to be remarked that, in the case of the localization of the Forces in 1872, a loan of £3,500,000 was raised, although the Army Estimates had been reduced by £1,000,000 sterling, as compared with those of the year before, and at that time also the Income Tax was reduced from 6*d.* to 4*d.*, notwithstanding which the loan for special purposes was provided for by a special Vote. Therefore, I think it will be seen that we have good precedent for the proposal which we are now making, and I do not think that my right hon. Friend will say that the difference between the two sums will be sufficient to destroy the force of the precedent.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am very sorry to have to go back to the charge I made originally, that the Government scheme is not a complete one. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer says that the scheme is a complete one; but against that I quote the Secretary of State for War, who said it was to be fully understood that the scheme now before the House does not pretend to be an exhaustive one; and the loan to be raised now will go in payment of expense for the fortification of coaling stations, which up to this time has been provided out of the Estimates of the year. As a portion of the expense has already been provided for out of the yearly Estimates, I do not see any reason why the remainder should not be dealt with in the same way; and with regard to the obvious precedent which the right hon. Gentleman has found in the loan for the localization of the Forces in barracks, there was in that case two qualities which are absent in the present case. It was for the definite and tangible purpose of erecting buildings which could not be removed, and it provided for services which could not be provided for in the ordinary Estimates of the year. That constituted a legitimate subject for a loan; but, in this matter, the money proposed to be raised by loan is to be applied to purposes that I contend ought to be provided for in the ordinary Estimates.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I would point out to my right hon. Friend that one of the advantages of proceeding by loan in this matter is, that we shall be sure that the work will be carried out from the beginning to the end without interruption or delay. If you proceed by Act of Parliament in this matter, the scheme will be carried out as a whole instead of being liable to be interrupted from year to year. What we have to deplore is that there has been too little regularity and too little continuity in carrying out the plans of successive Governments, and I believe we shall have a better security for the execution of this work if it is made clear by Act of Parliament that it is the will of the Legislature that the work should be carried out.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): My right hon. Friend says that this is a complete scheme; but, at the same time, he has thrown out some hints that there may be other works which will entail future applications for money. I suppose the right hon. Gentleman can suggest if there is likely to be any other work that will require further expenditure.

Mr. GOSCHEN: There may possibly be some consequential works in connection with the scheme which will have to be provided for.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I confess that the hints which the right hon. Gentleman has given should make us careful in the future. My right hon. Friend has quoted the precedent of 1881; but I would point out that there is this difference between the two cases—namely, that the expenditure we are now going to undertake is in respect of works already entered into. We have paid £1,000,000 under the ordinary Estimates, and we are now called upon to complete the work by loan, and that at a time when we have reduced the Army and Navy Estimates. At the time when we are making that reduction, the Government are asking us to vote a sum of £2,600,000, in order to complete these works. That, I venture to say, is almost without precedent, and not at all desirable. But there is a further novelty with regard to this proceeding of the Government. For the first time, they are proposing to pay off a loan, by allocating a particular asset which will not be in course of payment into the Exchequer until after a period of six years. This appears to me a novelty of an extraordinary character. How does my right hon. Friend know that six years hence we shall be better able to pay the loan than we are now? We are at present in a state of peace, and yet we are going to allocate the interest of the Suez Canal Shares—that is to say, to mortgage a special revenue that is not yet due to meet this loan. I say that that is a precedent altogether novel in connection with the finances of the nation; and, as I have always understood that my right hon. Friend is rather a purist in financial matters, I confess that I am rather surprised he should make a proposal of that character. I say it is a dangerous business, and I cannot but think that it will in future create a bad precedent; because, whenever the Government want to provide money in future, they will come down to the House and, upon the strength of this operation, propose to take some special asset to meet the liability.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman is anticipating the next Resolution.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: As a matter of fact, the different Resolutions are put in such a way that it is extremely difficult to deal with the whole scheme; but, of course, Mr. Chairman, I bow to your ruling, and will only deal with the main question of proceeding in this case by loan. On that point, Sir, I have the strongest possible opinion that the precedent you are about to form is a dangerous one, and one which will in future cause regret that the Government should have adopted the present course.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said that hon. Gentlemen on that side objected, quite apart from the question of the interest of the Suez Canal Shares. They objected that the repayment of the loan was not spread over a number of years—that there was no sinking fund—and that the repayment of the principal was to be deferred for years to come. That seemed to him an improper way of meeting the expenditure, and in that view of the case he should vote against the Resolution.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I am somewhat surprised that the right hon. Gentleman has no argument to offer in reply to the statement of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer that, while on a former occasion the Estimates for the Army Service were reduced by £1,000,000, the Government of the day nevertheless thought it right to borrow £3,500,000 for that Service. With reference to the question whether this is a complete scheme or not; it is perfectly true, as my right hon. Friend has said, the proposal put before us by the Military Authorities would require a larger sum of money than is taken in this Bill. Instead of leaving the Estimates totally unexamined, as in previous years, I took them carefully into consideration with the requisite assistance, and the result is that we are able to present to Parliament what is in itself a complete scheme, because it provides for the completion of that portion of our defences which are the most urgent. We felt that our honour was pledged to deal with the defence of the coaling stations at once; we could not allow the matter to drag on year after year when we were asking the Colonies to contribute towards the defence of the Empire, and we, therefore, in good faith to the Colonies, decided to borrow a sum of money to finish the guns and supply the ammunition without any further delay. As my right hon. Friend has pointed out, the guns are now very different from what they were in former days, inasmuch as, being mounted upon hydro-pneumatic carriages, they disappear after firing; and less expensive fortifications are required for their protection. I trust that the Committee will accept the proposal of the Government as one best calculated to meet the urgent requirements of the country.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, he was glad that the Government had to rely almost entirely on hon. Members opposite for support in their proposal. But if there was an objection to the proceeding of the Government before, he thought there was almost a stronger objection to the mode of payment here proposed. Not long ago, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given them a reason of the most extraordinary character when he said that the hands of Parliament would be tied in regard to the continuation of this expenditure. They were told that the expenditure must be carried on for several years. The right hon. Gentleman gave the House and the country no place for repentance, such as many would have been glad to find a few years after what was called the Palmerston scare, when an expenditure of £10,000,000 was resolved on in a panic. Before the work then undertaken was carried out, there were many who saw the folly of the proposal, and would have been glad to curtail the expenditure. He wanted to know why a Government that was in a minority in that House should undertake the very unusual course of fettering the freedom of a future Parliament. Why should the House at that moment be asked to float a loan of that character? It was not that they did not regard their own position in relation to nations on the Continent as being in a normal state; it was because there was in Europe now a state of anxiety and a growing danger of an outbreak of hostilities. If we were to take part in any European conflict, it appeared to him that it was not a very robust proceeding that we should be hesitating about this expenditure. He could easily understand the position of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman had been posing before the country as an economical Chancellor of the Exchequer. On the one hand, he had been getting credit before the country for reducing expenditure; and, on the other hand, he was coming to Parliament with a most feeble proposition to launch the country into expenditure without the moral courage to meet that expenditure in the only way in which it could honestly be met. He saw nothing in the plan now proposed to justify the anticipation of certain sums of money that would come into the Exchequer six years hence. He was happy to think there was on that side of the House a growing feeling against this scheme, or, at any rate, a feeling that where a Government came before Parliament with the assurance that an increased expenditure was necessary, they ought also to make their demands on the House of Commons to meet the expenditure at the time, or not postpone them beyond a reasonable period. There was nothing in the state of the country commercially, industrially, or agriculturally which justified hon. Members in expecting that it would be better able to bear this expenditure hereafter than at present. He looked forward with the greatest possible apprehension at the danger there was of this country taking a part, an unnecessary part, in the possible hostilities which might arise, instead of steering a clear course. If the latter course were adopted, there would be no necessity for this expenditure. If, on the other hand, it was understood that we were to be involved with other nations on the Continent, he maintained that this proposal was a mere flea bite. Besides, it was not a very robust system of finance which postponed the repayment for six years.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 216; Noes 136: Majority 80.—(Div. List, No. 126.)

Resolved, That interest at the rate of three per centum per annum on such or so much of the said sum as may be borrowed, shall be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for Army Services.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, after 1894, all dividends received by the Treasury in respect of Suez Canal Shares, after deduction of the sum required for paying off the bonds issued for the purchase of such shares, be applied in paying the principal of the amount borrowed."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he objected to the Resolution, not only on account of what he should submit was its essentially vicious character, but also on the ground that it was utterly illusory. The Resolution intended to convey that this was an asset, out of which the whole of the expenses connected with Imperial defence could be paid, after deducting the whole of the cost of these shares. He trusted to be able to show to the Committee that that view was utterly incorrect, although it was the view which had been repeatedly advanced in the country during the last few weeks by at least one Member of the present Government, if not by more. He admitted that he conducted this opposition under some difficulty. In the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) there was no statement of the estimated value of the shares. There was no statement of the expenditure which had been incurred since those shares had been acquired, expenses solely consequent on their acquisition, and if that night he was in error in the figures he should submit to the Committee, it was hardly his fault. He put a Question that afternoon to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the average annual and total civil expenditure for the last 12 years preceding the 1st of November, 1875, and for the 12 years since that date, the shares having been acquired early in November, 1875, and he put a similar Question with regard to the military expenditure in Egypt. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not answer him, and he understood him to give as a reason for not answering him, that any brief answer would be misleading, and that the work of collecting the figures was too large to be put to him for an answer to a Question. But surely the right hon. Gentlemen had tried to ascertain the value of the asset he wished the House to pledge, and if he had ascertained it, he ought to be able to state it to the House in reply to an uninformed Member, whose ignorance he might hold up to derision. It was the duty of the right hon. Gentleman to have given the House an estimate of the value of the shares, showing what had been expended on them, and not have left the attack to be conducted by him (Mr. Bradlaugh) in the dark. Owing to his want of official knowledge, there might be errors in his statement, but he would endeavour to make as careful a statement as he possibly could. Although he might be wrong by £1,000,000 or £2,000,000, he assured the Committee that it would be in under-estimating the amounts we had spent. It might astonish the Committee to learn that the shares we held were not ordinary dividend-paying shares, nor at the present time could they have been sold in the market at the price of ordinary Suez Canal Shares. So far as he was aware, those shares were utterly unsaleable at any price at all. There had never been an opportunity since the English Government entered upon dealings in shares in foreign countries of the market value of these shares being tested; but even if these shares were at the full value of the ordinary dividend-paying shares, the £13,000,000 sterling that the shares would be worth would not equal the expense we had already incurred upon them, let alone the amount for which the Committee were asked to-night to make them security. He might have to trouble the Committee with a few details in presenting his view of the case; but he trusted the Committee would pardon him, for that was the only time during the last few years, as far as he was aware, that there had been any opportunity of answering the extraordinary misrepresentations that had been made. Members opposite had gone about the country representing that in consequence of the splendid financial operation entered into by their Party in the past, there was, to use an expression of the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, a nest-egg. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) was going to break the egg, and show its rottenness. Now, we owned in the Suez Canal Company two classes of shares. We had, in the first place, 176,602 shares, and, in the second place, we had 300 shares, or now a larger number, he supposed, to give us the qualifications for Directors. It would strike the Committee at once as an extraordinary thing that, being the owners of 176,602 shares, when we came to want "Directors" to represent us on the Board of the Suez Canal Company—the Director's qualification being, he believed, 100 shares—we had not amongst those 176,602 shares a solitary share sufficient to qualify as a Director. They were shares from which the coupons had been detached, under circumstances which he would deal with presently. In the Suez Canal Company there were 400,000 ordinary shares, of which we owned 176,602, which would pay no dividend to us until the 1st of July, 1894, and which never had paid one farthing of dividend to us at any time since we had been the owners of them. There were, in addition, 223,698 dividend-paying shares, of which we held a sufficient number to qualify men to represent the country on the Board of Directors. In addition, there were 333,333 debentures and 120,000 delegations, which had attached to them the coupons which had been detached from the 176,602 shares which we held. These 120,000 delegations were in the hands of ordinary holders for value, and were not in our hands or under our control. The delegations represented no shareholders' rights at meetings, but 10 votes were accorded by courtesy to Ismail. Those 10 votes were transferred to us, but gave no legal right whatever to speak or vote at general meetings. This was not unimportant, in view of the great boast of the enormous influence acquired by us by the expenditure of the £4,000,000 sterling. There were, in addition, 120,000 debentures, which, he believed, had been repaid; there were 400,000 debentures which were issued at 85 francs, and of these he did not know how many had been paid off. There were 250,000 founders' shares, of which 150,000 belonged to Ismail, and 100,000 to the general public. By the constitution of the Company the profit was divided, so that 15 per cent went to the Egyptian Government, 10 per cent to the founders, 5 per cent for management, and the shareholders got 70 per cent. What had the 176,602 shares cost us? The usual statement was absolutely inaccurate. The usual statement was that they cost, roughly, £4,000,000 sterling, or a little over, including commission. But we had spent in Egypt, in consequence of having these shares—to protect our interests there—an amount which might be much larger than he was going to state, but which was at least £10,000,000 sterling. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not know this at Question time. He understood, from an expression which fell from the right hon. Gentleman during the earlier words of his (Mr. Bradlaugh's) speech, that the right hon. Gentleman was informed upon it now. He was sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not have given an answer at Question time which would in any way mislead him.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he did not understand the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman seemed to suggest that he (Mr. Goschen) knew now more than he did at Question time.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he had suggested that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, judging from a remark he interjected a little while ago, had now ascertained the facts of the case.

MR. GOSCHEN, denied that he was any better informed now than he was at Question time.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, that here, so to speak, we had a horse which cost us £20. It had cost us £40 to keep it, and the stable having been broken into, it had cost us a considerable amount to catch the thieves. The Government only took into account the original cost, and they were about to pledge the horse for £50, although the expenditure had been over and over again more than the animal was worth. He complimented the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the audacity of his financial proposals. At any rate, they understood that the sole cost to the country of these shares was £4,080,000. But he would prove, beyond the possibility of doubt, matters which to the Chancellor of the Exchequer needed no proof, because they were entirely within his knowledge. From the acquisition of these shares an expenditure extending to more than £10,000,000—how much more he did not know—had all been incurred because of the purchase of them, and he contended that before they had a right to propose to pledge the shares for anything else, they should redeem every halfpenny of expenditure in connection with them.

MR. GOSCHEN: We have paid it all.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, that was so; but they had paid it out of the taxpayers' pockets, and the Government were now trying to beguile the taxpayers by the supposition that they had got a watch which they could pawn for £10, when they had spent £15 on it besides its original cost. Surely that was a monstrous way of submitting a proposition to the Committee. He would, however, prove his case. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] He did not often trespass——

THE CHAIRMAN: I confess I am at a loss to see the relevancy of the hon. Gentleman's argument, assuming it to be perfectly sound.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he would try to make his argument relevant. The Resolution was that—

> "After 1894, all dividends received by the Treasury in respect of Suez Canal Shares, after deduction of the sum required for paying off the bonds issued for the purchase of such shares, be applied in paying the principal of the amount borrowed,"

and he was going to show by figures that if the Government paid off the amount for which the bonds had been issued, and paid off, as he said they ought, if they were honest, the additional amount which the shares had cost, there was no balance whatever which they could pledge for the object in view. If that was not relevant to the Resolution, he could not conceive anything which would be relevant to such a subject. Surely it must be relevant to the question whether they should pledge these shares or not, to consider what the shares had cost, what had been our dealings in regard to them, whether the country had stood in respect to them in the relation of loser or gainer; because if we stood in the relation of loser, and there was a large deficit, he submitted it was a monstrous thing that should not be urged in discussion on this Resolution. It was an unusual thing to take a part of the assets of the State, and to propose to hypothecate them for any particular matter of the State. If the Crown Lands had been taken, if any other asset of the State had been taken, he submitted it would have been perfectly relevant in passing the Resolution to go into the question of the entire cost, and adduce reasons why they should not be so pledged. Unless the Chairman directed him not to do so, he would put before the Committee, as an argument why they should not accept this Resolution, the amounts of expenditure in connection with the protection of the Suez Canal Shares. He would show how the expenditure arose out of the purchase of those shares.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I confess I am at a loss to follow the argument. If it were established that there was a debt outstanding, besides the unpaid balances of the bonds, there might be room for an argument against the proposed application of the dividends. I do not understand that even that primary statement is about to be established, and therefore I cannot discover the relevancy of the argument of the hon. Gentleman.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, that part of his argument would be that there was a debt outstanding. Part of his argument would be, that to secure the interest we had got by entering into the contract with an insolvent person, we had guaranteed loans which were still outstanding, which were still unpaid, which formed a charge against these shares, and which ought to be taken into consideration before any dealing with them was permitted. He was entirely in the Chairman's hands, and he should bow with the utmost respect to any intimation he might receive from the Chairman, but he respectfully submitted that that might be urged on such an occasion when such a pretence was made by the Government, when such an absolutely inaccurate pretence was made by the Government, when a pretence not only absolutely inaccurate, but which within the knowledge of the Government they ought not to permit to be made, because it was made for the purpose of inducing the British taxpayers to imagine that this £2,600,000 was being raised without any cost to them. That had been stated in absolute terms by one of the Members of the Government, boasting of the better financial skill of those with whom he was associated, and urging that as a reason why the Government were worthy of the confidence of the country. He should, of course, on the slightest intimation from the Chairman, stop, but unless the hon. Gentleman stopped him——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I am afraid I must stop the hon. Gentleman in the examination he proposes.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, that even if he was stopped upon that point, his objection would be that we had no statement of what the value of these shares were, and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have laid before the House some actuarial statement showing how he made them of sufficient value to meet the charges that were upon them. It was clear that they stood in a different ratio from any other shares. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have shown them what engagements the Government had yet unfulfilled, both in relation to the loans which they had guaranteed—loans which they had guaranteed to enable a man who was insolvent to pay interest—and the obligations to the amount of many millions which were still outstanding, for which the national credit had been pledged. In addition, there was a variety of expenditure connected with the dredging of the Canal, expenses attending the possible construction of a new Canal, or the widening of the present one to meet the traffic. The Committee ought to have before them some statement as to what estimate had been made with regard to this, because it was possible that the expenses in relation to our guarantees, and in relation to the demands upon us, would sweep away the whole of the profits which were supposed to be allocated by this Resolution. He deeply regretted that it was impossible for him to lay before the Committee a statement of what was the actual financial condition of affairs at the present moment, which he avowed would have seemed to him in any other case necessary to enable one to judge of the value of the security that was being pledged. But as he understood that the whole of the past expenditure was entirely outside the argument, he would confine himself to the charges which had yet to be made, although it was not immaterial to the facts that part of the military charges were going on year by year and would come before the House this year as they did last year, as they would next year, and the year afterwards. What calculation had the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer made with regard to these charges? All the right hon. Gentleman chose to tell them was—"Here are some shares which cost £4,080,000, which have never brought us one halfpenny of interest, because, although we had got £200,000 a-year in interest, we had only got it by guaranteeing the credit of our debtor, and by furnishing him with actual cash or enabling him to get actual cash."

When the Bill was introduced, he should probably have an opportunity of doing that which the form of the Resolution did not permit him under the Chairman's ruling to do now. He would ask, however, what calculation had been made for the risk of a competing Canal? The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer knew as well as any man in England, probably better than most men in England, that statements had been circulated to the effect that the English Government was committed by its ownership of 176,602 shares to provide a large sum of money that might be required for the widening of the Canal, or for the enormous dredging work that had to be conducted to keep the traffic from falling away, and it was within the knowledge of the Government that the highest legal opinion had been given that the Concession was a Concession for a limited term. Had the Chancellor of the Exchequer made any calculation for a sinking fund to meet the amount for the redemption of the capital? [Mr. Goschen: Yes.] The right hon. Gentleman said "Yes;" but why had not the Committee the advantage of that information? Why were they asked to agree to this Resolution without any statement in regard to it? The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury made a clear and lucid statement of everything but this. Why was not the Committee taken into the confidence of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon this point? He should not have been subjected to the possibility of its being suggested that he had done what he always tried to refrain from doing, going outside the fair measure of argument, if the right hon. Gentleman had condescended to lay before the Committee information on this subject. The original Concession was for 99 years after the Canal was open. He did not know the precise official date of the opening, but he supposed that some 20 years or more of the 99 years had already passed. The shares, therefore, were diminishing in value every day. Surely there ought to be a sinking fund to provide for the £4,000,000 sterling. If a sinking fund was commenced, he would have suggested, if he had been permitted, that it should also provide for the whole of the £10,000,000 or £12,000,000 spent; it should, at any rate, provide for the possible risk we had incurred. He felt he had only been able to make the very lamest statement against one of the most vicious proposals that was ever made to a Committee of the House of Commons.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, that a very short time was left that night in which to come to a conclusion on this matter, and what he had to suggest was that hon. Members should allow the Government to take the Resolution that evening, and avail themselves of the subsequent opportunity which would be afforded them to discuss the subject. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Of course, the Government were entirely in the hands of the Committee. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had dealt with two points. One was that they ought to establish a connection between these shares and the whole of the Egyptian Expenditure. That, of course, they would repudiate. It was impossible to argue that the whole of our policy in Egypt had been consequent on the acquisition of these shares. If it were, the hon. Member would be justified in bringing the two matters together. But, as he ventured to interject while the hon. Member was speaking, as a matter of fact all the remainder had been paid for, and paid for mainly by the taxpayers during the last two or three years. He contended, and it was the essence of this proposal, that as the taxpayers had, as the right hon. Gentleman suggested, been bearing the great burden of the expenditure in Egypt during the last few years, they and not subsequent generations should have the advantage, or at least part of the advantage of the shares which had been acquired. That was not in opposition to, but in accord with, some of the views which the hon. Member had advanced. No doubt the expenditure upon Egypt had been very large. On the other hand, there was this one operation which had evidently been profitable. The suggestion of the Government was that, in view of the expenditure which was now being incurred, this asset should be devoted for a time to meeting a charge in which both the present and the future taxpayers were equally interested. The hon Member (Mr. Bradlaugh) was perfectly entitled to ask for a declaration as to the value of these shares, and he was not sure that the hon. Gentleman was not justified in criticizing him (Mr. Goschen) for not having given before this further details with regard to the matter. These shares would be entitled, when the year 1894 arrived, to the ordinary dividends paid on all other shares. The dividends were there. We were not in receipt of them, but we should be in receipt of them in 1894, and it was proposed to apply them in 1894 to paying off the loan now asked for. The Government were prepared to prove that the dividends would pay off the Bonds and pay them off in a very short time. The figures were as follows:—The present dividend was £3 5*s*. per share, and on 176,000 shares the amount was equal to about £570,000 a-year. By the year 1894, according to the Government's proposal, they would have paid off the whole of the £3,200,000 which was still due on the loan of £4,000,000, so the sum of £570,000 would be available to pay off the loan of £2,600,000 it was proposed to raise. There would be no further liability to pay off the shares, because the whole would have been redeemed, he believed, by that time. The hon. Member would see that even if there was a considerable diminution in the receipts—if the dividends on the shares were reduced from £570,000 to £400,000, that would be sufficient in a very few years to pay off the £2,600,000 which it was proposed to raise. The hon. Member asked what the actuarial value of these shares was at the present time. Speaking in round figures the actuarial value of these shares at the present moment was £9,800,000. That was an asset which we had got, and against that we owed £3,200,000; so that there was a margin, not of £2,600,000, but there was a margin of more than £6,000,000 to pay off the £2,600,000 proposed to be borrowed. But for the desire of the Government to remain possessors of these shares it would be perfectly possible to go into the market and to sell these shares for a sum that would approach very nearly £10,000,000. That was what they believed would be the value in the market. But they did not propose to dispose of this valuable asset. They proposed to keep this asset. Anyone who was acquainted with the general value and financial position of the Suez Canal shares was perfectly well aware that there could be no safer operation than to pledge the balance of these shares beyond the £3,200,000 for the sum of £2,600,000, which was the amount of the proposed loan. That, in a few sentences, was the actuarial position of these shares; a position which he thought must be satisfactory to the country. He had not time to enter into the general argument as to whether it was legitimate or not to pledge these dividends which would come in; but he thought it would be perfectly legitimate, if the Government were so desirous, to sell a portion of the shares for the advantage of the taxpayers of the present generation, who had been liable to so great an expenditure in Egypt. The Government did not propose to do that. They proposed to keep these shares, and to devote their proceeds for a few years to the payment of the instalments of the loan. After they had paid those instalments there would still remain a most valuable asset, an asset giving a sum of £500,000 to the future taxpayers for their benefit. He need not say that it was not only this asset which was available to pay off the loan of £2,600,000. If there were balances from year to year, any Chancellor of the Exchequer would be perfectly at liberty to pay off any Exchequer Bills which might be raised for the purpose of that loan. It was said that there was no precedent for such a course as this. The fact was there was no precedent for an asset of this character and the particular advantage which might be derived from it.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked if he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the capital of the Suez Canal Company was to be paid off by 1894?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he proposed to pay off a portion. He proposed to pay off—and he said so in his Budget speech—the whole of the outstanding balance of £3,200,000.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman had explained where he was to get the money to pay off the £3,200,000. If they applied the £200,000 a-year to that purpose, he supposed that in 1894 there would still be remaining about £2,500,000.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, there were large resources for paying off portions of the National Debt, and a portion of this was to be paid off out of the surplus of last year.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he confessed he did not quite understand the matter. It seemed to him that Her Majesty's Government were borrowing money to pay off other money. He did not understand it at all; but, be that as it might, he did not propose to enter into the peculiar view the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had taken. This certainly was a subject which ought to be discussed at greater length. The objection was that in 1888 the House should take upon itself to dispose of an asset which we hoped to receive in 1894. That seemed quite contrary to good finance, and contrary to common sense and reason. He was one of those who never opposed the purchase of the Suez Canal shares, but he maintained that these shares were an asset which had no connection whatever with the particular Vote before them. This was a Vote to make provision for the protection of our coaling stations, and he thought that if this expenditure was to be incurred, the Government ought to go fairly and squarely to the country and tell them they must find the money. A great many things might happen before 1894. The Suez Canal might "bust" up; it might be superseded by something else. In any case, it was extremely unfair that the Government in Office in 1888 should endeavour to forestall the Government in Office in 1894. He thought it was necessary that the debate should be adjourned, and that the Committee should have another opportunity of fairly and fully discussing the subject. With that view, he begged to move that the debate be now adjourned.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee also report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

NATIONAL DEFENCE [REMUNERATION, &c.].

COMMITTEE.

Matter—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of remuneration to Railway Companies for receiving and forwarding traffic under the authority of a Secretary of State or the Admiralty, and of compensation to any person suffering loss for anything done under such authority, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to make better provision respecting National Defence."—(*Mr Secretary Stanhope.*)

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he objected to the matter being proceeded with at such a late hour.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, he hoped the hon. Member would allow the Resolution to pass through Committee. It was a merely formal proceeding, contingent upon the proposals before the House, and it was not usual to offer opposition to such.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he must press his objection.

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

PUBLIC BUSINESS — THE BANN, BARROW, AND SHANNON DRAINAGE BILLS.

OBSERVATIONS.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.) said, he did not know whether it was the pleasure of the House that he should now proceed with a statement on the introduction of the three Drainage Bills, of which Notice had been given?

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he was sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but really the subject required a great deal of consideration, and he was sure the statement would necessarily be curtailed if it were delivered now; but Irish Members were anxious to hear the Government view at large, and he would beg the right hon. Gentleman not to condense his remarks in the endeavour to introduce the Bills at such a time, but to defer the introduction to an hour when full justice could be done to the subject.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he entirely agreed that it was desirable the Government proposals should be fully explained, and if there was any general desire that that explanation should be deferred to a more convenient season, he would not stand in the way of such a desire.

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY TO THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND BILL.—[Bill 201.]

(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Jackson.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee be deferred till To-morrow."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) begged to point out the futility of such an arrangement. Tuesday was a private Members' day, and, as the Motions of private Members would have precedence of Government Business, there would not be the slightest chance of the Bill being taken. Then the same remark applied to Wednesday, and Thursday was appropriated to the Local Government Bill, which was to be continued at a Morning Sitting on Friday. Honestly, he would ask the Government to give up the ghost of this Bill. [*Cries of* "No!"] Of course, the worthy Alderman opposite objected to giving up the ghost of anything, even of the City of London administration. But, considering the position in which the Bill stood, would it not be better at once to put it off for six months. He strongly objected to this useless setting down of an Order from day to day.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he would admit that it was extremely improbable that the Bill would be taken to-morrow; but everybody must know the uncertainty of the course of Parliamentary Business, and he had known the most important matters run through in a most unexpected manner. He was unwilling to lose a possible chance by not putting the Bill down. He was ready to admit also that the Bill could not come on on Wednesday or Thursday, but still that should not affect the setting down the Bill as proposed.

Question put.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I must object to that, and we can take a Division.

Mr. SPEAKER: The majority of the House may decide if the Bill should be set down for this or a future day.

Question again put.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is not a preponderance of voices for the later day, and there can be no Division on the subject.

Committee *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (LAND COMMISSION) BILL.—[Bill 199.]

(*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Colonel King-Harman.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee be deferred till To-morrow."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he would again ask why put the Bill down for a day that must inevitably be occupied with other Business? He had himself a Motion on the general condition of Ireland that would in itself take up all available time.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he wished to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland, if there was really any intention of pressing this Bill forward or not? If there was not such an intention, what was going to be done to remove the block in the Land Court? To the removal of that block the Bill was directed; but the Bill was not pressed forward, and the block continued; and, on behalf of the tenants of Ulster, he asked what was going to be done?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he had done his utmost to bring the Bill on, and that his efforts had not been successful was due to causes over which neither he or his Colleagues had any control, and which had greatly delayed that progress of Business they had hoped to make in the last few weeks. That was the sole cause of delay with the Bill. But he was far from despairing of passing the Bill within a reasonable time. The hon. Member was aware that other Bills had taken a much longer time than the Government expected, and the Local Government Bill must be proceeded with rapidly. Hence it was that there was delay with this Bill. For putting the Bill down for to-morrow, he could only repeat the reason he had just given, and he was following strictly the Parliamentary practice adopted by successive Governments, based, he presumed, on the fact that the daily course of Parliamentary Business was always attended by some uncertainty. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) said he had a Motion that he would guarantee would take up the whole time, and prevent the Bill coming on. But unforeseen contingencies might arise, the hon. and learned Member might be indisposed.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Yes; or I might be put into gaol.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Many accidents might alter the anticipated course of Business, and, therefore, he was anxious not to lose the remotest chance of proceeding with the Bill.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he desired only a word in the interest of historical accuracy. The right hon. Gentleman said the delay with the Bill was occasioned by causes over which the Government had no control; but really it was due to a cause over which the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues had full control. The only reason why the Bill for removing the block in the Land Court was not in an advanced instead of in a backward stage, was entirely due to the persistency with which the Government, in and out of season, had pressed forward that unfortunate measure, the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill, of which that night he hoped the House had heard the last.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee *deferred* till *Thursday.*

COUNTY COURTS CONSOLIDATION AND AMENDMENT BILL [*Lords*].

(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

[BILL 263.] CONSIDERATION.

Order for Consideration read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Consideration, as amended, be deferred till Thursday."

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, seeing that obviously there would be no chance of taking the Bill on that day, he would ask that it should be postponed to some day when there would be a reasonable prospect of it coming on.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight) said, the postponement was merely *pro formâ;* but he would confer with his right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury, and communicate with the right hon. Gentleman.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Consideration, as amended, *deferred* till *Thursday.*

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY FOR INJURIES TO WORKMEN [REMUNERATION].—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked to which of the Standing Committees, that of Law or Trade, was it proposed to refer the Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT) (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) (Sheffield, Hallam) said, he was not in a position to give the desired information.

Committee thereupon *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

GLEBE LANDS OCCUPATION BILL.

(*Mr. Mowbray, Mr. Childers, Mr. John Talbot, Mr. Tomlinson.*)

[BILL 34.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Mowbray.*)

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, the House should really have some knowledge of what they were assenting to in giving a second reading to the Bill.

Mr. MOWBRAY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said, the Bill was introduced last Session by Mr. Baggallay, and the hon. Member did not then object to it. The particular object of the Bill was to extend the principle of the Agricultural Holdings Act to the case of incumbents in the occupation of Glebe land, so that when an incumbent died, or changed his incumbency, his representatives should be entitled to receive from his successor compensation for permanent improvements. The Bill had the support of many hon. Members on the other side, and he hoped it would receive a second reading.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he objected to the Bill being taken at an unreasonable hour.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Second Reading *deferred* till *Wednesday.*

MOTIONS.

DRAINAGE AND IMPROVEMENT OF LANDS (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jackson, Bill to confirm Two Provisional Orders under "The Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Act, 1863," and the Acts amending the same, relating to the Ballycolliton Drainage District, in the county of Tipperary, and the Killard River Drainage District, in the county of Cork, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Jackson and Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 277.]

NORTH SEA FISHERIES BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill to carry into effect an International Convention respecting the Liquor Traffic in the North Sea, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Baron Henry de Worms.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 278.]

TORQUAY HARBOUR AND DISTRICT ACT (1886) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Bill to repeal the thirty-eighth section of "The Torquay Harbour and District Act, 1886," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. Charles Acland, Mr. Stuart, and Mr. Schwann.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 279.]

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Leave given to the Chairmen's Panel to make a Report.

Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *reported* from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had appointed Sir Matthew White Ridley to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, which may by order of the House be committed to such Standing Committee.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRADE, SHIPPING, AND MANUFACTURE.

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures have leave to sit and proceed with the Railway and Canal Companies Charges Bill, and the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill [*Lords*], on Monday 11th June, at Twelve of the clock.—(*Sir Matthew White Ridley.*)

House adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 5th June, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Sat First in Parliament—The Lord St. John of Bletso, after the death of his brother.

Public Bills — *Second Reading* — Municipal Franchise Extension (Ireland) (80), *negatived.*

Committee—Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, Amendment (91-131).

Committee—Report—Re-committed—Universities (Scotland) (47-128).

Third Reading — Glebe Lands* (119), and *passed.*

AFRICA (SOUTH)—TREATY WITH THE AMANDEBELE CHIEF—ZULULAND. QUESTION.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it was true that an important agreement had been entered into with the Chief of the Amandebele country, and whether the Treaty would secure for our South African Colonies free access into the interior of Africa? He also asked whether any recent intelligence had been received as to the state of affairs in Zululand?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Lord Knutsford): I am glad to inform the noble Earl that we have concluded a Treaty with the Chief of the Amandebele tribe, and I think that the best course for me to take will be to read its terms. The Treaty runs as follows:—

> "The Chief Lo Bengula, ruler of the tribe known as the Amandebele, together with the Mashuna and Makakalaka, tributaries of the same, hereby agrees to the following articles and conditions—that peace and amity shall continue for ever between Her Britannic Majesty, her subjects, and the Amandebele people; and the contracting Chief Lo Bengula engages to use his utmost endeavours to prevent any rupture of the same, to cause the strict observance of this Treaty, and so to carry out the spirit of the treaty of friendship which was entered into between his late father, the Chief Umsiligoas, with the then Governor of the Cape of Good Hope in the year of Our Lord 1836. It is hereby further agreed by Lo Bengula, Chief in and over the Amandebele country, with its dependencies as aforesaid, on behalf of himself and people, that he will refrain from entering into any correspondence or treaty with any foreign State or Power to sell, alienate, or cede, or permit, or countenance any sale, alienation, or cession of the whole or any part of the said Amandebele country under his chieftainship or upon any other subject without the previous knowledge and sanction of Her Majesty's High Commissioner for South Africa."

I am strongly of opinion that a Treaty of this kind will be of great advantage as securing free access and trading facilities for our Colonies, and also as securing the Chief himself against unwary concessions of land to individuals or to foreign nations. I am obliged to the noble Lord, also, for giving me an opportunity of reading the last telegram from the Governor of Natal with respect to the very much to be regretted outbreak in Zululand. The telegram, which is dated June 4, runs as follows:—

> "Dinizulu and Undabuko, having collected armed native followers at Ceeza, made raids upon and stole cattle of friendly peaceful Usutus. Warrants of arrest of Dinizulu and other ringleaders on charge of cattle stealing were issued 2nd June. Police, rifles, troops, went to Ceeza to execute warrants; were successfully resisted and compelled to retreat, Two men reported killed and two wounded. Levy of Basutos under M'Keen, and reinforcements of troops proceed immediately to support authority."

It will be seen from the above that the report which appears in the telegram in some of this morning papers that Dinizulu had attacked and routed Usibepu, is incorrect. I may add that I have telegraphed to-day to Sir Arthur Havelock to say that all means are to be taken to put down this insurrection as speedily as possible.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(*The Marquess of Lothian.*)

(NO. 47.) COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill."—(*The Marquess of Lothian.*)

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, that he wished to address a few words to the noble Marquess with reference to a very important question of principle contained in the Bill. He referred to the question of affiliation and incorporation. He thought it was more convenient to raise the question at this point than to wait until the Bill reached Committee, because the question of incorporation and affiliation ran through many of the clauses, and it would be very difficult to adequately discuss it on any single clause. At the same time, it would be to the advantage of the House if they knew distinctly what the intentions of the Government were on this point before they went into Committee. This question of affiliation and incorporation was the most important point in the whole Bill. It had excited very great interest in the Universities and Colleges affected, and, moreover, however great might be the amount of confidence which they felt in the Commission, this point was too important for Parliament to hand it over to the Commission without giving very distinct and clear instructions to the Commission thereupon. As the Bill originally stood, in the 14th clause distinct instructions were given to the Commissioners. They were to have power to affiliate and incorporate or unite to any University Colleges duly incorporated and endowed and to admit the teaching of such Colleges as qualifying for graduation in the Universities. That clause recognized no less than four different kinds of incorporation or affiliation. But when they saw the Amendments of the noble Marquess they found that that clause had been struck out, and in lieu thereof there appeared two different forms of expression by which he intended to explain what the powers of the Commissioners were. As they stood now in the Amendments a College might either be added to or it might form part of a University. The appearance of that Amendment excited a good deal of interest and some apprehension on the part of some of the Universities, and when he read it himself he read it in this sense, that it was intended as a limitation of the powers of the Commissioners and that there was a preference on the part of the Government, rather implied than expressed, that the Commissioners should apply themselves rather to the policy of incorporation than to the policy of affiliation. He hoped the Government would leave the largest powers and the greatest possible latitude to the Commissioners on this point. He did not think it could be their intention to limit the powers of the Commissioners in the way he had stated; but it would be very satisfactory to the Universities and Colleges and to the House if they were to hear from the noble Marquess what his intentions were. The noble Marquess might make some alterations in one or two ways. He might either re-insert his old clause and define the words "incorporation" and "affiliation," or if there was an objection to that—and he believed there were objections in defining these words adequately—he hoped the noble Marquess would adopt some very clear language by which it might be made plain what the powers to be given to the Commissioners were. He would suggest to the noble Marquess that he should insert in lieu of the clause struck out another clause empowering the Commissioners to unite Colleges duly incorporated and endowed, either wholly or partially, with any University; and, secondly, to admit the teaching of the College or of the individual teacher as qualifying for graduation in any University. If the noble Marquess would explain clearly to the House and to the satisfaction of the Universities what course he proposed to take on this point he would greatly facilitate the progress of the Bill.

The Earl of ROSEBERY said, that before the noble Marquess rose to reply he should like to say that, in his own view, and in the view of all with whom he had spoken on the matter, the suggested words "added to" instead of "affiliated to" did not meet the requirements of the case, and were, in themselves, somewhat bald. He had always held with regard to this question that the simplest way would be to stick to the original word in the Bill, the word "affiliated." If they defined affiliation in the Interpretation Clause the noble Marquess would get out of an enormous number of difficulties which he had plunged into by the later Amendments he had placed on the Paper. He quite admitted, if he raised this objection, that he was bound to produce his definition, and he would do so. With regard to the word "incorporation," that was a word which must be defined by a lawyer, having regard to the exact meaning of the word in Scotland, a meaning which he did not think was quite kept in view by the framers of the Bill when they first laid it on the Table. He would propose to the noble Marquess the adoption of these words—

> "Affiliation for the purposes of this Act shall mean such a connection between an existing University and a College as shall be entered into by their mutual consent, under conditions approved by the Commissioners, or, on the termination of their powers, by the Scotch University Committee and the Privy Council."

He believed that would cover the whole ground contemplated by the Bill, and would enormously simplify the clause. He threw this out for the consideration of the noble Marquess. If the noble Marquess did accept the Amendment, he was convinced that the difficulties would be simplified. It was to be a condition of mutual consent. He knew it might be said that the Universities would not consent to affiliation readily. He very much doubted that; but as the Government were going to put into the Bill clauses to the effect that at any moment, by the wish of either party, the connection might be terminated, it was clear that it must be entered into by the consent of both parties. That was the only explanation he had to offer on the point. He had one or two other Amendments which he proposed to put down that night. One of these Amendments would give the Commissioners power, or rather would insist upon the Commissioners seeing that the Governing Body of the University was adequately represented on the Governing Body of any affiliated College. That was a rule to which, he believed, there was no exception in the English Universities. It seemed to be fair in itself, and he did not think it would meet with any objection from the Government. The last point he had to touch on was this. His noble Friend who spoke last said truly that they ought not to tie too strictly the hands of the Commissioners. They would have much more confidence in the Commissioners if the noble Marquess would tell the House who they were to be. The announcement of the names would be exceedingly welcome to the Universities and to the public.

Lord WATSON said, that the suggestions of the noble Earl were well worthy of consideration. The difficulty which he felt in common with many others with regard to the terms of the original Bill arose from the circumstance that the words "affiliation," "union," and "incorporation" were inserted without any definition whatever, and without any direction to guide the Commissioners, or, after the Commission had terminated, to guide the authorities of the Universities as to the terms on which they were to be permitted to associate themselves with bodies outside the Universities. The principle which ran through the Amendments proposed by the noble Marquess was this — that the Universities and institutions which were devoted to instruction in the higher branches of learning should be at liberty to form a connection with each other on such terms as they might mutually agree upon, provided only that those terms met with the assent of the Commissioners, and, after the expiry of their powers, with the assent of the Universities Committee of the Privy Council. The words suggested by the noble Earl seemed to him to carry out that principle, and they got rid of a great deal of verbiage which was necessary in using the words "added to" or "connected with." When the clauses of the Bill were explained, the provision that "affiliation" was to consist in admitting those outside bodies to the Universities upon terms which they themselves assented to, and which met with the approval of the University authorities for the time being, there could be no risk of misconstruction. He, therefore, appealed to the noble Marquess whether he would not accept that simpler form of definition. It appeared to him that there ought to be some limit to the representation of outside institutions in the University Court. As the Bill stood, it made it imperative that the Commission should admit to the University Court the Principals of those institutions, and such members of the Governing Body as might be selected, according to the regulations to be laid down by the Commission. What would be the effect of that provision in swelling the already too bulky University Court; and what would be its effect upon the interests of the teaching body of the University and its representatives? Take, by way of illustration, the University of Edinburgh. The Senatus consisted of 40 members, and in the Court they had four representatives, or one in 10. The institutions with which it was proposed the University in future should connect itself were small bodies, not containing a large number of teachers. If they were going to give three, or four, or five, or six teachers from such institutions one or two representatives, as the Bill proposed, the result would be that 15 or 20 teachers from those outside institutions might have 10 or even 12 representatives in the University Court; whilst a teaching body of 40, as in the case of Edinburgh, might only have four representatives. It appeared to him that, on the ground even of reciprocity, that would be most unfair. Would it not be better to leave it to the Commissioners to determine what should be the limit of the representation to be given to the outside institutions, and as to how the representatives should be selected?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (The Marquess of LOTHIAN) said, that the question put by the noble Earl opposite was one which, as the noble Earl said, touched one of the main principles of the Bill—namely, the manner in which Colleges should be added to the Universities. The Amendments which he proposed to lay on the Table were framed in deference to the opinion expressed by all who took part in the discussion on the second reading—namely, that the words in the Bill as it now stood were not sufficiently defined, and therefore did not make it clear to the Commissioners and the public in what way the other Colleges should be added or affiliated to the Universities. He attempted afterwards to give effect to the opinion so expressed by giving a more accurate definition of the terms "affiliation," "incorporation," or other form of union; but he found the difficulties that surrounded such a definition to be very great, and he therefore thought it better, instead of using words which might be open to different meanings, to leave the question as open as possible by omitting "affiliated" and "incorporated," and inserting the words "added to." He quite agreed with the noble Earl that those words were in themselves bald and meagre; but there was some advantage in having words which did not attempt to express too much. The whole object of the Government was that they should as much as possible leave it for the Commissioners to decide in what manner the union might take place in every possible instance. There was no possible doubt that the circumstances of different cases must vary very much. There was the case of the University College of Dundee, fully equipped in every manner, and the case of the Colleges at the other end, which admitted of the affiliation of individual teachers. The great object was to admit every possible form of union which might be within these two limits. He would certainly take into consideration the suggestion made by the noble Earl who had spoken first, and the definition which had been proposed by the noble Earl who followed would also be considered. The Government could not, of course, pledge themselves at once on the subject; but if they could see any definition that would not have the effect of hampering or tying the hands of the Commissioners in any way in reference to that question, and which would be distinctly understood by the public of Scotland as giving power to the Commissioners to admit any College to any form of affiliation to an existing University, he should be happy to consider it. He was afraid what he had said might not meet the views of the noble Earl—namely, that he should give an accurate definition of what was the meaning of "added to;" but he thought he had said enough to show that the object of the Government in this matter was simply to leave the hands of the Commissioners as free and untied as possible. With reference to the suggestion of the noble and learned Lord (Lord Watson) as to the representation of the University Court, that had been a very difficult point, and he agreed there was great force in what his noble and learned Friend had said. If the Bill was recommitted and reprinted he would consider that question. He hoped the House would allow the Bill to go into Committee *pro formâ*, and if that were done he might be able to announce the names of the Commissioners before the rising of the House.

Motion *agreed to;* House in Committee accordingly; Bill *reported* without Amendment: Amendments made: Bill *re-committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next; and to be *printed* as amended. (No. 128.)

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE EXTENSION (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 80.)

(*The Lord Denman.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD DENMAN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to extend the municipal franchise to women throughout Ireland. He would not appoint a day for Committee until many Petitions had been presented for the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Denman.*)

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN) said, he must oppose the Bill, which proposed to give the municipal franchise to women throughout Ireland, without altering the franchise in other respects, as was done in the case of the Belfast Municipal Franchise Bill of last year. He moved, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time that day three months.

Amendment *moved,* to leave out ("now") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day three months.")—(*The Lord Privy Seal.*)

LORD DENMAN said, that the measure was a very simple one, which could do no harm, and he hoped that their Lordships would not refuse to pass it. The confining of the Bill to voters who had a £10 occupation, as was done in the Belfast Act, and as was proposed by the Local Government Bill—which might never be carried—would be unfortunate.

On Question, Whether the word ("now") shall stand part of the Motion? *Resolved* in the *negative;* and Bill to be read 2ª *this day three months.*

THE SCOTTISH UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION.—STATEMENT.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (The Marquess of LOTHIAN) said, he was now able to state to their Lordships the names of the Gentlemen he proposed to act as Commissioners under the Scottish Universities Act. They were—Lord Kinnear, Chairman of the Commissioners; the Dean of Faculty, the Earl of Crawford, Lord Watson, the Marquess of Bute, Mr. A. B. M'Grigor, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Mr. Craig-Sellar, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. James A. Campbell, Sir James Crichton Browne, and Mr. Vary Campbell. The Secretary he was not able to name just yet.

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock till Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 5th June, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered—First Reading*—Parliamentary Voters Lists (Ireland) * [280]; Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland) (1877) Amendment * [281]; Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers) Act (1875) Amendment * [282].

First Reading—Law of Distress Amendment * [283].

Committee—Distress for Rent (Dublin) [159]—R.P.

Withdrawn—Steam Boilers * [160].

Provisional Order Bills—*Second Reading*—Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 7) * [272]; Local Government (No. 8) * [271].

Considered as amended — Pier and Harbour * [221]; Water * [227].

Third Reading—Metropolitan Police * [212]; Public Health (Scotland) (Denny and Dunipace Water) * [229], and *passed*.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

VALUATION ROLL (SCOTLAND)—"INHABITANT OCCUPIERS," OR "TENANTS."

Mr. PRESTON BRUCE (Fifeshire, W.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the fact that the names of householders who are workmen occupying houses belonging to their employers on a tenancy determinable with their employment, but paying rent in the shape of a periodical deduction from their wages, are in Mid Lothian and Fife inserted in the "Inhabitant Occupier" column of the Valuation Roll, whereas in Lanarkshire they are inserted in the "Tenant" column; in how many counties the former, and in how many the latter, system obtains; whether both systems are legal; and, if so, with whom lies the discretion of deciding in each case which system shall be adopted; and, whether on the adoption of the one or the other depends the having or not having of school board and municipal votes by a very large number of householders, especially in the industrial and mining districts?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I apologize for not being in my place when the Question was first asked. I was under examination upstairs before a Select Committee, and I assure my hon. Friend I would much rather have been here. I answer the first paragraph in the affirmative; 13 counties follow the first practice, and three the second; and in three counties the practice varies according to the mode in which the master holds the property. If he is proprietor, the occupiers are entered as tenants; if he rents the property in which his *employés* live, they are entered as inhabitant occupiers. The remaining counties have no cases falling under the Question. In answer to the third paragraph, I have to say that both systems cannot be legal, and the Registration Court is the proper tribunal to say which should be followed. I answer the fourth paragraph in the affirmative. It is certainly desirable that this matter should be brought to the test of legal decision, as the present position of matters is anomalous and unsatisfactory.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—CLAUSE 24 — THE WATERFORD ESTATE, CO. DERRY.

Mr. MULHOLLAND (Londonderry, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the purchasers of the Waterford estate, in County Derry, have applied to the Board of Works for a reduction in their annual payments, in accordance with the provisions of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," Clause 24; and, what reply (if any) has been made to their application?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): This is a Question for the Treasury. I do not see my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary here at preent; but, no doubt, he will answer the Question subsequently.

CHANNEL TUNNEL BILL—LETTERS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

Sir EDWARD WATKIN (Hythe) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If, prior to the second reading of the Channel Tunnel Bill, he will obtain and place in the Library, for the perusal of Members, a copy of a letter (which has been read by the present Secretary to the Board of Trade, and is in the possession of Lord Rothschild), from the late Earl of Derby to the late Earl of Beaconsfield, expressing opinions in favour of the construction of a tunnel to connect England and France; and also a copy of a letter from the Earl of Beaconsfield to the late Baron Lionel de Rothschild, enclosing, and concurring in, the foregoing letter?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): I know nothing whatever of this matter, and the Secretary to the Board of Trade informs me that he is not aware that he ever read the letter referred to in the Question of the hon. Baronet. If the hon. Baronet thinks that a correspondence so antiquated is of material importance to his case, it is his duty rather than mine to provide for its publication.

Sir EDWARD WATKIN said, in consequence of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, he should raise the question in another form.

INDIA (BENGAL)—NAWAB ZAIGHUM-UD-DOWLAH.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether any, and what, arrangement has been made by the Indian Government to send Nawab Zaighum-ud-Dowlah to this country; at whose cost, for what term, in what capacity, and at what salary; whether the same person was formerly appointed Rural Sub-Registrar in Bengal, and at what salary; whether he afterwards ceased to hold such appointment; and, whether the Government can state the reasons for such cessation?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The Secretary of State is not aware that Nawab Zaighum-ud-Dowlah is being sent to England at all in any capacity. The Bengal Civil Lists for January and April, 1888, show that this gentleman was on the 1st of those months a Special Sub-Registrar in the Durbhanga District; he was a probationer for six months; his salary was 75 rupees a month, and he enjoyed certain fees under the Registration Law. Beyond these entries in the Bengal Civil List, the Secretary of State knows nothing about this gentleman.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—ISSUE OF LIME JUICE—THE "KILLEENA."

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has received complaints of cruelty practised towards the officers and crew of the British barque *Killeena*, Captain Blake, and whether any, and what, action has been taken thereon; whether the complaints included the allegation of the non-issue of lime juice for 42 days on a voyage between foreign ports, and whether the present law is insufficient to meet this; and, whether such complaints also include the illegal imprisonment of two men, Smith and Malmberg, at Talcahuano, and what, if any, action has been taken thereon?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): Complaints of harsh treatment at sea and in foreign ports were received from certain members of the crew of the *Killeena*. The Board obtained statements from all witnesses whose whereabouts could be traced. These statements do not contain allegations of gross misconduct, drunkenness, or tyranny on the part of the master such as would, under the statute, have justified the Board of Trade in sending the case to a Local Marine Board for investigation, with a view to the suspension of the master's certificate; but the Board called the attention of the owner of the *Killeena* to the complaints. The complaints included the allegation of the non-issue of lime juice. The present law does not cover cases of British vessels which do not begin their voyage in the United Kingdom. The *Killeena* was on a passage from one foreign port to another on the occasion referred to; but I find that, as the voyage commenced in the United Kingdom originally, the law is strong enough to meet such a case, and it will be enforced in the event of any future cases being reported. The complaints included the allegation of imprisonment. This has been investigated by direction of the Foreign Office; and Her Majesty's Consul at Valparaiso has taken steps with a view to prevent the imprisonment of any British seamen at Talcahuano without an order from the British Vice Consul at that port.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—SECTION 46—HIGHWAYS IN SOUTH WALES.

Mr. ARTHUR WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the 46th section of the Local Government Bill will transfer to each of the Rural District Councils in each of the six counties of South Wales, in respect of the highways situate within the district, all the powers, duties, and liabilities of a Highway Board; and, if so, whether these powers, duties, and liabilities will be the powers, duties, and liabilities created by the various Acts specially relating to the highways in South Wales?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It is intended by Clause 46 of the Local Government Bill to transfer to the Rural District Councils in South Wales the powers, duties, and liabilities which now devolve on the Highways Boards under the South Wales Highway Acts.

CRIMINAL LAW (UNITED KINGDOM)—WILFUL MURDER.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing all cases in England and Wales and Ireland respectively, during each of the two years 1880 and 1886, in which a verdict of wilful murder was returned by a Coroner's Jury, but in which no one has subsequently been convicted of the crime, giving similar information as respects Scotland in cases where the Procurator Fiscal has reported to the Crown Agent that a murder appears to have been committed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, if the hon. Gentleman moved for such a Return, there could be no objection to granting it.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—WEEKLY SHERIFF COURT, TOBERMORY.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the Memorial addressed to the Secretary for Scotland by the Procurators practising at Tobermory protesting against the abolition of the weekly Sheriff Court there; whether it is true that the Sheriff Clerk Depute has been removed from Tobermory to Oban, with all papers and documents connected with crofter applications and cases depending or to be brought before the Crofters' Commission; whether he is aware that the removal of the Court from Tobermory to Oban will involve much trouble and expense to litigants in many of the Western Islands; and, whether he would consider the advisability of deferring the proposed change at least till the Crofter Commission has dealt with the district of which Tobermory forms the centre?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): My attention has been called to the Memorial referred to. There have hitherto always been Sheriff Clerk Deputes both at Tobermory and Oban, and there is no intention to alter this practice. I am not aware that the alteration will involve trouble and expense to litigants. So far as I can ascertain, this will not be so, but rather the reverse. As at present advised, I cannot adopt the suggestion in the fourth paragraph of the Question. The Courts are already being carried on under the new Order; and, with the exception of the Memorial referred to by the hon. Member, no representations have been made to me against the recent Order.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—BURNING A BARN.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, at the Presentment Sessions held at Dungarvan on May 19, a police sergeant admitted that, although he believed the burning of a barn belonging to a Mr. Samuel Hood was an accident, he reported it as an "outrage;" and, whether his excuse for this was that, being bound to report the occurrence, he had no forms but such as were headed for "outrages?"

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Deputy Inspector General of Constabulary states that the sergeant did not report this case as an outrage, but as being an outrage in the opinion of Mr. Hood—an opinion from which the sergeant himself dissented. It was never recorded as an outrage.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: Is it correct that there were no other forms available?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I understand the matter, the police have only to report upon cases where outrages are alleged, and there is no objection to an allegation of an outrage being put on the form. It does not follow, however, that the case will find its way into the official statistics of outrages.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Who decides that?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The person who is responsible for the statistics—the Inspector General.

LUNACY ACT—DISTRICT BOARD OF LUNACY.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether District Boards of Lunacy who have, under the Lunacy Act, contracted with chartered asylums for the maintenance of pauper lunatics, are entitled, under reasonable regulations, to visit such lunatics?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I am not aware of any statutory right under which District Boards of Lunacy are entitled to visit lunatics for whom they pay in chartered asylums. They have a power under the Act of 1857 to appoint medical men as District Inspectors to visit such lunatics. I am informed that there is only one case in which any question has arisen ont his subject—namely, in Forfarshire; and in this case, though the Directors of the asylum declined to allow visitation as a matter of right, they stated that, as a matter of courtesy, they would welcome a visit from the District Board at any time.

SWITZERLAND—ENGLISH MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is aware that certain legally qualified English medical practitioners have lately been fined and threatened with imprisonment by some of the authorities for practising among invalids visiting Swiss health resorts; and, whether, in the interests of such invalids and of members of the English Medical Profession, he will make representations to the Swiss Government on the subject?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The statement in the first paragraph is true. The laws of Switzerland do not permit foreign doctors to practise there without the Federal authorization. Her Majesty's Government have for some time been endeavouring to arrange with the Swiss Government reciprocal privileges for the Medical Profession in either country; but as yet without success.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether it is the intention of the Government to provide a permanent home for the National Portrait Gallery?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): This matter is under the consideration of the Government; but they are not prepared at present to make any proposal on the subject.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—SALUTING.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that a police inquiry was held in Newmarket, County Cork, on the 2nd and 3rd of May last, at which Constable Oldfield was accused of not saluting Mr. Langley, J.P., and local bank manager, and Mrs. Langley; what was the nature of the evidence for the prosecution; what was the result of the inquiry; if he can state the approximate cost of this inquiry, which lasted two days, and which necessitated the presence of District Inspector Meehan of Charleville and Inspector Lanyon of Mallow; and, if Mr. Langley would be required to defray all or any portion of the expense of the proceedings in the event of the charge not being sustained?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Inspector General reports that it is the case that the local Justice of the Peace referred to charged the constable with treating him with disrespect. The constable was acquitted. The approximate cost was something over £3. It will be a departmental charge.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—SUNDAY BAND AT TRALEE.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why the police authorities in Tralee have prevented the members of a fife and drum band in that town from playing through the streets and adjacent roads on Sunday, as was their wont hitherto for their own amusement and that of the public?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): On one occasion only has the band referred to been prevented from playing through the streets of Tralee; and on that occasion the reason for preventing them was that the police believed the collection of a crowd would lead to a disturbance.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON asked, whether there was a meeting being held on that day, or what was the reason that a disturbance was feared?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, the day in question was the day before the trial of the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington), and the hon. Member was expected to arrive in the town.

FIRES (METROPOLIS)—FATAL FIRE IN THE EDGWARE ROAD.

Mr. SEAGER HUNT (Marylebone, W.) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether there was undue delay in the arrival of fire-escapes at the premises of Messrs. Garrould (in the Edgware Road) on the morning of Wednesday, May 30; and, if so, will he be good enough to state the cause of the delay?

Mr. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) (for Mr. Tatton Egerton) (Cheshire, Knutsford): In answer to the hon. Member's Question, I have to state that the fire in the Edgware Road on Wednesday morning broke out just after the hour when the men on night watch with the fire-escapes went off duty. The firemen in charge of the fire-escape at Connaught Place had just lowered it and secured it for the day, when they were informed by a police-constable where the fire was. They should immediately have turned back, and taken the escape to the fire; but it seems that they neglected to do so, and for their neglect they have been suspended by the chief officer. It does not appear that if they had taken the escape on immediately they could have saved any of the lives; but, nevertheless, it was their duty to take it. All the engines reached the fire without accident or delay, and the water supply was prompt and ample. The conduct of the men in charge of the fire-escape is being investigated by the chief officer; and I may add that the whole of the circumstances connected with the fire will be thoroughly inquired into at the next meeting of the Fire Brigade Committee.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS — THE "VANCOUVER."

Mr. R. W. DUFF (Banffshire) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to the case of the British Ship *Vancouver*, which sailed from St. John's, N.B., on March 18; when three days at sea the crew considered the ship unseaworthy, and insisted on her being put back to port; whether he is aware that on being surveyed at St. John's the *Vancouver* was declared seaworthy, the crew were imprisoned for eight days, and were only released on undertaking again to go to sea in her; and that on the subsequent voyage from St. John's to Belfast the *Vancouver* sprung a leak, the cargo had to be thrown overboard to save the ship, which only reached Belfast in a perilous condition; and, whether he will cause an inquiry into the nature of the survey held at St. John's, and also into the treatment of the crew?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): Until the hon. Member put his Notice of the Question on the Paper the attention of the Board of Trade had not been called to the case of the survey of the *Vancouver* in St. John's, New Brunswick. A letter has been addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies with a view to obtaining such information as can be procured respecting the case, including the nature of the survey held at St. John's.

POLICE SUPERANNUATION — LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Mr. T. ROBINSON (Gloucester) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the practice in the County of Gloucester and other counties in England to deduct 2½ per cent from the salaries and wages of every member of the County Police Force for the purpose of establishing a superannuation fund for the benefit of every member of the Force after 30 years' service; and, whether this superannuation fund is secured to them in the Local Government Bill now before

Parliament; and, if not, whether he will undertake to introduce a clause for that purpose when the Bill is in Committee?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Whatever powers with regard to the superannuation of the police were possessed by the Justices in Quarter Sessions will, under Clause 7 of the Bill, be transferred to the Joint Committee of the Quarter Sessions and County Council; and the funds in hand for superannuation purposes will be transferred to the County Council under Clause 63 (1), by whom they will be held for the same purposes and subject to the same conditions as they would have been held by the Justices if the Bill had not passed.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—PAYMENT OF COUNSEL'S FEES.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Metropolitan Board of Works, at their sitting on Friday last, voted the sum of £440 out of the rates for the payment of counsel's fees on the present Board of Works inquiry; and, whether, as the Act upon which the Board rely as their authority for this charge upon the public was "prepared and brought in by the Home Secretary," he is able to state whether or not it was the intention of the Government to give the Board this power?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have observed that such a sum was voted by the Board to pay for counsel's fees. The Government had no expressed intention of giving the Board the power of paying counsel's fees out of the rates, or they would have inserted a clause to that effect in the Act. They thought it, however, impossible to withhold from the Board, against whom grave charges were made, the right of appearing by counsel before the Commissioners; and they accordingly inserted in the Act a clause to that effect, leaving it to a Court of Law to determine, in the event of dispute, whether that clause carried with it a right to pay counsel's fees.

MR. HOWELL asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Treasury Auditor, when auditing the Accounts of the Metropolitan Board of Works, will allow, or will be justified in allowing, the cost of counsel employed before the Board of Works Inquiry Commission to be charged upon London rates?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.), in reply, said, he thought the hon. Member would see, on reflection, that he could not answer his Question. Nor did he think it would be proper for him to inquire from the Auditor what course of action he might take with regard to certain accounts which were not yet before him.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—CASE OF MR. AND MRS. CLINTON AT, ASSINEE.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether James Clarke Clinton, a British subject, has been expelled by the French authorities from Assinee, on the West Coast of Africa, and whether the business carried on there by Adeline Clinton, also a British subject, the widow of his late brother, has been closed by order of the same authorities; whether the said James Clarke Clinton, having taken his residence in neutral territory adjoining Assinee, has been expelled from there by the same authorities; whether the French Resident at Assinee is one Verdier, a partner in the firm of Verdier and Company trading there, and rivals in business to the said James Clarke Clinton and Adeline Clinton; whether the steps so taken by the French authorities have been initiated and carried out by Treich la Pleine, one of the *employés* of the said Verdier and Company; whether the said firm of Verdier and Company are collecting and appropriating from the natives around Assinee the produce which such natives owe to the said James Clarke Clinton and Adeline Clinton; and, whether Her Majesty's Government are taking any steps for the protection of the said James Clarke Clinton and Adeline Clinton personally and for the protection of their property?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): It is the fact that Mr. Clinton was expelled from Assinee. All the circumstances of the case are the subject of discussion with the French Government; and I am not in a position at present to express an opinion upon them.

INDIA—MR. TAYLER, LATE COMMISSIONER OF PATNA.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether there is any record in the India Office of a letter from the late Earl of Iddesleigh (then Sir Stafford Northcote) to Mr. Commissioner Tayler, of Patna, dated December 7, 1868, in which it was stated that Mr. Tayler's appeal had not up to that date gone before the Committee of the Indian Council, and the promise was given that the case should be looked into "fairly and fully?"

The UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): There is no record of any such letter.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE: I should like to ask the hon. Gentleman whether, if I hand him such a letter, which I hold in my hand, he will undertake that it will be entered in the archives of the India Office?

Sir JOHN GORST: I think I ought to have Notice of that Question.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — THE SOLICITOR GENERAL AT SOUTHAMPTON.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) (for Mr. Summers) (Huddersfield) asked Mr. Solicitor General, Whether he is correctly reported as having said at Southampton that, under the Licensing Clauses of the Local Government Bill, "no new tax was imposed upon the ratepayers at all," and "no new burden imposed on the people?" He also wished, before the hon. and learned Gentleman answered the Question, to ask him a Question of which he had given him private Notice, Whether, in the same speech, he (the Solicitor General) did not also say that where licences were forfeited for reasons for which they were forfeited now, not 1*s.* would be paid; but if, in the exercise of their absolute discretion, the Licensing Committee chose to take the licence away without alleging any ground, and without trying any question which the Justices were bound to try, then compensation would be paid, but paid out of the fund to be created by the extra Licence Duty of 20 per cent imposed on the licence holders?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir Edward Clarke) (Plymouth): As to the statements mentioned in the first Question, I did make them in the terms stated. As to the latter Question, I do not think the quotation exactly represents the words I used; but it represents with substantial accuracy what I said, and I shall be quite prepared in Committee to defend the statements which I made on that occasion.

Mr. ANDERSON asked, if the hon. and learned Gentleman gave the House to understand that he was speaking of the Bill as it stood?

Sir EDWARD CLARKE said, he was speaking of the Bill as it stood; but in the same speech he referred to matters in reference to which the President of the Local Government Board had already made some suggestions.

WAR OFFICE—THE VICTORIA JUBILEE HOSPITAL, FOLKESTONE.

Sir EDWARD WATKIN (Hythe) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he would state to the House the grounds upon which he refuses to perform the contract made in June, 1887, by him with the Committee of the proposed Victoria Jubilee Hospital at Folkestone for the sale of the site of the now dismantled battery at the "Bayle" as a site for such hospital; and, further, the grounds upon which he refuses to perform a subsequent contract made in July, 1887, by him with the Earl of Radnor for the sale of this battery site for the same purpose; and, whether it is true he has now decided to offer such last-mentioned site for sale by auction; and, if so, when and where the auction will take place?

The SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): There was no contract with the Committee of the Victoria Jubilee Hospital. The negotiations for the sale of the site to the Earl of Radnor have been suspended with his Lordship's consent. No decision has been come to to offer the site for sale by auction.

INDIA STORE DEPOT—SALARY OF THE SUPERINTENDENT.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is correct, as stated in the *Home Accounts of the Government of India* (just issued), page 59, that the salary of the present Superintendent of the Branch of the Store Department at the India Store Depôt is £900, whereas the maximum salary of that office is stated as £800; and, if so, what is the explanation?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The explanation is given in a foot-note to the Accounts. The present Superintendent, who was appointed in 1855, was granted a personal allowance of £100 per annum from May 9, 1882.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE LICENCE DUTIES.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) (for Mr. SUMMERS) (Huddersfield) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the sum of £300,000 per annum, estimated as the amount that would be received from the 20 per cent increase of the Licence Duties, is calculated on the total proceeds of such duties, not only in England and Wales, but also in Scotland and Ireland; and, whether the above Estimate includes any, and, if so, what allowance for the diminution in the duties that will take place wherever County Councils exercise the power of closing public-houses on Sundays?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): My estimate in round numbers of £300,000 was based on the estimated revenue from the duties to be transferred to and collected by the County Councils in England and Wales, exclusive of Scotland and Ireland. The amount, of course, varies from year to year. No reduction was made in respect of any diminution of duty which would result from the County Councils exercising the power of closing public-houses on Sundays.

INDIA STORE DEPARTMENT—PRICES OF WARLIKE STORES.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, with reference to the following paragraph in the Report of the Auditor for Indian Home Accounts for the year 1885-6, dated May, 1887:—

> "4. As regards . . . the prices charged by the War Office for warlike stores, I have to report that a Committee has been appointed, and is now sitting, for the consideration of this subject; so that the difficulties which have hitherto attended it may now be considered as in a fair way of solution;"

and also with reference to the following paragraph in the Report of the same official for the year 1886-7, dated May, 1888:—

> "The question referred to in my last Report, relative to the prices charged by the War Office for warlike stores, still remains open;"

what Committee is referred to by the auditor; has this Committee reported on the question to which he refers; and, when is it likely that the Government will come to a decision in the matter?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Committee to which the Auditor refers is one on which the Treasury, the War Office, and the India Office are represented, appointed in April, 1887, to investigate the prices charged by the War Department for stores supplied to the Indian Government. The Committee has not yet reported. Until the Committee shall have reported it is impossible to say when the Government will pass a decision on the matter.

ST. GILES-IN-THE-FIELDS—VESTRY ELECTIONS.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) (for Mr. CONYBEARE) (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether Mr. Robinson, the Vestry Clerk of the parish of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, had received notice from both Mr. Lee and Mr. Fowler that, as they had been duly elected, they should attend and take their seats as Vestrymen at the meeting of the Vestry on May 31; and, whether the clerk has alleged that or any other reason as the grounds for his application to have a force of police secreted in the church of the said parish?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I am informed that the Vestry Clerk had received such notice. The clerk informs me that he applied for the assistance of the police on the ground that he had received letters which led him to anticipate that an attempt would be made to disturb the proceedings of the Vestry.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) (for Mr. CONYBEARE) (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Upon what grounds were eight ballot papers disallowed at the recent Vestry election in the parish of St. Giles-in-the-Fields on May 17; whether it is the fact that, in consequence of such rejection of votes, Mr. Cooper, of 1A, Church Passage, and Mr. Gardiner, of 110, Great Russell Street, were allowed to take their seats and vote at a meeting of the Vestry held on May 31; and, whether it is not the fact that, but for such rejection, Mr. Lee, of 25, New Compton Street, and Mr. Fowler, of 58, High Street, would have been elected by a majority of at least three over the first-mentioned gentleman?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Local Government Board have no jurisdiction whatever with regard to the election of Vestrymen in parishes in the Metropolis, and they have no information on the subject of the disallowance of the votes alluded to. If there is any ground for questioning the legality of the proceedings in the case in question, I presume that those aggrieved would have their remedy in a Court of Law.

IRELAND—THE NEWTOWNARDS FARMERS' ASSOCIATION.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the meeting of farmers recently addressed by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) at Newtownards, If he can now state whether the hon. Member was closely followed by a detective in a car from Belfast to Newtownards and back; whether District Inspector Ward called with the hotel proprietor who owned the hall where the meeting was to have been held, and caused her to refuse the hall for the meeting; whether he is aware that Mr. M'Master, P.L.G., who engaged the hall, is the Honorary Secretary of the Newtownards Farmers' Association, which holds its meetings regularly in the same hall; whether several constables were placed at the door of the premises in which the meeting was held, and whether these constables endeavoured to intimidate the people by staring into the face of every man as he left the meeting; and, whether the hon. Member for East Mayo was followed by three policemen wherever he went, on that evening, through the town of Newtownards?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Sir, I have already answered one or two Questions on this point. I am sorry to say that I cannot give the further information asked for without a detailed Report from the locality. I have asked for the Report, and I hope I shall be able to give the information asked for on Thursday next.

TORQUAY DISTRICT HARBOUR BILL, 1886—REPORT OF THE HOME OFFICE.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Report of the Home Office on the Torquay District and Harbour Bill, 1886?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I shall be happy to lay this Report on the Table of the House.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE LAW COURTS—OATHS OF PRESBYTERIANS.

MR. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether it is the custom that when a Presbyterian desires to swear by the uplifted hand, in accordance with his legal rights, he is almost invariably asked in the Irish Courts of Law—"Do you believe that form of oath is binding on your conscience;" whether such a question is asked in virtue of any statutable requirement; and, if so, can he indicate where this statutable requirement is to be found; and, whether, as this inquiry is looked upon as an insult by many of those to whom it is asked, he will consider how best to put a stop to this or similar questions being asked in future?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): As the result of the inquiries which I have made into this matter, I have ascertained that a diversity of practice exists in the mode of administering an oath under the circumstances mentioned by the hon. Member. Some Judges consider themselves bound to put the question referred to, having regard to the terms of the statute, which enacts that in all cases in which an oath has been administered to any person—

> "Such person is bound by the oath administered, provided the same shall have been administered in such form and with such ceremonies as such person may declare to be binding."

This, however, is not the view taken by all tribunals; and any witness who may object to being asked the question is entitled to have the matter decided by the Judge as a question of law. In reply to the third paragraph of the Question, I have to say that the matter is one which must be left to the decision of each individual tribunal.

MR. SINCLAIR: Arising out of the answer of the hon. and learned Gentleman, I have further to ask him if he would consider the subject of legislation in this matter, whereby it would not be necessary for the future to ask questions of this kind, which are considered as insults by those to whom they are put?

MR. MADDEN: I shall be very happy to consider the subject; but I must say that the putting of the question can hardly, in fairness, be considered anything of an insult, inasmuch as, whenever it is put, the Judge acts under the belief that he is bound to do so by the terms of an Act of Parliament. I have always understood that that Act was introduced into Parliament by a Member of the Irish Bar, who was himself a Presbyterian, in the year 1838.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Is not the real question whether the persons to whom the question is addressed consider it an insult?

[No reply.]

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—OATHS.

MR. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is not the common practice in Scotland to administer oaths by the method of the uplifted hand; and, whether such practice is based on any statutory enactment, or on the Common Law of Scotland, or through immemorial custom?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): It is the invariable practice in Scotland to call upon any person taking an oath to do so with his right arm uplifted, and persons of all religious beliefs are generally willing to be thus sworn. But any foreigner who, for religious reasons, might prefer to be sworn according to the form in use in his own country, or by his co-religionists, would be permitted to be so sworn. I am not aware that the Scottish form is based on any known Statute. It has come down from time immemorial.

MR. SINCLAIR asked, whether it was the custom in Scotland to ask a person taking the oath whether he believed it to be binding upon his conscience?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he had never heard of any such question being asked.

NEW GUINEA—COST OF TELEGRAPHIC MESSAGES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, What was the cost of the telegraphic message sent from the Colonial Office to the Governor of Adelaide, dated December 3, 1886, on the subject of New Guinea?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I presume that the hon. Member means the Governor of South Australia. No telegram was sent to the Governor of South Australia on the date mentioned by the hon. Member. One was sent to the Governor of Queensland at Brisbane, and its cost was £86 5*s.* 9*d.*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) — TRANSFERRED LICENCES AND LOCAL TAXATION LICENCES.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, When the Return of the amounts paid in the counties in respect of transferred licences and local taxation licences will be presented?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, the Government were making every effort to complete the Return as quickly as possible, and he hoped it would be ready in about a fortnight. He might point out that the Return would not embrace the Horse and Wheel Tax.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND)—POLLUTION OF LOCH LONG AND LOCH GOIL.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he is aware that between 11.30 and 12.30 on Whit Monday, three Glasgow barges discharged several hundred tons of filth in Loch Long, and that discharges are daily occurring; whether the Secretary for Scotland has recently received four Memorials from the Local Authority of Cove and Kilcreggan, from feuars, residents, and fishermen, inhabitants of the shores of Loch Long and Loch Goil, in relation to the constant and continuing pollution of the waters of the Lochs; whether he has received a communication from the Chief Magistrate of Cove and Kilcreggan suggesting that, pending the final decision of the Government, the "Clyde Trust" should be forthwith compelled to deposit these dredgings in deeper water and in a swifter running channel, from Wemyss Bay down towards the Garroch Head, for which service their dredgers are quite suited as to seaworthiness in ordinary weather; and, whether he can now state what course the Government intend to pursue in the matter?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The facts are as stated. The Secretary for Scotland has received several Memorials and letters from parties interested in this matter, containing various suggestions about it. Of the six sources of pollution indicated by Mr. Fletcher, in his Report laid before the House, only one—namely, the deposit of alkali wash—is within the control of the Scotch Office, and that ceased altogether on the 27th of February. I will be obliged to the hon. Member if he will postpone the latter part of his Question.

LIBEL LAW AMENDMENT BILL—SECURITY FOR COSTS.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he is prepared to introduce a Bill adopting the principle contained in the Libel Law Amendment Bill, whereby every plaintiff, upon commencing proceedings, can be compelled to find security for costs?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): In reply to the hon. Member, I am not prepared to introduce a Bill adopting the principle that every plaintiff upon commencing proceedings can be compelled to find security for costs, as, in my opinion, such provision would work great hardship upon poor plaintiffs who may have suffered great wrong.

WORKMEN'S WAGES—MESSRS. LION BROTHERS.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been drawn to a case heard in the Shoreditch County Court on May 15, from the report of which it appears that Messrs. Lion Brothers, boot manufacturers, of Phipps Street, Finsbury, compel their workmen in the slack season to sign an agreement, which is, in substance, as follows:—

> "We, the lasters and finishers, agree to deposit 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week, to be deducted from our wages weekly from this date, for 12 months, and, should we leave before that time, we forfeit that money to Lion Brothers;"

and, whether such a contract is legal; and, if so, whether the Government will consider the advisability of amending the law?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): My attention had not been called to the case until the Question appeared on the Paper this morning; and I have not been able in the time to obtain information as to the accuracy of the statements therein contained. The question whether a contract embodying the terms referred to is legal depends upon the circumstances under which it was made. But it by no means follows that under such a contract the master would have the right of obtaining the total amount, as in some cases his remedy might be for damages only. As at present advised, I do not consider that any alteration of the law is necessary.

HORSE BREEDING—FIRST REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the First Report of the Royal Commission on Horse Breeding has been presented to Her Majesty; and, whether he will cause it to be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Report has been presented to Her Majesty, and will be laid on the Table to-night.

THE TITHE QUESTION—LEGISLATION.

MR. SWETENHAM (Carnarvon, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce any Bill or Bills into this House during the present Session dealing with the tithe question; and, if so, when; and, whether, considering the grave importance of the subject to many parts of England and Wales, the Government will allocate to its consideration such and so many days as will reasonably insure such Bills becoming law before the Recess?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Two Bills dealing with this question have been sent down from the other House, and, when opportunity offers, will be proceeded with.

DEPARTMENT FOR AGRICULTURE—LEGISLATION.

MR. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Bill for the creation of an Agricultural Department, which was promised by the Government on the 20th of February, is prepared; and, if so, when it is proposed to introduce it; and, if not, whether, having regard to his promises on the subject, he is able to say what is the cause of the delay?

MR. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, How soon Her Majesty's Government will introduce their measure for the establishment of a Department for Agriculture?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Bill has been prepared, and will be introduced as soon as the state of Business permits. There are, however, one or two questions that remain to be solved, and they are receiving very careful attention.

ARMY (INDIA) — CANTONMENT BAZAARS—CAMP FOLLOWERS.

In reply to Mr. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth),

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) said, a "regimental bazaar" means the shops and trading establishments with which the military population of any particular regiment in a cantonment deal. All other bazaars in the cantonment, of which the chief customers are the civil population, are called "cantonment bazaars," and the chief of these would be called the "sudder bazaar."

SOUTH AFRICA—REPORTED DISTURBANCES IN ZULULAND.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he could give the House any information as to the reported disturbances in Zululand?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In answer to my hon. Friend, I will read to the House a telegram which was received last night at the Colonial Office, and which is the latest information we have—

> "Dinizulu and Undabuko having collected armed Native followers at Keeza, made raids upon and stole cattle of friendly peaceful Usutus. Warrants of arrest of Dinizulu and other ringleaders on charge of cattle stealing were issued 2nd June. Police, rifles, troops went to Keeza to execute warrants; were successfully resisted and compelled to retreat. Two men reported killed and two wounded. Levy of Basutos, under M'Kean, and reinforcements of troops proceed immediately to support authority."

It will be seen from this that the telegram which appeared in yesterday evening's and some of this morning's papers, to the effect that Dinizulu had attacked and routed Usibepu, is incorrect.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—THE BOTTLED WINE DUTIES.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he would be able now to state the result of the arrangement which had been come to with reference to the Wine Duties?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): With the indulgence of the House, I should like to make a statement on the subject. The House will remember the main principles on which I founded my proposals with regard to the Bottled Wine Duty. I regarded it as a rough way of reaching the higher class wines, and I looked to derive a revenue of £125,000 from the tax. I was aware that it would not reach all the expensive clarets, and on the other hand, that it would ftall heavil on some cheap wines, which could noy like the bulk of cheap wines, be imported in casks instead of in bottles. This consideration led me to accept the suggestion to modify, and, as it were, correct the inequalities of the tax by introducing a limit of value, provided the examination, which I undertook to make, should prove that it was possible to find a workable plan for giving effect to such a limit. I have now concluded my investigations, and they have proved the following points:—(1) That the total amount of wine imported in bottles is far more considerable than from the best calculations we were previously able to make it was possible to discover. (2) That of this wine imported in bottles by far the greater part is sparkling wine. The increase in the consumption of champagne of late years has greatly modified both the proportion of the amount of bottled wine to wine in cask, and of still bottled wine to sparkling bottled wine. It is this increase in the consumption of champagne which necessitates a great modification of the statistics based on the state of things existing when the old Bottled Wine Duty was in force. (3) The third fact which I have ascertained is that the proportion of high-priced still wine imported in bottle to low-priced still wine imported in bottle is very much smaller than that of high-class champagnes to cheap sparkling wines. The result of these facts is as follows:—As more wine is imported in bottle than previous statistics led me to expect, the total revenue which I should derive from the tax, as it stands, would be very much larger than that which I assumed it would be in the first instance. The second result is that only a small portion of this revenue would be derived from still wines, and a very small portion indeed—in fact, a quite inconsiderable sum—if the lower-priced still wines were exempted. It must be remembered that all still wines, even the highest qualities, can be imported in cask, and they come in cask even now. If the duty were to be maintained, the amount of high-class still wines imported in bottle, which is already small, would become absolutely insignificant. I may here say that I have received the strongest possible representations from the English wine trade with regard to the difficulty which an attempt to draw a limit between high and low-class wines would entail. I do not for one moment accept the statement that there would be such a degree of fraud and misrepresentation as is declared to be inevitable. But I am anxious to confine the difficulties of the limit of value to the smallest possible area. To return to still wines, the facts which I have explained seem to indicate that, with a limit of value, there would be a prospect of a minimum revenue and a maximum difficulty in collecting that revenue. With regard to sparkling wines the case is different. A far greater proportion of these are wines of high value, and there are far greater facilities for determining the value. I propose, therefore, to bring in a Bill whereby the additional duty of 5*s.* a dozen shall be limited to sparkling wines; while, in order to meet the case of Saumur and other cheap sparkling wines, power will be taken to reduce the duty to 2*s.* a-dozen where the wine can be proved to be less than 30*s.* a-dozen in value on its arrival in England—that is to say, there will be the original tax of 5*s.* a-dozen on sparkling wine above 30*s.* in value, and a tax of 2*s.* a-dozen on sparkling wine below 30*s.* a dozen in value, in addition, of course, to the duty on the alcoholic scale previously existing for all wines. The duty on this basis will give me at least £100,000, and probably the full £125,000 originally estimated. I do not propose a total exemption of the cheaper class of sparkling wines, for two reasons. In the first place, I think that cheap sparkling wine can fairly bear the additional tax of 2*s.* a-dozen, which is 2*d.* a-bottle. In the next place, the fact that even the cheaper wines pay something will largely diminish both the temptation to and the possibility of fraudulent representations as to the value of sparkling wines. In order to forestall any possible inquiries, I may state at once that I do not propose to return the extra duty paid since March 27 on the kinds of wine which will in future be exempted. It would be impossible in many cases to discriminate as to who would be entitled to such a return, as the additional tax has been paid partly by the importers and partly by the consumers. I have only still to add that the duty will be levied, according to the universal desire of the trade, on the gallon, and will not vary according to the size of the bottles—that is to say, the duty will be 2*s.* 6*d.* a-gallon on sparkling wines above 15*s.* a gallon in value; and 1*s.* on sparkling wines under 15*s.* a gallon in value.

MR. CHILDERS: It has been somewhat difficult to follow the Chancellor of the Exchequer through his long statement. May we take this as a summary—That no additional duty whatever will be imposed on bottled still or non-sparkling wines, however valuable, though there will be duties of 2*s.* 6*d.* and 1*s.* 3*d.* a gallon respectively on the dearer and cheaper classes of sparkling wines? May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, considering the novelty of the proposal, whether he has any Papers of any kind on the subject to lay on the Table?

MR. GOSCHEN: There is no great novelty in the proposal, for a proposition to tax bottled wines was made in 1880 by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and modified by him after a certain time. A tax upon bottled wines also existed for five years in this country under the financial auspices of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. I will see what Papers can be laid on the Table. There are none in my mind at present, but if there are any I will produce them. It would be easy for me to embody the result of my investigations in a Statistical Report, which I should certainly feel it my duty to lay before the House if it were desired. The right hon. Gentleman has correctly described the effect of my proposals; there will be no duty on still wines, and there will be a duty on sparkling wines of 5*s.* on the higher class and 2*s.* on the lower.

EAST INDIA (CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS).

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the despatch of the Secretary of State to the Government of India on the subject of the Contagious Diseases Acts was assented to by the majority of the Council of India; and, if not, what Members of the Council dissented; and, further, whether there was any objection to the production of any opinions that might have been recorded by the dissenting Members?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham), in reply, said, that of 13 Members of the Council, present on the occasion, nine voted against the despatch. Of these nine, six had recorded their dissent under the provisions of the Act of Parliament. The names of those who so recorded their dissent were—Sir Peter Lumsden, General Foster, Sir A. Arbuthnot, Sir John Strachey, General Strachey, and Sir Owen Burne. He believed it would be in accordance with precedent that the Minute of their dissent should be laid on the Table.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE asked, whether he would be in Order if he now moved for the production of the Minute of the dissenting Members of Council?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Baronet can give Notice of the Motion which I understand that he now wishes to do.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. HAMILTON, R.M.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention had been called to a statement in *The Daily News* of that day, that Mr. Hamilton, R.M., held a private Crimes Act inquiry in the house of a landlord named Olpherts contrary to the statute, which provided that the inquiry should be held in the place where the Petty Sessions of the district in which the offence was committed was usually held; and, also, whether the inquiry in question was held in relation to the rents of Mr. Olpherts?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have not seen *The Daily News;* but I have reason to believe there is no foundation for the statement. If the hon. and learned Gentleman will put the Question on the Paper I will make inquiries.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As the matter is of importance, will the right hon. Gentleman have any objection to the Question appearing on the Paper to-morrow?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; I will endeavour to have the information by to-morrow.

CRIMINAL CASES (IRELAND)—(INCREASE OF SENTENCES ON APPEAL).

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Return moved for by the hon. Member for Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) in relation to the increases of sentences on appeal in Ireland, would be in the hands of hon. Members?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. A. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, additional information on the subject had been asked for by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) and there was no delay in the preparation of the Return.

MOTIONS.

EAST INDIA (CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS).—RESOLUTION.

MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe), in rising to call attention to the existence and working of the Contagious Diseases Act and of the Cantonments Acts in India, and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, any mere suspension of measures for the compulsory examination of women, and for licensing and regulating prostitution in India, is insufficient, and the legislation which enjoins, authorizes, or permits such measures ought to be repealed,"

said, in dealing with this question, he disclaimed any intention of speaking in a Party spirit; indeed, he should be exceedingly sorry to endeavour to make Party capital out of it. The demand of those whose spokesman he was on the present occasion was a very simple demand; it was for the total and immediate repeal of every vestige of the Contagious Diseases Act and of the Cantonments Acts in India, as well as of every vestige of the regulations under those Acts. They entirely repudiated any compromise in the matter. He instanced cases where threatening letters were sent in order to compel compliance with the Act, and, having given a description of the regulations in force, he said the whole system in India was for licensing vice, putting it under control, and raising revenue out of it. He regretted to be compelled to bring before the notice of the House details so horrible and revolting and so discreditable to English civilization as were contained in the documents which it was his painful duty to refer to. The Act was in force in 74 Cantonments in India, of which 54 were in Bengal, seven in Madras, and nine in the Bombay Presidency. Major General Chapman's Memorandum based on the Act, which had been disowned and repudiated by the Secretary of State for India (Viscount Cross), proceeded on the assumption that immorality must be licensed, and that prostitution was a normal condition of the human race. He ventured to say that this was a doctrine which the House would emphatically repudiate. The Natives deeply resented the system, and in 1879, when the Act was brought into operation in Bombay, the Bishop and 60 influential British and Native residents petitioned against it, and their Petition would be found in Return 200, f. 1,883. The reply of the authorities was that every care would be taken to prevent annoyance to respectable persons, the "respectable persons" being explained to mean in a later passage "mistresses of wealthy persons and kept women." These were the people whose susceptibilities were not to be wounded, while the unhappy poor were to run the risk of fine and imprisonment. The Municipality of Bombay resisted the enforcement of the Act, and were only induced to accept it by the stoppage of 15,000 rupees from their allowance. Lord Ripon, in a despatch of June 16th, 1882, strongly advocated the repeal of the Act, which he described as extremely distasteful to the Municipalities and the Native population generally, and the object of general denunciation by the Native Press. The whole religious community were in arms against the Act, and a Memorial requesting its repeal had been signed in the present year by 300 missionaries and representatives of 40 societies. The same view was taken by the Army chaplains, but the only reply of Lord Cross was that the protection of the health and efficiency of the British garrisons was the paramount duty of the Government. It had, however, been proved that in a sanitary point of view the result had been the exact contrary of that which the Act was intended to produce. If Lord Ripon's wishes could have been realized, the Act would have been repealed in 1882, but he was over-ruled by the noble Lord the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington), who was then Secretary for India. He imputed no blame to that noble Lord, whose objection to the repeal of the Act was based mainly on the fact that the English Acts were still in force, and it was not till a considerably later date that the House had decisively condemned those Acts. The operation of the Act in India had been a complete failure. Vice had increased, and the promise of immunity from the consequences of vice had not been fulfilled. The remedy was said to be that the provisions of the Act should be enforced with enthusiasm. But he had in his hand a most painful return—namely, a *fac-similie* of the 13th annual report of the working of the Lock Hospitals in the North-West Provinces and in Oude, for the year ending December 31, 1886. Why was that Return not laid on the Table of the House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): It is not in the possession of the India Office.

MR. M'LAREN hoped, then, that the Government of India would inquire why that was so, and also why Major General Chapman's Memorandum was not at the India Office. That Report contained the most painful details of the state of things which had been brought about by the operation of the Act, especially in and about Lucknow. The hon. Gentleman proceeded to make a severe attack on Major General Chapman, who, he said, although he was the author of the Memorandum of June, 1886, which had been so often referred to in the House, in reply to a telegram from Lord Cross in August, 1887, declared that neither the Government nor its officers had, directly or indirectly, encouraged prostitution. Referring to the case of the Memorandum issued in connection with the 2nd Battalion of the Cheshire Regiment, he protested as a Cheshire Member against the name of that regiment being dragged through the mire in such an infamous way. It was said that the Government of India were going to alter the regulations under the Contagious Diseases Acts and the Cantonments Acts. That was altogether unsatisfactory to him. If he and his hon. Friends did not get what they demanded that night, they would carry on the agitation until they did. Lord Cross said there was in future to be no compulsory system; but if compulsion were done away with the whole system would break down, and, therefore, what was the use of keeping the Acts on the Statute Book? Lord Cross very properly declared that he would not tolerate any regulation that assumed the appearance of encouragement of vice. If that determination was to be carried out literally the Government would be compelled to abolish the Acts, for it was an impossibility to preserve a shred or vestige of the Acts which did not assume the appearance of encouragement of vice. But apart from all other grounds for his Motion, there was the high ground of morality and the inherent wickedness of the Acts. Even if it were proved to him that the preservation of the Acts had been successful and would altogether abolish disease—and they had been, on the contrary, unsuccessful at every point—he and those who would vote for this Motion would not mitigate their opposition to them, but would still oppose them on the higher grounds that what was morally wrong could not be politically or physically right. Had the House no pity for these poor Indian women? Every one of them was as valuable as the daughter of any Member of the House, and their security and welfare should be as carefully guarded by the House. He was glad to see that a feeling of indignation was arising in this country. Rarely, indeed, had any question excited the same warmth of feeling and indignation. Those who felt that renewed agitation on this question was evil and undesirable should vote for the immediate abolition of the system, for by not doing so they were but opening the flood-gates of agitation. The women of England upon every platform would so denounce this system that every man and woman in the country should know of it, for they were persuaded that it only required to be dragged into the light of day to be universally condemned. They asked the Government, therefore, to save them from the necessity for such agitation by following in India what had been already done in England, and what, to his honour, had been done by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Lord Knutsford), so that this accursed system, the foulest that had ever been brought to the knowledge of the House of Commons, might be finally swept away. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Motion of which he had given Notice.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London), in seconding the Motion, said, that he did not go into the question whether these Acts were good for health or not. He opposed the system simply on the ground that what was morally wrong could not be politically right, On that ground he voted against the English Acts when they were brought before the House, and he now appealed to hon. Members to do for India what they had already done for England. It had been argued that Parliament had no right to interfere with the Government of India; but he could not admit that Parliament was justified in sitting still and allowing the Indian Government to administer an unjust and immoral law. It might be said that the conditions of India were different to those of England, but every argument that applied to England applied with equal force to India; and, moreover, the existing system had been universally condemned by the missionaries of all societies as opposed to the spread of the Gospel, and they had been unanimous in asking the House to abolish the system. As Members of the great Christian community, the House of Commons ought not to disregard such an expression of opinion. Because he believed these Acts to give encouragement to vice, and that whatever gave encouragement to vice ought at any risk to be swept away, and because he believed that these Acts were a difficulty in the way of those who were devoting their lives to spreading the Gospel in India, he gave a cordial and earnest support to the Motion which he had the honour to second.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, any mere suspension of measures for the compulsory examination of women, and for licensing and regulating prostitution in India, is insufficient, and the legislation which enjoins, authorises, or permits such measures ought to be repealed."—(*Mr. Walter M'Laren.*)

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven), who had placed on the Paper an Amendment to the effect that—

"Considering the large and alarming increase of venereal disease in the Army and Navy on the Home Stations since the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act, this House is of opinion that it is inexpedient to repeal the Acts now in force in India,"

said, he should oppose the Motion of the hon. Member for Crewe. He considered it his duty to take the position he did, because he was one of the few surviving Members of the Committee which sat some years ago to consider all the charges made against the administration of these Acts in England. The speeches he had now heard reminded him of those formerly made against the English Acts—the arguments were precisely the same. As a Member of the Committee which investigated the working of the Acts, he could assert that the inquiry proved that the Acts worked admirably in practice. With reference to the statement made by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) on a former occasion, that he knew nothing about these Acts, and that they had been passed *sub silentio*, he might call the attention of the House to the fact that the right hon. Gentleman, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, spoke in favour of the second reading of the Bill of 1866, and afterwards moved that it should be referred to a Select Committee. The Acts were in force for 16 years, and their opponents, though repeatedly challenged to do so, had not been able to adduce a single case in all that time where a respectable woman had been taken up by the police and subjected to an indignity. He contended that the compulsory medical examination had produced most beneficial results. If evidence of this were required, it might be found in the following letters which he had received on the subject:—

"Chatham,
June 1, 1888.

Dear Sir,

"I beg to state that as Chairman of the Chatham Board of Health, and of the Medway Guardians, I am able to testify to the deplorable results of the abrogation of the C. D. Acts, which is regretted by all public men here. Disease is rampant amongst the more numerous class of young girls now given to prostitution than formerly, and although we have opened Lock wards in the Union House, we have no powers of detention, so that, however diseased girls may be, they from time to time take their discharge for a few days, during which they are doubtless disseminating the complaint, and then return to the Workhouse as a port in a storm.

However, the most deplorable result of the C. D. Acts is seen in the lewdness and general immorality of young girls in the streets in consequence of the absence of those restraints furnished by the Acts; so that hundreds of young girls are now ruined body and soul, who would have been preserved, but for the senseless clamour of those prurient purists who would insist on describing the late Acts 'as a legalization of vice,' instead of regarding them as 'measures to minimize the evils of vice,' which they accomplished to a large extent. A terrible responsibility, it seems to me, rests upon Mr. Stansfield and his friends for the undoubted spread of disease and immorality, resulting from their action, involving as it does the ruin of so many very young girls.

Yours truly,
(Signed) ADAM STIGANT."

"Lock Hospital,
Westbourne Green, W.,
May 28, 1888.
'*Re*' C. D. Acts.

Dear Sir,

We receive, of course, far fewer patients than we did formerly.

Having no power whatever to keep them in the hospital, patients on the least provocation will 'take their discharge,' and go out, with the disease upon them, to infect the Metropolis.

We have many younger patients now in our wards than formerly, girls frequently of 14 and 15 years of age.—I am,

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) ALGERNON C. P. COOTE,
Secretary."

To say, therefore, that the Acts had not done good was the very reverse of the truth. Both the Army and Navy had suffered in consequence of their repeal. The ratio of cases had increased since 1882, the last year in which the Acts were in force, from 27 in the 1,000 to 42, while the admissions had increased from 78 in 1882 to 125 in 1887. In the Navy the admissions had increased from 845 in 1882 to 1,512 in 1886. According to the statement of the Inspector General of Hospitals the admissions at Haslar had increased from 1,169 in 1882 to 2,686 in 1887. He believed that these Acts, if properly carried out, were as necessary, and would be as beneficial in India as in this country, and he entirely repudiated the idea that in any respect they had been used in any manner which required, or in fact would justify, their repeal. He admitted that some of the cantonment regulations in India were open to objection, and ought to be abrogated. Those regulations were not, however, connected with the Contagious Diseases Acts, and their existence could afford no reason for declining to protect the health of our Army in India against infection. He would not move the Amendment which stood in his name, as, since it had been put on the Paper, another had appeared in the name of the hon. Baronet the Member for Worcestershire (Sir Richard Temple) which might, perhaps, be more acceptable to the Government than his own.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) said, he hoped the House would come to an early decision on the subject, because it seemed to him that the Resolution was calculated to support the policy of the Government rather than to express any censure upon them. In the discussion there were three separate points involved which in reality ought to be kept distinct, but which, he feared, it had beeen almost impossible to avoid confusing. These three points were—first, what was known as the regimental system; secondly, the question of the Contagious Diseases Act; and, thirdly, what ought to be done about the Cantonments Acts. He would endeavour to treat these three subjects, as far as possible, separately. He did not wish to blame hon. Members opposite for having, to some extent, confounded the three subjects, because they had recently been part of one system, and there had been a mistake, or an error of judgment, or worse, made with regard to one of these subjects. He thought that, in considering this subject, the House should remember the principle upon which the Government of India was conducted. It was conducted not by a Government in this country, but in India itself; and what the Secretary of State and Parliament in this country exercised was merely a control over a Government carried on elsewhere. Thus, the Executive Government of India was not in itself immediately responsible to the House in the same way as the Government in this country. The House could only act on the Indian Executive Government through the Secretary of State, who was himself, no doubt, responsible to the House, but only, so far as legislation was concerned as controlling the acts of the Government of India in the manner prescribed by the Statute. Parliament had created in India a Legislature deriving its authority by statute, and that Legislature alone had the ordinary power of making laws and regulations for India. He did not say that that House was not perfectly competent to establish any law in India, but it must be by Act of Parliament. With regard to the question of what was known as the regimental system, the telegrams and extracts from despatches which had passed between the Secretary of State and the Indian Government showed that Her Majesty's Government had taken active steps in the matter long before attention had been called to it in Parliament. In a telegram dated July 9, 1887, the Secretary of State had called the attention of the Viceroy to the regimental system, which had been referred to by the Bishop of Lichfield in the House of Lords. That telegram went on to say—

> "I apprehend system is indefensible and must be condemned; meanwhile, please prepare full report in your Military Department, and send home with copies of all orders and regulations in your department bearing on this subject as distinct from the Indian Contagious Diseases Act, against which also very strong representations are being made throughout the country."

On December 7, 1887, a further telegram had been despatched to the Viceroy asking when the Report might be expected. He submitted, indeed, that there was nothing the Secretary of State could have done more than he had done. The Council had received from India official reports which were certainly calculated to lull their vigilance to sleep, with an intimation at the same time that the Government of India were making further inquiries, and that the result of those further inquiries would be communicated to the Secretary of State. On the 9th of March, shortly after the question was raised in the House of Commons in connection with the statements of Mr. Dyer, an advance copy of a despatch, dated in the Blue Book March 29, was sent to India, with a peremptory declaration that if anything like the practices alleged in Mr. Dyer's letter prevailed in India, they should be stopped forthwith. Here, again, he must ask the House to acknowledge that there was a full and complete compliance with the pledge which he was instructed by the Secretary of State on the 25th of February to give to the House. Indeed, from the time the Bishop of Lichfield's Question was asked in the House of Lords, in July last, down to the present day, the policy of the Secretary of State and the Government had never varied. The Government had said all along that if such practices existed they must be stopped, and they had only hesitated because they were officially informed in the beginning of the present year, on the authority of the reports received from the Government of India, that practices of the kind complained of did not exist in India. He hoped he had satisfied the House that the Secretary of State for India (Viscount Cross) and the Government had acted in this matter with clearness, promptitude, and efficiency. With reference to the celebrated Memorandum of June 17, 1886, the hon. Member was generous enough to say that he did not make the present Government responsible for it. In point of fact, the present Government were not in Office at the date of that Memorandum, and, when its existence was brought to the notice of the Secretary of State, he condemned it in the clearest and strongest terms. It was ungenerous to charge Major General Chapman with anything in the nature of an offence. General Chapman was, he believed, an officer as distinguished for his piety as for his military ability. Men had before committed errors of judgment through excess of zeal, and that General Chapman had been guilty of more than an error of judgment he refused to admit.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked whether the responsibility for the action to which objection was taken rested wholly upon General Chapman, or whether he was only the agent of a higher authority?

Sir JOHN GORST said, that he was not well enough acquainted with the details of military organization in India to apportion responsibility with exactitude in a case of this kind, and that he would treat the Circular as a Circular issued by the Military Authorities; and as such he deeply deplored it. The Secretary of State had himself expressed his deep regret that any such document should ever have been issued. The conduct of the Secretary of State in this matter, instead of deserving censure, ought to earn the thanks of the House and of all moral and religious people who were interested in this subject. He came now to the next point under consideration—namely, the operation of the Act for the prevention of disease. The Government of India, recognizing that the law in India must be administered on the whole in accordance with the moral and religious sentiments prevailing in this country, had taken steps to suspend the operation of the Act without waiting for the instructions of the Secretary of State. The supension, however, had since been approved by the noble Lord. Hon. Members opposite complained that the Act ought not to be suspended only, maintaining that it ought to be repealed; but they ought to remember that even in this country this legislation was suspended for several years before it was repealed. In the Crown Colonies also it was suspended before it was repealed, and in some of the self-governing Colonies, Victoria, Tasmania, New Zealand, and Queensland, there had been no interference with the operation of the Act. If the Government of India were to repeal the Act at once they would be taking an extraordinary course. He did not himself wish either to support or oppose this legislation, but he felt it his duty to say that in his constituency, to which the Acts for the prevention of disease had applied, public opinion had never to his knowledge pronounced against those measures. He had, of course, at various times visited members of all classes of the community, rich and poor, and he had never heard a single complaint about the operation of the Acts. The Guardians of the poor and other Local Authorities were unanimous in favour of the Acts. [*Dissent.*] Well, in his constituency he did not know who had protested against the Acts. He knew that the generality of the public deeply regretted the repeal of the Acts. Something had been said about the feeling of the women; but Miss Webb, who was second to none in her services for the reclamation of fallen women, lamented the suspension of the operation of the Acts because it interfered with her rescue work, to which she had devoted her life. He hoped, therefore, that the House would excuse any want of enthusiasm on his part for the repeal of the Acts; but, at the same time, he should be very illogical if he set up his judgment against that of the Council of the Governor General of India, and he was instructed by his noble Friend the Secretary of State to say that if the Council of the Governor General thought fit to repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts altogether he should assent to that repeal. If he might give advice to the House, he would advise it not to attempt to coerce a body like the Government of India, which had not shown any unwillingness to conform to the sentiments of the people of this country. He would appeal to the House not to interfere with the legislative independence of the Governor-General. If they brought the people of India to regard that Council as a mere instrument of Parliament, and not as possessing any legislative dignity or independence of its own, they would greatly weaken its position. He passed now to the last head—what was to be done with the Cantonments Act? The House was aware that the cantonment was not a mere barracks; it was an extent of country. The Cantonments Act dealt with the preservation of the general health of the district, and from beginning to end of it there were only a few lines which had anything whatever to do with the subject they were discussing. He was sure the House would not desire that the Cantonments Act should be repealed. That Act provided, among other things, for the maintenance generally of the Cantonments in a proper sanitary condition; and, with reference to the sanitary question, the despatch of the 17th of May laid down the following principles:—

> "The prevention and cure of ordinary disease (mentioned in the 6th section of the 7th clause of the Act) and the preventing the spread of other disease (mentioned in the 7th section) are equally matters of the highest importance, and all infectious disease ought to be dealt with as a question of police. No examination should be imposed compulsorily; but, on the other hand, no person who is reasonably suspected of being in a condition likely to spread the infection of any dangerous disease whatever ought to be allowed within the cantonment except in hospital, and no one who is so suspected and who objects to such medical treatment as may be necessary ought to be allowed to remain within the cantonment at all."

Then the despatch proceeded—

> "The rules which have been framed under Clauses 7-31 of Section 27 of Act III. of 1880 appear to me to require careful revision; and in such revision the principle should be steadily borne in mind that the efforts to control prostitution and to mitigate its attendant evils should not be developed into anything that can assume the appearance of an encouragement of vice by the Government and its officers. There should be no regulations which can be justly construed into a legalization of prostitution. Since I received your last despatch a paper has been placed in my hands purporting to be a copy of a Circular Memorandum issued from Army Headquarters in India, and I learn from your telegram of the 8th instant that such Circular is authentic. I have no reason to doubt that the copy placed in my hands is correct; and although it has already been withdrawn, I feel bound to express my deep regret, in which I know your Excellency shares, that any such document should ever have been issued, nor can I in any way reconcile its contents with

the report made to you in Quartermaster General's letter, No. 3,713 B, of the 2nd of August, 1887, and contained in the enclosures to your despatch of the 24th of January, 1888."

These were the regulations, and it was not for him to interfere with the Government of India. He would entreat the Members of that House to put a little more trust not only in the good intentions of Her Majesty's Government and the Secretary of State, but also in the good intentions of those valuable public servants who had administered the government of India. He was horrified when he heard the worst motive attributed to them for the conduct which they thought it their duty to pursue. He heard an hon. Member opposite denounce what he called the atrocity of the Contagious Diseases Act, but did that hon. Gentleman remember who was Viceroy of India when that Act was passed? The Act was passed during the Government of Lord Lawrence, than whom no man would carry down to posterity a higher character for morality and religious teaching. He did not mean to say that grievous errors had not been committed in the administration of the government of India; but what he did claim was that the men who administered the affairs of India were guided in their conduct by the purest and the most patriotic motives; and anyone in that House or in the country who attempted to traduce the honour or the morality of the Government of India was guilty of a gross slander against a body of valuable public servants who were carrying on what he held to be, on the whole, one of the purest and one of the best Governments which the history of the world had ever seen.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, that he did not gather from the remarks of the hon. and learned Gentleman whether the Government meant to oppose the Resolution or not. What they on that side wanted to know, and they wished to know it soon, was whether the Members of the Government were going into the Division Lobby against the Resolution. There was no answer as yet to that question.

Sir JOHN GORST: I think I stated in the clearest terms that we do not regard the Motion as one brought forward with the intention of embarrassing the Government.

Mr. JAMES STUART said, that might be so; but he wanted to know whether on a Division the hon. and learned Member and the Government would vote in favour of the Resolution or not. It was quite clear that there were some of the followers of the Government who would vote against it, and they intended to give those hon. Gentlemen the opportunity of doing so. Was he right in understanding the Under Secretary of State for India to maintain the position which he took up when, in reply to a Question in that House, he said that—

"The Government had no intention to interfere, nor had they the power to interfere, with the discretion of the Indian Legislature in making, repealing, or amending laws,"

and, further—

"that it would be highly unbecoming of Her Majesty's Government to interfere."

Did the hon. and learned Gentleman adhere to that statement? He did not make it clear in his statement whether he adhered to it or not. His hon. Friend the Member for Crewe (Mr. M'Laren) had pointed out that the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) had interfered to prevent Lord Ripon repealing the Contagious Diseases Act in 1882. The hon. and learned Gentleman might say that the noble Lord interfered to exercise the veto of the Crown which existed to prevent some piece of legislation being carried out. But the hon. and learned Gentleman had maintained something different from that, for in the reply to a Question to which he had referred, he stated that the Secretary of State had no right to interfere with the initiative of legislation. He contended that the hon. and learned Gentleman in making that statement, and in the position which he had taken up, had shown that he did not know his own business. When Lord Salisbury was Secretary of State for India he wrote a remarkable despatch on the 11th of November, 1875, in which the Secretary of State's power to order legislation was clearly laid down, while the details were left to the Indian Government; and Lord Salisbury added that he deprecated any attempt to prescribe to the Viceroy the mode in which the policy adopted by the Government should be carried out, and he proceeded to remind the Governor General that the cotton duties, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, should be repealed as being protective in their nature, and thus inconsistent with the policy which Parliament had sanctioned and which the Government on that account could not allow to be set aside in any part of the Empire under their direct control. They now called upon the India Office to act upon that dictum of Lord Salisbury's. Sir Henry Maine, however, strongly supported the position, and, grounding himself on Sir Henry Maine's Memorandum, Lord Salisbury insisted upon the doctrine that Her Majesty's Government was as responsible to Parliament for the Government of India as for that of any Crown Colony in Her Majesty's Dominions. He wished the Government now to act upon the principle laid down by Lord Salisbury in 1875, and which was acted upon then. If the Government did not repeal the system in India, they would be divided against themselves. Lord Knutsford had throughout the Colonies, with, he believed, the single exception of Fiji, ordered the total repeal of Acts of this character. He had ordered their suspension in Ceylon while the Repeal Bill was being prepared. This was very different from their proposed suspension in India, where it was done, not to secure repeal, but to secure that if the Government was dissatisfied with the result the Acts might be again enforced. That was not satisfactory to the opponents of the principle of these Acts. Not only must the Contagious Diseases Act be repealed as, by its 4th clause, violating the principle laid down in the despatch of Lord Cross, that no regulations licensing prostitution should be made, but the 7th section of the 19th clause of the Cantonments Act should be repealed, for under it the condemned regulations had been made, and therefore could be made again. He read extracts from the Reports of Indian Lock Hospitals in support of the contention that the Quartermaster General's Memorandum was a fair sample of the system; and he pointed out that the cure proposed for the failure of the system was practically that the state should obtain a monopoly of brothel-keeping. Was the House prepared to endorse that proposal? He did not blame the Government, who, he believed, desired to act rightly in this matter, so much as the wirepullers in the India Office and in India, who kept the Government very badly informed. The reports from the Lock Hospitals in India showed that this legislation had failed in India, as it had done elsewhere, and had been utterly worthless so far as checking disease among our troops was concerned. He quite agreed that if that legislation, which had been in force for 17 years, were to be suddenly repealed, we must not look for an immediate benefit, because it would take some time before a moral system could have its effect in checking immorality. He referred to what he called the *pièce de résistance* in the whole of the statistics—namely, the report by Surgeon-Major Barclay relating to the averages of disease at different stations, and said that, incredible though it seemed, there was not one single average in the whole report but was taken wrongly. Any conclusion, therefore, which the Government founded upon it, and they had founded conclusions upon it, was worthless and misleading, and it was a disgrace to any man who dared to come forward to interpret statistics to the Indian Government and the British public that he should be guilty of mistakes for which a schoolboy would get a sound thrashing. The general position, then, was this—those who supported the Motion had by a slow educative process carried on throughout England got the House of Commons to pronounce a clear judgment, formed after a long and elaborate period of investigation. They claimed that that which was now the settled policy of England should be extended through the responsibility of the Ministers of the Crown to every portion of Her Majesty's dominions over which they had direct control. The Government had to decide whether they would or would not aid them in carrying out those views. The flimsy pretext was cut from under their feet that they had no right to interfere, and they stood face to face with the question whether they would that night get rid of or maintain a system which was founded on vice, built up of injustice and cruelty, and bolstered and buttressed by fraud.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) said, that, as a Member of that House who had had some connection with the work of Indian Administration, he rose for the purpose of expressing the disgust and, he might say, the horror with which he read the disgraceful circular to which reference had been made so often in this debate, and also the disgust which he felt at the details of the so-called regimental system which had come under their review. That regimental system and that circular seemed to him to justify all that had ever been said with regard to the pernicious results of any attempt at the State regulation of vice. If Her Majesty's Government, or the Government of India, or the Indian Military Authorities had defended or even excused or palliated that circular and that system, he for one would this evening have recorded a most emphatic vote against them. From a personal acquaintance with Sir Frederick Roberts, Sir Charles Arbuthnot, General Chesney, and many others among the highest military authorities in India, he would take upon himself to assure the House and the country at large that there were no men, whether in that House or elsewhere, who could feel more acutely the disgrace of these proceedings. He did not know personally General Chapman, whose responsibility for that most unfortunate circular had been dwelt on somewhat severely from the opposite Benches, but he knew him well by reputation, and he had been glad to hear the remarks which had fallen from the Under Secretary of State for India in defence of that officer, though not in defence of that miserable circular, for which no possible excuse could be alleged. He could only suppose that General Chapman had signed it as a matter of official routine, without being aware of the contents of the document. General Chapman was well known in India as one of the leaders in every good and religious work in that country, and he believed that he was one of the most active and prominent members of a most estimable and self-denying religious body, the Plymouth Brethren. He was glad to find that not only the Secretary of State, but also the Government of India and all the military authorities and the Quartermaster General's Department itself, entirely repudiated that circular, and denied that any such system as that which had been described that evening really existed in any force in India. They had pledged themselves that if it was existing anywhere it should cease to exist in the future. Since the Authorities had done so much he felt very great difficulty in taking upon himself to vote for any Resolution that would tend to coerce the Legislative Council of the Viceroy. There was no sign whatever to indicate that the Council had not entirely recognized their responsibility in this matter, and if the House passed such a Resolution as that suggested to it by the hon. Member for Crewe, it seemed to him that they would be taking upon themselves a most terrible responsibility, especially when it could not be denied that most Members would be voting with an imperfect knowledge of the peculiar sanitary conditions of India, and the effects of the climate in that country upon the propagation of disease, and, in fact, of all the conditions of the question which it was now proposed so summarily to decide. He would much prefer to see the ultimate decision as to the repeal of the Acts, which were at present suspended, left to the arbitrament of those distinguished men who represented public opinion, both English and Native, in the Viceroy's Legislative Council. It must be remembered that the Viceroy had around him the most authoritative body of experts in all such subjects as these in that Indian Medical Service which would always be the pride of our Indian Empire, distinguished as they were, not only for their skill in dealing with all such matters as this, but also for their high feeling of honour and integrity and devotedness to the well-being of those with whom they had to do. In consideration, therefore, of the many peculiar sanitary conditions, and the terrible nature of the subject before them, he would venture to urge the House to beware before it coerced the action of such men as these.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, he did not wonder that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down felt it his duty to endeavour to defend the character of some of those members of that service in India of which he had himself been a member. No more severe condemnation was ever penned by a Secretary of State than that passed upon Major General Chapman.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE said, he expressly stated that he in no way defended Major General Chapman's action in signing the infamous document referred to in the despatch. All he stated was that he believed that Major General Chapman's signature was obtained by a stamp signature, or in some way by which he had not full knowledge of the contents.

MR. J. E. ELLIS said, that if the hon. Gentleman thought by such an explanation he could do his friend any service, he should be sorry to stand in his way; but if that defence was to be received, then that let some light into the extraordinary manner in which Indian official documents were signed, and it only added one more to the matters which needed inquiry by Viscount Cross. But it was not in respect to the contents of the document that the severest censure was passed. Viscount Cross added—

> "Nor can I in any way reconcile its contents with the report made by you in the Quartermaster General's report of August 2, 1887."

The fact of Major General Chapman being a man of deep religious character only added to the gravity of the situation. Had it come to this, that an officer of the highest religious character could, by the suppression of details in the report, draw forth such words of condemnation? This was why he and those who acted with him could not have that very high confidence in Indian officials which had been expressed by the Under Secretary and the hon. Member who had just sat down. Nor were they satisfied when it was stated by the Government of India that the operation of the Act had been suspended. The Under Secretary read a despatch from Lord Dufferin, dated March 27, 1888, stating that he had decided to suspend the operation of the Act in the localities mentioned, but there was absolute information that operations under the Act were in full swing in the middle of May, so that it would appear that certain officials had not received, or did not carry out, the suspension orders. The information upon which he stated this was contained in a letter from Mr. A. S. Dyer, who stated that he, in company with Mr. Gladwin, found on May 16 that the doors of the Lock Hospital were crowded, and the medical authorities had heard nothing of the suspension. There were 60 women in the hospital and 500 on the register. The acting police commissioner had heard nothing of the suspension, and examinations were proceeding. He could not, therefore, have confidence in the Indian officials. The supporters of the Resolution were determined to stand by its terms, that the legislation ought to be repealed, and they would be content with nothing less.

MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth) said, it was important to keep clear the fact that this was no question of objection to certain details of the Acts; it was an objection based on a principle of the broadest kind against any method of establishing harlotry in India or elsewhere, and against any recognition of it, except for the purpose of repression. It was extraordinary to hear the ignorance expressed by the India Office of what was known as the "regimental system." It was in existence in 1853, and he could not say how much earlier. In 1870 and 1871 there was a Royal Commission, which, among other evidence, took that of Lieutenant General Lord Sandhurst, and he stated, in the most explicit manner, that the regimental system was in full operation when he was in India in 1853. So to talk of it as a system established a few years ago was an extraordinary delusion, and he was sorry the Under Secretary of State (Sir John Gorst) should be under it. More than that, there was other evidence given before the Royal Commission, showing that the system was in operation before any legislation authorized it. That the House should understand, for, although the Resolution spoke of the repeal of legislation, there would still be attempts to work some system or other in the same direction as a substitute. Dr. Ross, in his evidence before the Commission, said the principle of the Act was carried out long before it was extended to India, and his evidence went almost as far back as the date already given. Much information was contained in the 13th annual Report of the working of the Lock Hospitals in the North-West Provinces and Oude for 1886; but the remarkable thing about that Report was, that it contained very little about the working of the hospitals in the sense usually understood, but it contained much about the building and furnishing military brothels, their sanitary arrangements, and staffing them with suitable persons. There was no disguising the facts, and in one instance the institution was referred to as the "regimental brothel." It really amounted to the same thing as was referred to by the religious Major General, who appeared to allow his signature to be attached to documents not knowing their contents. He (Mr. Wilson) was the last man to speak with contempt of genuine piety, but he could not have a high regard for the piety of a man whose signature was attached to such a document. The evidence showed every possible recommendation had been made except that soldiers should behave like decent men. If it was suggested that Europeans could not so behave in India, that was the severest condemnation against having a European Army in India at all. Now that all other plans had failed, let morality be tried. Give the men reasonable occupation and recreation. He implored the Government not to go on in defiance of public opinion and the voice of the country, which, he believed, in this case at all events, was the voice of God.

MR. H. S. WRIGHT (Nottingham, S.) said, he could not see what object was to be gained by prolonging the discussion on a subject on which the House was agreed almost to a man. Nothing could be clearer than the speech they had listened to from the Under Secretary of State for India, in which he said that the licensing of this vice was not going to be countenanced any longer, though he pressed that the House should leave it to the Indian Government to take the initiative rather than take the initiative themselves in an unconstitutional way. He thought that by the manner in which it had been shown that the Indian Government was recognizing the opinion of this country on the subject hon. Members need not be in fear that the old policy would be continued. If the Indian Government did not intend to carry out what they had commenced, the speeches which had been made that night would be an incentive to them to carry out more resolutely and speedily the abatement of the intolerable system. It was necessary that some sort of restriction should be imposed on the entry of these women into the cantonments where our soldiers were. They did not want to place temptation in the way of the soldiers; but if the women insisted in going voluntarily into the cantonments they should be subject to police restrictions in the same way as persons suffering from small-pox, or fever, or other contagious disease. That was the sort of restriction, he believed, it was intended to enforce, and that kind of restriction, he believed, everyone would agree with most cordially. He only wished to say he was perfectly satisfied himself and delighted with the very plain and eloquent speech of the Under Secretary for India, which he felt sure would meet with the approval of the country, as he was sure it would of the constituency which he represented.

SIR JOHN SIMON (Dewsbury) said, he thought the hon. Member who had brought forward this matter had done a great public service, for he had enabled the House of Commons to pronounce upon and condemn this system. We were in the habit of justifying our presence in India on the ground that we were a civilizing Power there, but this law was an insult to civilization. It struck at the root of the first principles of morality, and legalized a vice which all Biblical religion condemned. He preferred the moral argument to the constitutional which had been advanced. We heard nothing of the constitutional argument when we pressed the Indian Government for the repeal of the duty on cotton goods. If the matter went to a division, the issue would be morality *versus* vice. He hoped that the Government would see to the repeal of this legislation, and so rescue the British name from the dishonour which now rested upon it in consequence of this legislation.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham), who had on the Paper the following Amendment:—

> "That this House, while approving the recent action of the Government of India regarding the suspension of certain portions of the Contagious Diseases Acts in that Country, yet deems it unconstitutional to interfere by Resolution with that initiative in legislation which has been assigned to the Government of India by Act of Parliament,"

said, it was certainly true that, under the operation of the Acts in question, a certain class of diseases had not decreased as much as had been hoped for; but, nevertheless, it was impossible to doubt that the effect of that legislation had been beneficial in a physical point of view. The statistics and the medical evidence taken as a whole were conclusive on this point. If indeed at some stations a slight increase had been perceptible, that, he feared, was owing to certain causes which were arising in England, and to which he would not further allude. Though he denied that India owed the introduction of these diseases to England, still we were bound to take all the precautions we could to prevent them from spreading among the Natives. Passing to the moral aspect of the question, he desired to pay a tribute of respect to the motives that actuated hon. Members opposite in the course which they had taken in demanding the repeal of this legislation. He must, however, enter his protest against the unintentional exaggerations and misrepresentations into which an excess of zeal led hon. Members opposite, whose pictures were drawn somewhat after the Rembrandt or Salvator Rosa schools. He might say at once that he was not prepared in the slightest degree to defend or to countenance anything that could be regarded as immoral. He knew that the Government of India had never intended to contravene the principles of morality, and had never done so conciously. He could assure the House that the Army officers in India did all they could to promote the welfare of their men, while the medical officers, in the discharge of their delicate duties, showed the most humane consideration for the miserable class of persons with whom they were brought into professional contact. Hon. Members opposite, however, should remember that there was such a thing as a choice of evils. It did not follow that evils which had to be regulated were at all approved. Nor did it follow that the recognition of inevitable facts at all involved their authorization. He was afraid that the sudden repeal of these Acts would lead to an aggravation in India of vice and of human degradation, the very evils which hon. Members opposite were laudably striving to lesson. The recent despatch of the Secretary of State addressed to the Government of India was most satisfactory, as it carried out the promises which had been made by the Under Secretary for India. It was clearly understood that there was not to be any more compulsory examination of certain classes, and that there was to be nothing which could bear even the semblance of the authorization of immorality or vice. He was sure that those promises were to be relied upon. He acknowledged the utter indefensibility of certain despatches which had been disowned by the Government and condemned in that House. Admittedly the authorities in India had in one respect gone too far, and had unwittingly infringed sound principles at some points. But the Executive orders which had been embodied in the despatch of the Secretary of State went further than even such a measure as the repeal of these Acts. In fact, the Government had granted more than was asked for in the Resolution now before the House. While admitting, of course, that the British Parliament was the paramount authority in the Empire, he might point out that to interfere with the Legislative Council of India was a very serious matter; in fact, it was unconstitutional. Parliament might be omnipotent practically, still even its powers were limited by Acts passed by itself. For 50 years it had been the object of this Parliament to extend legislative powers to India; and to interfere with these powers, conferred by Parliament itself, was a very different matter from interfering with the Government in its executive capacity. To virtually direct that Legislature to repeal such and such Acts was tantamount to interference. The Indian Councils Act, passed by Parliament in 1861, expressly assigned full powers of law-making to that Legislature by Section 22. A veto was reserved to the English Government by Section 22, whereby a full control was maintained. These two sections were so explicit that, while providing this veto, they left the initiative to a Legislature consisting of the Governor General and his Councillors, aided by a certain number of non-official Members both European and Native. He could give instances where this Legislature had asserted its right of initiation even as against the English Government. Of course, the supreme power must ever reside in England. Certainly, if England insisted on having a measure passed, it could recall the Governor General and the Members of his Council, if they objected; but that would be an unusual course. The proper plan would be to leave the initiative in this case to the Government of India, who would act officially, and would not take an opportunity of running counter to the general observations they might receive from Her Majesty's Government. He submitted that an authoritative suggestion, such as would be comprised in or implied by a Resolution of that House, would be tantamount to an order, and would be also equivalent to taking the initiative which had been assigned by Parliament to the Government of India. He did not for a moment suppose that a Resolution of that House could be treated as a *brutum fulmen*, as it was really a most serious practical matter. He submitted that the proper plan was to allow the Government of India to have the initiative in this and in all other cases. They would take note of the sentiments expressed in that House, and would in due time act faithfully and loyally in accordance therewith. In dealing with these particular Acts the Government of India would have much to think of. The Acts were various, extending from 1864 to 1880. They touched on many topics besides the diseases now under consideration. If parts of them had to be repealed, parts would have to be retained or re-enacted. While studiously preventing any practices condemned by public opinion or prohibited by Parliament, the authorities must yet repress open vice, preserve public decency in the military stations, expel persons from military limits who were known to be dangerously diseased. Among the measures to be kept up was the maintenance of hospitals. He hoped that the charity and humanity of hon. Members would not object to Lock Hospitals being maintained for those who voluntarily resorted to them or who applied for relief. We ought generously to offer them relief when they sought it. We did not refuse medical aid to a man suffering from *delirium tremens* on the ground that he had brought it upon himself, or on the ground that when he came out of the hospital he would relapse into his fault. When cured in the Lock Hospitals, these poor people would have a chance of returning to an honest life, whereas if uncured they would never emerge from a state of misery, and they would die a most wretched death. In conclusion, he duly noted the argument which had been used by several speakers opposite to the effect that some remedy for this evil ought to be found as affecting our soldiers in the East. He admitted that there might be physical mitigation, but there could be no final remedy even if the law were administered with the greatest stringency. He entreated hon. Members as humane and sensible men to reflect upon the many disadvantages which beset the life of the soldier in India. The soldier was carried out to a foreign land with no family, separated from all his friends, and shut up for many months of the year from morning to evening in hot barracks, which were darkened in order to exclude the rays of the burning sun. Perhaps he was allowed one or two hours' liberty in the cool of the evening. Could not hon. Members imagine what were the temptations to which he was exposed in such circumstances? Despite all these temptations there had been such improvements in his lot and his surroundings, in his character, his conduct, and his habits as to encourage him (Sir Richard Temple) to hope enthusiastically for the future of the soldiery in India. There was only one perfect remedy for the state of things that existed in India, and that was that the men should be enabled to take their wives and families with them to India; but the House well knew that this was practically impossible. For the limited number of families that were taken out to India married quarters were provided, where the women could live happily and comfortably with all the best associations of an English home. It was said by hon. Members opposite that the men should not be allowed to be idle and so get drawn into temptation. That had been considered, and soldiers' gardens and workshops had been provided, and military industry was encouraged. Means of recreation, swimming baths, shady parks, and playgrounds, had been provided. There were also facilities for education. The men were encouraged to circulate books and to hang pictures on their barrack-walls. Well-lighted and properly furnished reading-rooms were constituted to allure men towards better things and away from low places of amusement. In fact, everything was provided that was calculated to raise the lives of the soldiers—physically, mentally, and morally. No matter was of more Imperial importance than this, because the precious reserve of European strength must be maintained intact and unimpaired, however much the Natives of

India might be disposed to venerate our pure administration of the law. Native loyalty had been conspicuous happily. Still, behind it all there must ever be "the thin red line" and the central power on the spot. For the sake of sustaining that line and that power, he had spoken to the Amendment, though, under the circumstances of the moment, he would refrain from actually moving it.

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, he hoped that after the discussion of that night they would have heard the last of these horrible Acts in India. On his side of the House they had to consider not merely the independence of the Indian Legislature, but also the character of the English nation. The Medical Profession at one time was strongly in favour of the extension of these Acts, actuated by the wish to do good to the community because of the terrible results which followed from these diseases; but the horrors of the system and of the methods necessary for the suppression of the disease were found to be such as to outweigh, from a moral point of view, any benefits to be derived from the stamping out of the disease. It was now desired by the carrying of the Resolution before the House to express an opinion which would be an indication to the Council of India of the feeling entertained in England on this question. These Acts had failed in England, but they had in an especial manner failed in India. Looking at the statistics on the matter, he found that the number of cases of disease had been increasing year by year, and especially in the last two or three years. Whilst the number of cases in 1876 was 189 per 1,000, they had risen in 1880 to 249; in 1883 to 270; and in 1885 to 342 per 1,000, so that while the Acts had been in force, the disease, instead of being suppressed, had actually largely increased. The argument on the other side from the experiment made at certain stations, was based on unscientific methods and unscientific comparisons, single years being compared with the average of series of years, instead of single years or groups of years being compared with each other. It was said that the increase was due to the shutting up of the hospitals; but no one ever asked that the hospitals should be shut up, or that there should be no places open for the treatment of disease. He found, on examining the matter more closely, that this argument entirely failed, for at those stations where the system was allowed to continue in force the increase went on the same as in stations where the system had been suspended. In Cawnpore, for instance, where the experiment of doing away with hospitals had been tried, the number of cases reported per 1,000 in 1884 was 166, whereas in 1885 the number rose to 309, which increase was stated to be due to the abandonment of the hospital system, and of the regulations with regard to the suppression of the disease; but, in reply to this argument, he would take the station of Agra, where the regulations remained in full force. At Agra he found that there were no fewer than 223 cases reported in 1884, and that in 1885, when a diminution ought to have been shown to bear out this argument, so far from there being a diminution, the number of cases reported had actually increased to 416 per 1,000, so that here with all the advantages, or supposed advantages, of the system which was advocated by hon. Members opposite, the increase was about as great as it was in the station where the system had been abandoned, so that the argument based on the ground of the experiment of doing away with the hospitals failed altogether. He commended the result to the attention of hon. Gentlemen opposite. As a member of the Medical Profession, to which were allotted the objectionable duties which the Resolution of the hon. Member condemned, he protested against any of his fellow practitioners being called upon to act in the manner they had now to act in India. They ought not to be asked to carry out what was a vile duty in the so-called interests of the Army of the Empire; and, on this ground, to say nothing of the immorality of the question, he would support the Motion of his hon. Friend. He would like to ask hon. Members what they would think of a medical practitioner who would perform the same duties in London for private individuals? It would be impossible that they could respect such a medical man. And yet this was the system which was allowed and systematized by the Government of a Christian country. What they ought to do was to find recreation for the men of the Army, mental, educational and physical, and turn the Service for the poorer classes into what the Universities were for the wealthier classes. If they did this there would be no complaints that the men were kept in idleness. It was said that the men had long hours in dull barracks, and that they were entitled to two hours' recreation every evening. He was willing to concede that they shall have recreation of a moral kind; but in the interests of the morality, the courage, and the self-respect of the soldiers, the system in use in India ought to be put down, as it had been put down in England.

Mr. STANSFELD (Halifax) said, he rose, not to continue the discussion, but to suggest that it should now be brought to a close. The whole course of the debate, and the attitude and statements of the Government, had been of such a character, that he must congratulate himself and his Friends on the result of the discussion. The House had also every reason to congratulate itself upon the character of the statement made by the Under Secretary of State for India, and he did not in the least doubt what the effect of that statement would be. He would not enter into the Constitutional question raised by the hon. Member for Evesham (Sir Richard Temple), for there was really no difference of opinion on the subject. The Indian Government, he agreed with the Under Secretary, ought to be treated with respect and in a courteous manner. No one, however, could dispute that Parliament had the power to legislate over the head of the Indian Government, and to direct the action of the Viceroy and his Council. The only practical question was, as to the manner in which the power of this House should be brought to bear, and he had no doubt but that the expression of opinion in the course of this discussion would result in the Indian Government honourably, and without delay, bringing their legislation and practice into accord with the views of the House of Commons. He desired to express his acknowledgments to Her Majesty's Government for the manner in which they had met the Resolution, and that was especially gratifying to him because the subject under discussion that evening he regarded as only the continuation and corollary of a long and painful struggle in which he had borne a laborious part. He had never desired to make it a Party question, and as some time ago the House repealed the Contagious Diseases Act, *nemine contradicente*, he hoped that it would now with similar unanimity adopt the Resolution of his hon. Friend (Mr. M'Laren).

The House proceeded to a Division, and Mr. Speaker stated that he thought the Ayes had it. But his decision was challenged, and it appearing to Mr. Speaker that the Division was frivolously claimed, he directed the Noes to stand up in their places, and no Member having stood up, Mr. Speaker declared that the Ayes had it.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, any mere suspension of measures for the compulsory examination of women, and for licensing and regulating prostitution in India, is insufficient, and the legislation which enjoins, authorises, or permits such measures ought to be repealed.

REGINA *v.* HARKINS AND CALLAN.

RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That there be laid before this House Copies of a Statement made to Mr. Cuffe, Assistant Solicitor to the Treasury, by Mr. Joseph Nolan, M.P., on the 11th day of January, 1888, with reference to the case of Regina *v.* Harkins and Callan:

And, of a Transcript of the Shorthand Writer's Notes of the Evidence given by Mr. Joseph Nolan, M.P., at the trial of the case of Regina *v.* Harkins and Callan at the Central Criminal Court."—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Sir, I beg in the first place, to call your attention in regard to this Motion, to the fact that the Rule of the House, which provides that the name of an hon. Member shall appear in connection with the constituency which he represents, has been infringed. That, I understand, has been the practice laid down from the Chair on previous occasions; and I think, Sir, if that ruling is to be adhered to in one case and not in another, it would be extremely desirable that we should know that that is to be the practice henceforward. However, perhaps we shall have some detailed or precise Rule upon that point, so that we may exactly know how we stand. With regard to the other matter, I am surprised that the noble Viscount (Viscount Ebrington), who, I understand, is in his place, who gave notice of this Motion, never said anything in support of it. I understand that the noble Viscount was the Chairman of the Committee that sat, and made some foolish recommendations with regard to the Strangers' Gallery. Well, the noble Viscount put down the Motion, apparently at the instigation of Her Majesty's Government some two or three months ago. [The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) dissented.] Well, I will develop my reasons presently. The noble Viscount, as a Liberal Unionist and supporter of the Government, put down the Motion in conjunction with some Gentlemen on the Government Bench. I observe that the Home Secretary is apparently uneasy. At any rate, the noble Viscount put it down in conjunction with Her Majesty's Government, as I submit. When the Committee met, its exact investigations were defined; but instead of their being devoted to the general question which was understood to be the original ground upon which the Committee was formed—the exclusion of Strangers—the Committee devoted itself to one object—namely, to besmirch the character of an individual Member of this House. I am sorry to see that when, on another occasion, the Attorney General had a full opportunity of cross-examining in the course of a trial where an oath was administered, and where he would have all the latitude afforded him at the Old Bailey, he passed over any question which could have affected the character of this hon. Gentleman, and instead of that the Government granted a Committee, for which the Home Secretary could apparently snatch a moment of his time from looking after Trafalgar Square and devote himself to the unusual duty of acting as a Member of this Committee, and the Home Secretary gave his great assistance, both as a statesman and a lawyer and as a Home Secretary, to the Committee, and the noble Viscount, in the endeavour by some means, if possible, to carry out the object I have stated, and, from what I can gather, the noble Viscount puts down the Motion which can only have one other object—that is, to assist *The Times* in the forthcoming libel trial. The Attorney General is the Gentleman whose services were offered to my hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) by the First Lord of the Treasury, so that the Attorney General might conduct a libel action for him acting on behalf of the Government against *The Times*. We detect the *bona fides* of Her Majesty's Government with regard to this very important question, when we find the first Law Officer of the Crown, who was proffered to us as our shield and buckler on the occasion of the action in respect of the forged letter, now leading counsel for *The Times*. We find the noble Viscount acting in collusion with the Government and with the Attorney General, who is also acting as leading counsel for *The Times*, in getting out matters for which a full opportunity was afforded to the Attorney General when he had my hon. Friend the Member for North Louth (Mr. J. Nolan) upon the table at the Old Bailey, and he had not then any desire for cross-examination with reference to these matters. I denounce this attempt as one of the basest manœuvres to which a responsible Government ever descended. The position is this. You deny to prisoners in Ireland under the inquisitorial clauses of the Crimes Act, the opportunity of getting a sworn deposition, and you now propose to produce, for the first time, a Home Office document, that has been a secret document regarding matters contained in it which has hitherto been supposed to be in confidence between the Home Office and those who supplied them with the information; and I say that that is conniving at a well-regulated breach of official etiquette, and it is a surrender of the confidence of the Home Office in order to assist a Party manœuvre. Where is the noble Viscount who moved the Motion? Sir, you have proposed the Motion from the Chair, and I ask where is the noble Viscount? It seems to me that in addition to having granted this Return this Motion must have been made for the Treasury Bench, because I cannot assume that you would propose the Motion from the Chair——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Motion was moved in the usual way from the Treasury Bench.

An hon. MEMBER: Now we have it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. T. M. HEALY: I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for having given the House the information, and I take it that the Under Secretary of State to the Home Office was about getting on his legs in order to make that open confession which is so good for the soul.

Therefore, when the First Lord of the Treasury a few moments ago shook his head and said that he had not connived at it, he was throwing over his Colleague then. That he had not connived at the granting of this Return or the granting of a Select Committee, but that—I will not say his understrapper, because that would be an un-Parliamentary expression—but a minor official, a very minor official, takes it upon himself. I believe the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) is a Member of the Bar and a Colleague of the hon. and learned Attorney General, and for anything I know, perhaps like the ex-Judge Advocate General, also counsel for *The Times,* and he takes it upon himself to grant this Return and to surrender what has hitherto been supposed to be a secret matter—namely, the confidences which any person is willing to give in the interests of justice to the Treasury and the Home Office. I always understood that a statement to a solicitor was privileged under the circumstances, and especially a statement made to the Representative of a high Minister of State with regard to a matter affecting the Queen and her Crown and dignity; and yet this Gentleman, representing the Home Office, of course without the consent of the First Lord of the Treasury, and equally, I assume, without the consent of the hero of Trafalgar Square, his senior Colleague—he takes it upon himself to issue a proclamation to the noble Viscount granting the Return. It would have passed through without a word in the turmoil of the moment after the excitement of an opposed Division had it not been summarily stopped by me. I would say to the Government, if they want to give these Returns, let them put them down frankly themselves. If the Under Secretary of State wants to give the statement of what is called Mr. Joseph Nolan, M.P., let them present it as a Crown document, but let them not usurp the name of the noble Viscount. Let them attempt to fight without the Liberal Unionist crutch. Let them not attempt by any side wind of this kind to throw dirty water on a Member of the House. If, however, that occupation be congenial to any of them, let it be frankly performed, and let the garden hose from the main tank—I will not say of Downing Street, but shall say of the Central Criminal Court—be turned on by themselves. I would say that a matter of this kind requires to be disposed of by some better explanation than that conveyed to the House by the Jove-like nod of the Under Secretary of State to the Home Office. Perhaps we shall have from him, or from the leading counsel of *The Times* on the Treasury Bench, some further explanation with regard to this important question. I think I have discharged a function of a useful character in exposing what I conclude to be the true intention and objects of this Motion. I do not know what Mr. Joseph Nolan, M.P. may have said to Mr. Cuffe, the Assistant Solicitor to the Treasury, or what the same Gentleman may have said anywhere else; but what we do want to know is this—that the stratagems available in the hands of the Government which are placed at the hand of the leading journal supporting their policy should be fired and fused by those who are chiefly concerned in the policy of defamation against the Irish Members. Let those Gentlemen in their places in the House of Commons get on their legs and stand to their guns. The noble Viscount in whose name the Motion stands has appropriately gone out. I congratulate him upon that performance much more than upon his allowing himself to be made a bonnet for the Government, to use the memorable expression of the late Sir Stafford Northcote. Apparently, to some extent, he has withdrawn, and perhaps now some Representative of the Treasury Bench will give us some better explanation of this matter than we have yet been vouchsafed.

The UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) (Sheffield, Hallam) said, that what was done in the present instance had been customary since he had been in the House—namely, that when a Return was asked for by an hon. Member, with the assent of the Government, the Motion in his absence was made by a Member of the Government. So far as the documents in question were concerned his Office was purely Ministerial. The first of these documents was one the authenticity of which was disputed, and the authenticity of which it was thought desirable to prove, and the other was the accord of a matter of notoriety which was given in evidence before one of the tribunals of the country. That was the substance of the Return, and if the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. T. M. Healy) wished to oppose it, no doubt the Forms of the House would enable him to do so; but all he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) could say was that it was a matter of ordinary practice to move for Returns in this way.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, he should like to add a few words to the remarks which had fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State upon a matter of which the hon. Gentleman personally knew nothing, but which had been in his (Mr. Matthews's) knowledge as he had been a Member of the Committee to which reference had been made. He was bound to say that he had seldom witnessed the ingenuity and imagination of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) exercised with more effect, and more to the astonishment of the House, than on the present occasion. What took place on the Committee was this; when on the last day it sat certain evidence was given by a certain witness. That witness, amongst other things, touched upon a statement of an hon. Gentleman written for the Government as a brief for the Solicitor to the Treasury, but he did not produce that original, and the hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) called upon him to produce that original. The witness had not got it with him, only possessing a copy, whereupon the right hon. Member for West Cavan objected, with perfect propriety, that the copy should not be accepted, and that the original should be produced. The Committee decided not to wait for the original then and there, but asked the witness to read the copy and to produce the original later on. The witness complied, but unfortunately that was the last day on which the Committee sat. All the Members dispersed, the Report was settled, and he (Mr. Matthews) himself had left before the close of the proceedings. A technical difficulty in the way of the production of the document read by the witness then arose, for the Clerk to the Committee could not obtain it and put it in the evidence, neither could the Committee, as it no longer sat as a body. The noble Viscount (Viscount Ebrington), who was responsible for the proceedings of the Committee—inasmuch as he had been its Chairman—suggested how this little difficulty could be got over, and how the very proper objection of the hon. Member for West Cavan could be met. He suggested how the original in place of the copy could be put in evidence—how the verification of the copy could be effected. He was not quite sure whether the suggestion came from the noble Viscount, or was primarily his (Mr. Matthews's) own. It was that the original should be moved for, so that the House could see whether the copy placed before the Committee in evidence was correct or not. That was the whole of this story of which the hon. and learned Member for North Longford had made so much. The whole of his tremendous charge against the Government vanished into thin air. This Motion was simply a means to enable the hon. Member for West Cavan and his Friends to do that which, owing to the dispersion of the Committee and the closing of its period of sitting, could no longer be done regularly, either by the Members of the Committee, or the Committee Clerk. The evidence was at an end. The Committee had decided to read the copy, and not to wait for the production of the original, then and there finishing their task before the original could be produced. If the Motion for the production of the original was now agreed to, everyone would be able to compare it with the copy, and to see whether or not the copy was accurate. The other document, the Armstrong paper, was precisely in the same position. The witness before the Committee stated his recollection of certain evidence which he had heard. He (Mr. Matthews) was not sure whether the objection to the admission of that statement in evidence before the Committee was taken by the hon. Member for West Cavan; but, at any rate, some Member of the Committee objected, declaring that they ought to have the shorthand notes of the evidence in question, which would be a fuller, more complete, and more satisfactory account of the evidence given by the witness at the Central Criminal Court. It was impossible, however, to bring their shorthand notes before the Committee, as this was the last day of its sitting; therefore, this Motion was made in order that the House might see whether there was anything in the notes which would qualify or alter the statement made before the Committee, which hon. Members would see printed in the evidence. The wonderful discovery which the hon. and learned Member for North Longford had made therefore vanished into thin air. He failed to see what the matter could have to do with the Attorney General, or anyone else in the world. All that was about to be done was to furnish those interested in the proceedings of the Committee with the originals in place of the copies of the evidence given before the Committee.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) here rose.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Oh, oh! Three of them!

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock) also rose, and was called upon by Mr. Speaker. He begged to apologize to the House for not having been in his place to move for this Return when it was moved for by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State (Mr. Stuart-Wortley). He was sorry that the matter had caused so much excitement, but the explanation of the whole thing was very simple. Copies of the paper in question had been submitted to the Committee, of which he (Viscount Ebrington) had been Chairman, by a witness. One of them was objected to by an hon. Gentleman, a Member of the Committee, as only being an office copy in the possession of a subordinate, and not being a certified copy of the original. The Committee, however, decided to accept them, and they were put in for what they were worth—and he had given a verbal assurance to the hon. Member who had raised the objection that he would take steps to get the copies verified. The Committee, however, did not meet again, so that it was not possible to get the originals put in. The originals were not, therefore, produced; and, under the circumstances, he had thought that the best course would be to move that these originals should be laid upon the Table of the House, in order that the House might be able to have the documents verified on Ministerial responsibility rather than on the responsibility of a subordinate. That was the whole history of the matter. He was sorry he had not been in his place to explain the matter at the time the Motion was made; but he thought the hon. and learned Member who had initiated this debate would probably be satisfied with this explanation.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, he should not have intervened but for two direct deliberate charges made against him in a most unwarrantable manner by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy). The hon. and learned Gentleman had first stated that the Motion before the House had been made with his (Sir Richard Webster's) knowledge—collusively in relation to some proceedings with which he (Sir Richard Webster) was connected. Of course, he could not say whether the hon. and learned Member for North Longford would accept his word or not; but there were many in that House who would. He could only assure the House that he had not the slightest knowledge, direct or indirect, that this Return had ever been asked for, had ever been moved for, or that the Motion in any form was to come before the House on this or any other occasion. He was in absolute ignorance, either that the papers were required, or that the Motion was going to be made. So much for the allegation that these papers were moved for in collusion with one who was said to be the counsel for *The Times*. The other charge made against him he was surprised to hear proceeding from a member of the Bar whom he could scarcely think wholly ignorant of the proceedings which had taken place. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that he (Sir Richard Webster) was willing that this Return should be moved for, having, when he had had an opportunity of cross-examining the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Nolan) at the Central Criminal Court, deliberately elected not to do so.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I said on these points.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: There was not a particle of foundation for such a suggestion. He would not use any discourteous expression. At the Central Criminal Court it was necessary to prove that a dynamiter named Melville—against whom a warrant was out—had been to the House of Commons in company with one of the prisoners—either Callan or Harkins. To prove that this man had come to the House the hon. Member for Louth was called as a witness for the prosecution—was called as a witness for the Crown—was called by him (Sir Richard Webster), and examined by him. He had simply asked the hon. Member a question as to a matter of fact, as to Melville having been the name of the man introduced to him. The order for admission into the House was produced with Melville's name on it; and the hon. Member for Louth admitted that the name of the introducing Member was in his handwriting. Now, the hon. and learned Member for North Longford was a member of the Bar, and was perfectly well aware that no one calling a witness to prove a fact could cross-examine him at all. There was no opportunity to cross-examine the hon. Member; and he (Sir Richard Webster) had simply put a question to him which was answered. On the hon. Member for Louth stating that he had signed the order his evidence was at an end. He (Sir Richard Webster) had called him to prove a fact which he had thought it necessary to prove. The House, therefore, would judge as to how much truth there was in the charges brought by the hon. and learned Member for Longford against himself or the Government.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he rose to say two or three words on this subject, because he had been a Member of the Committee to which so much reference had been made. He must frankly own that when he saw the Notice of Motion on the Paper to-day that he was as much surprised as he had ever been in the House, because it seemed to be a revival of about as unfortunate a course of conduct as ever was pursued in a Parliamentary Committee—a course of conduct which was, as he thought, with the general consent of the Committee, desisted from. This was a Return now moved for in cold blood, some three or four weeks after the Committee had brought in its Report. The Return, as it appeared on the Paper of the House, evidently cast serious imputations upon a Member of the House. Such a Return would never be placed upon the Paper of the House unless some serious use was going to be made of it. Now, the Secretary of State for the Home Department and the Under Secretary of State for the Home Office said that these two documents were accurate and authentic documents, of which copies were laid before the Committee. That was not the case. The first of them—the brief which, he supposed, was a statement made by the Assistant Solicitor to the Treasury—was at a late stage of the proceedings laid before the Committee; but by that time the Committee was conducting its business in a much more reasonable manner than it had been doing earlier, as he would explain to the House; and a legal objection—because by that time they had begun to regard themselves as to a certain extent under legal responsibility—was taken that the original, and not a copy, should be brought forward. The original could not be produced, and, consequently, the copy was not laid before the Committee. The copy was never before the Committee, and, in spite of what had just been said, was not printed in the Blue Book. If it were produced now, in response to the present appeal, it would be the first time it had ever been before the House of Commons or a section of the House of Commons. And now let him say a word why, under the circumstances, even if the copy had been laid before the Committee, he should not vote for this Motion—indeed, should vote against it. The Committee, to which so much reference had been made, appeared to have been assembled for a double purpose. One purpose—and a most legitimate purpose — was in order to discover whether the regulations for admitting Strangers were so defective that dangerous Strangers might be admitted; and secondly—and this was likewise a most legitimate purpose—in order to discover whether there was any method of allotting the seats in the Gallery which Mr. Speaker could approve and which the majority of the House would agree to, and which would be more convenient to hon. Members than the method of admitting Strangers lately in practice. But on the top of these two most proper objects there was engrafted a third, which was to bring a charge against a Member of this House. [An hon. MEMBER: Monstrous thing!] He heard an hon. Member say "Monstrous thing!" Well, he would explain to him what he thought a monstrous thing. What was the charge which it was sought to bring against a Member of the House?—but he would not say whether it was a true one or a false one. ["Hear, hear!" *from the Government Benches.*] No; he did not say whether it was a true one or a false one—that had nothing to do with his argument. It was a charge of knowingly admitting into the Gallery of that House men who were prepared to commit a crime—to commit a murderous outrage upon this House. If an hon. Member had been guilty of that, he would have been guilty of high treason, he supposed. He would have brought himself within the compass of an Act by which he could have received 21 years' penal servitude; and did any hon. Member—an hon. Member had called it a "monstrous thing"—did any hon. Member think that Parliament was the proper place to try anyone on such a charge, whether a Member or not, and whether it was true or not? He was obliged to be rather frank with the House in one point—namely, that on the first of these important days he was absent in the North of England, and did not sit upon the Committee. When he got back, he found that a good deal of evidence had been given before the Committee which ought not to have been given; and the hon. Member for North Louth (Mr. J. Nolan), whose conduct was in question, had not heard the evidence, though it was admitted that he was invited to be present when it would be given, so that he might come forward to make the best reply he could. But after that evidence had been given he came forward and made the best reply he could, not to that evidence, but to the questions which were put to him by Members who had heard that evidence. The next day he (Sir George Trevelyan) was present. His method of cross-examination was carried to a still further point. It actually came to this—that Members of the Committee questioned this hon. Member as to the topics on which he had been discussing at a private interview which he had had with one of these inculpated persons; and when it came to that point, he (Sir George Trevelyan), as hon. Members who looked at the Book would find, moved that the room should be cleared, and that they should discuss the course that they were then taking. He persuaded the Committee that they were in the wrong in allowing that method of cross-examination to be pursued; and it was not a breach of confidence to say that the Home Secretary—he did not say that the right hon. Gentleman admitted that they had been in the wrong up to that point; but the Home Secretary thought that they could not go any further in that direction, and so that method of cross-examination came to an end. It had been during that course of examination, which was, as it were, condemned and disowned by the Committee, that allusion had been made to this statement made to the Assistant Solicitor to the Treasury which they now asked should be brought before the House of Commons. He did not think it ought to have been brought before the Committee, and he did not think it ought now to be brought before the House of Commons. He did not find it in the Book.

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON asked the right hon. Gentleman to look at Question 778 in the Report.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN said, the Question to which the noble Lord wished him to turn was as follows:—

> "With reference to this statement made to the Treasury Solicitor, which you wish to put in, will you read it?"—"It is as follows:—'No doubt, the statement I made to an officer last summer was correct, if I said it at the time. It does not, however, recall the circumstances to me, and I can add nothing to it; I might recognize the man; I do not know Mr. Stock's writing, nor do I know in whose writing the entry is in the Speaker's Register. I cannot recall the circumstances of the visit, nor do I know what name the other man gave. I repeat that I do not know what name the other man gave. I do not remember having had any letter of introduction from anyone coming from America. I should give people tickets on their own representation of themselves. I do not recollect the circumstances at all, at present.—(Signed) JOSEPH NOLAN."

Then, in that case, he (Sir George Trevelyan) fell back upon what he said earlier, and that was that this Notice of Motion of the noble Lord was the sanction of one of the most improper proceedings that ever took place in a Committee. On that ground, if on no other, he should vote against the Motion. He considered that the only business of the Committee was to ask the hon. Member for North Louth (Mr. J. Nolan) what the circumstances were under which he introduced these gentlemen, and to take his statement of the case. That was only what was necessary for the purpose for which the Committee was appointed, which was to see whether or not improper characters could be introduced into the House under the existing circumstances. The hon. Member for Louth made a perfectly consistent and, he (Sir George Trevelyan) believed, a perfectly true statement. In all the cross-examination which ensued, that statement was not shaken in any particular, and he absolutely refused to vote for this Motion, and thereby sanction a course of conduct which he thought was wrong in itself, a course of conduct pursued very far, and which threw a slight upon the hon. Member for North Louth which he was quite certain was undeserved.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University) said, that as he was one of the Members of the Committee, perhaps the House would indulge him for a few moments while he stated what, in his view, were the real circumstances of this case. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Sir George Trevelyan) had very severely condemned the proceedings of the Committee, and had taken upon himself to impugn the motives with which that Committee was asked for, and with which the examination of the witnesses appearing before that Committee was conducted. As far as he (Mr. Plunket) was concerned, he was not present, any more than the right hon. Gentleman, on the first day that the hon. Member for North Louth was cross-examined. He might say, also, that he had not refreshed his memory as to the exact details of the proceedings of the Committee, because he had not observed that that Notice was on the Paper at all. As to what really happened on the first day when the hon. Member for North Louth was called before the Committee, he (Mr. Plunket) could only judge from the evidence as printed. One of the police authorities (Mr. Munro), to whom to a great extent was entrusted the protection of the House, came before the Committee and gave certain evidence. The main feature of that evidence was, that one of the difficulties he had in securing the protection of the House was that dangerous characters obtained admission to the House on orders given by the hon. Member, and as he (Mr. Plunket) recollected, in support of that statement, the proceedings which had been made public in the trial of the dynamitards were brought before the Committee. The hon. Member for North Louth, receiving notice that that kind of examination was likely to be entered upon, appeared before the Committee and gave such evidence as he desired on the subject. On a subsequent day, when he (Mr. Plunket) was present, the examination on the subject was resumed, and at one stage of the proceedings the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), who, up to that time, had not taken the smallest exception to anything that had been stated or done by the Committee——

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: I was not there on the first day, as I explained to the House.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he knew that the right hon. Gentleman was not there on the first day; but he said that on the second day the right hon. Gentleman took no exception up to a certain time. As soon as the right hon. Gentleman took exception to the course of the proceedings the room was cleared, and the Committee deliberated upon the objection of the right hon. Gentleman, and, in accordance with his opinion, the line of examination which was being observed was not pressed further. He maintained that, under these circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman was not justified in the attack he had made on the proceedings of the Committee. The whole of the proceedings of the Committee, both before and after the room was cleared, were perfectly harmonious. The right hon. Gentleman now said he would not support the Motion, because he considered that it was a most unfair endeavour to renew and revive proceedings which had been dropped. The House might think it was right or not that the Return should be granted. So far as he was concerned, he was not aware that it was going to be asked for. He was bound to say, however, that the attack just made on the Committee by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division was wholly groundless and unwarrantable, and that the statement by the noble Viscount (Viscount Ebrington) was a perfectly right and fair statement, and in accordance with the promise he gave at the time, that he would take steps, as far as possible, to confirm, by the production of the original document, the evidence which the Committee were obliged to take at second hand. The Motion, as he understood, was for a copy of a document which was given in evidence before the Committee.

MR. T. M. HEALY: You want the original.

MR. PLUNKET said, that the Chairman asked Mr. Munro as to these documents—

> "For what purpose do you wish to put them in?"

The reply was—

> "Because I said there was some doubt about the handwriting."

In answer to Question 567, he said—

> "We were in some doubt, because, when Mr. Nolan was examined by the Treasury Solicitor, he said it was not like his handwriting, but he seemed to admit that it might be at the trial, and we thought it right to have as much inquiry upon that point as possible."

And in answer to the Chairman's Question, 659—

> "He was quoting the statement which you made on the subject to the police?"

Mr. Nolan said—

> "I simply said that I could not swear to the writing as being mine, but that it had a general resemblance. It is more with reference to my own statement, in which I said that we had not a doubt about it, that I wished to put in the statement before the Treasury Solicitor."

This was a reason why this evidence was given. Mr. Nolan said to the witness, "Is that the original?" Mr. Nolan—being the person objecting to that way of giving evidence, asked—"Is that the original?" The witness replied, "This is a copy," whereupon Mr. Nolan said —

> "We had better have the original, and have it put in by the Treasury Solicitor."

That was the very document which, if this Motion were granted, would necessarily be placed before the House, because if the House said a copy of the original was to be printed, of course the original would have to be forthcoming. He did not know whether the hon. Member who interrupted him suggested that the authorities would give some false copy. [Mr. T. M. HEALY: No!] Then he did not see the force of the objection. It was only fair to the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. J. Nolan) himself that what he had said should be judged by the original.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, it was quite plain there had been a good deal of misconception on both sides of the House in this matter due to the unfortunate incident that the noble Viscount (Viscount Ebrington) was not able to be present to explain the reason why this Return was moved for. Had the noble Lord been present a good deal of the heat arising out of this misconception would, no doubt, have been prevented. As he understood the noble Lord, the object of the Return was merely to verify certain documents which were put in before the Committee. These documents would give no new information, according to the noble Lord's statement. It was a remarkable fact that in their Report the Committee took no notice of the fact to which this Return referred, and consequently they did not regard it as a material part of their inquiry. Let them see whether it would be wise or advantageous to make this formal Return. The Return was asked for to supplement, as he understood, defective evidence or documents before the Committee. He did not think it was a convenient precedent to set in any case that when a Committee had reported and concluded its transactions they should set to work by independent Motion to introduce something which should be supplementary to the Business which had been closed. But that was not all. How was the situation improved? A responsible officer, as he understood—namely, Mr. Munro—produced a copy of a document, and the objection—a good legal objection—was taken that they should see the original. But they did not improve the matter by moving for another copy.

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock) said, the right hon. Gentleman would, perhaps, excuse him for interrupting him. He had a further reason for moving for the Return; for the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. J. Nolan), in conversation afterwards, gave him to understand—he spoke to him in the presence of the hon. Member for South Fermanagh (Mr. H. Campbell), who would correct him if he was wrong—that upon the original document there was more writing than appeared on the copy put in by Mr. Munro. He (Viscount Ebrington) had had to leave town the next morning to do duty with the Yeomanry, and he was away from London until a very few days before the House adjourned for the Whitsuntide Holidays, and that was the reason why he did not take action earlier.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he hoped the noble Lord would understand that he meant no reflection on him for the course which had been taken. All that he was doing was considering whether it was wise for the House of Commons to grant the Return which had been moved for. He was trying to state the reasons quite apart from the circumstances of this particular case why this Return should not be granted. Though he perfectly admitted the noble Lord had made this Motion, as he believed, for the advantage of the hon. Member for Louth, he did not think it was a wise thing that this Return should be made. This was a Motion to lay on the Table of the House a copy of the brief supplied to the Solicitor to the Treasury. If he (Sir William Harcourt) had been on the Committee, he should have said that such a document ought never to have ——

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, that this was a matter of great importance, and he wished to know whether, as the Orders of the Day had not been entered upon, and it was now past 12 o'clock, he would be in Order in moving that the House do now adjourn for the purpose of making some observations by way of supplement to what had taken place? This was a matter of vital importance not only to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Louth himself, but to his Colleagues, who wished that there should be the amplest and fullest inquiry. They were most anxious that everything affecting this matter should be sifted to the very bottom; and what he submitted was that the Government should either re-open this Committee, which evidently had done its business in a most unfortunate and unusual manner——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member will not be in Order in making the Motion. I am now about to proceed with the Orders of the Day.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, that perhaps he might have the indulgence of the House for one moment. This was a matter affecting the personal honour of a Member of the House, who was charged with one of the most infamous crimes that an hon. Member could be charged with. Besides that, the honour of a Party consisting of nearly one-eighth of the House was affected, and therefore the House could scarcely deny him (Mr. T. M. Healy) the opportunity of making a few personal observations.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. and learned Gentleman that the debate has gone on until midnight, and therefore stands, *ipso facto*, adjourned.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, that when the Secretary to the Treasury moved formally "That the House do adjourn," he should claim leave to revert to this matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: By the Rules of the House the debate is adjourned until to-morrow.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, that what he meant to convey was, that at the conclusion of this day's Business, and when the Motion was made "That the House do now adjourn," he should respectfully claim leave, with the Speaker's permission, to revert to the present matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: That would not be in Order. The debate is adjourned by the Rules of the House, and remarks as to that Motion would anticipate the discussion on the subject which might arise when the debate is resumed.

Debate to be resumed *To-morrow.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY TO THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND BILL.—[Bill 201.]

(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Jackson.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 14th May.*]

Order for Committee read.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to move that this Order be discharged.

Mr. SPEAKER: Such a Motion is not consistent with the Rules of Debate.

Committee *deferred* till *Tuesday* next.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (LAND COMMISSION) BILL.—[BILL 199.]

(*Mr. A. J. Balfour, The Solicitor General for Ireland, Colonel King-Harman.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee be deferred till To-morrow."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he would respectfully submit that it was highly irregular on the part of the Government to pretend to use private Members' days for measures of this kind. The Government should set down their Bills for a Government day. He objected to the setting the Bill down for a day when there was no hope of it being taken—it was a mere farce.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he did not care when the Bill was put down for, but he would ask the right hon. Gentleman if the Government did or did not seriously intend to proceed with it?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, the objection of the hon. and learned Member for Longford seemed to be to the Bill altogether. [Mr. T. M. HEALY: No.] The hon. and learned Member had just moved that the Order be discharged. [*Cries of* "No!"]

MR. T. M. HEALY said, it was the King-Harman Bill he referred to.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the complaint of the hon. and learned Member was that the Government proposed to set down the Bill for a private Members' day.

MR. T. M. HEALY: After the contradiction he had given, would it not be only decent to withdraw the remark about the discharge of the Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he quite admitted his mistake. As to the Government acting improperly in putting down Bills for private Members' nights, as the House was well aware, the rights of precedence for the Business promoted by private Members on certain days were well defined; but the Government had a perfect right, a right which had been exercised by every Government, of putting down their Bills after the other Orders, and, by so doing, there could be no conceivable interference with the rights of private Members. He was, therefore, at a loss to understand the objection of the hon. and learned Member. He could assure the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) that he was extremely anxious to proceed with all the Irish Government Bills, but the hon. Member must know the circumstances that had prevented their being proceeded with. In putting it down for to-morrow he was actuated by a desire not to lose any possible chance of advancing the Bill.

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS LISTS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chance, Bill to amend the Law relating to the preparation of Lists of Parliamentary Voters in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Chance and Mr. Maurice Healy.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 280.]

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT (IRELAND) (1877) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chance, Bill to amend "The Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Act, 1877," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Chance, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Maurice Healy.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 281.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (RETURNING OFFICERS) ACT (1875) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chance, Bill to amend "The Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers) Act, 1875," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Chance, Sir Walter Foster, and Mr. Maurice Healy.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 282.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 6*th June,* 1888.

MINUTES.] — PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*) — *Second Reading* — Enniskillen, Bundoran, and Sligo Railway; Staffordshire Potteries Water.*

PUBLIC BILLS — *Second Reading* — Companies Clauses Consolidation Act (1845) Amendment * [230].

Committee—Libel Law Amendment [17]—R.P.; Reformatory Schools Act (1866) Amendment [161] — R.P.; Distress for Rent (Dublin) [159]—R.P.
Committee — Report — Victoria University * [198]; Habitual Drunkards Act (1879) Amendment (No. 2) * [203].
PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS — *Ordered — First Reading*—Local Government (No. 12) * [283].
Third Reading — Pier and Harbour * [221]; Water * [227], and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

ENNISKILLEN, BUNDORAN, AND SLIGO RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. JORDAN (Clare, W.) said, he wished to know, before the Bill passed a second reading, whether all the notices had been served; and whether all the necessary preliminary steps had been taken with regard to the Bill?

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, that the hon. Member asked as to the fact whether all the necessary steps had been taken. The Bill would certainly not be remitted to a Committee until it had been certified to the Examiners, and all the Standing Orders of the House had been complied with.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

LIBEL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 17.]

(*Sir Algernon Borthwick, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Jennings, Dr. Cameron, Mr. John Morley, Mr. E. Dwyer Gray.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 8th May.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1. (Interpretation, 44 and 45 Vict. c. 60) *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Repeal of Sec. 2 of 44 and 45 Vict. c. 60).

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) said, he rose for the purpose of moving the rejection of the clause. He was quite aware that if he were to succeed with his Amendment it would virtually amount to the defeat of the Bill, and he was also aware that it was a somewhat inconvenient course to take; but he must say that the promoters of the Bill had only themselves to thank. The Committee had really no knowledge of what the Bill was to be until that morning; they had never had any explanation from the promoters of the measure as to what its objects were, and they had had no notion as to what Amendments would be put down until they saw them on the Paper that morning. Under these circumstances he felt he had no alternative but to go to a Division on this clause, notwithstanding the fact that its rejection would defeat the whole object of the Bill. The clause itself might be said to raise the whole question whether it was necessary to give any further protection to newspaper proprietors at all. Personally, he had had considerable experience in the matter, and he believed that it was unnecessary and would be absolutely wrong in the interest of the general public. The question was, what protection did the newspaper proprietor now enjoy? If he published a fair report of a matter of public interest—a *bonâ fide* report, and without malice, he was absolutely protected. What further protection could he require? He admitted that there were some few cases in which newspaper proprietors were made to suffer rather cruelly; but they suffered in consequence of the negligence of their own servants. [An hon. MEMBER: No!] He begged the hon. Member's pardon; the fact was as he had stated it. Most of the cases that were brought before the Courts were brought because the reporters were either ignorant or careless people, and sent in improper and unfair reports to be published. On what principle was a newspaper proprietor to be held not to be liable for the negligence of his servants? In all other cases the employer was properly made liable, and he failed to see why the newspaper proprietor should go scot-free. As the Committee was aware, in every case that was brought before a Court the question raised was whether the privilege enjoyed by the Press had been exceeded or not. In almost every case which he had heard brought against a newspaper proprietor privilege had been very properly pleaded, and in a large number of cases pleaded successfully. The only question, therefore, was whether or not there had been malice. He would point out that the Bill, if it became law, would be of little or no value to the good and high-class newspaper, and would be of immense benefit to scurrilous and personal society papers. It was for the Committee to consider whether the sanctity of individual reputations were to be swept away in order to secure the pecuniary interests of newspaper proprietors; because that, undoubtedly, was the matter which was at issue. He might repeat the words of an able, respected, and well-known Judge, Sir James Fitz-james Stephen, in regard to this matter. That learned Judge asked this pertinent question—

> "Is there any reason why cruel libels should be published with impunity? I should like to hear some reason given for allowing such a state of affairs to be brought about in this country. I believe it will be some time before Parliament consents to pass a measure of this kind."

He certainly doubted whether the House would be willing to give encouragement to the scurrilous paragraphs which at present disgraced the society newspapers. What was the evil they were asked to deal with, and what was to be substituted for it? Under Section 2 of the Newspaper Libel and Registration Act of 1881, any report of a public meeting was privileged, if such meeting was convened for a lawful purpose and was open to the public, provided that the report was fair and accurate, and the matters—the publication of which was complained of—were published for the public good. Sufficient protection was now afforded both to the newspapers and the public; and if Section 2 of the Act of 1881 were repealed, individuals would be at the absolute mercy of a certain class of newspaper proprietors. He guarded himself against saying one word against the proper organs of the Press; they were amply protected now in ordinary cases, and were ready to meet in a fair spirit any claims that might be made upon them for libellous paragraphs which might appear in their papers through negligence. It was on the ground that this clause would open the door to a flood of scurrilous and libellous paragraphs that he asked the Committee to pause before agreeing to it. It might be said that there were some matters in which protection should be given to the newspapers. He wished to point out that there were two classes of actions of libel—cases in which serious libels had been committed, and others in which the insertion of defamatory matter, causing little or no injury, was used got up for the purpose of extortion. He remembered the case of an action being brought against a paper in which a solicitor, in opening a case, had said that he would prove certain facts against a man whose character was unquestionably most indifferent. The reporter, in reporting the case, instead of saying that a certain charge rested only upon an allegation made by the advocate, said that the evidence went to show that such and such was the case. Thereupon an action was brought against the newspaper. It was unsuccessful on the first trial; but on a second trial a certain amount of damages was recovered from the newspaper. That was a hard case, in some respects, no doubt; there had certainly been no malice, and the libel was the result of a pure accident. It contained simply a reflection upon a man whose character was not of a very high order; but he ventured to think that the newspaper proprietor, as the employer, should be made responsible for that kind of carelessness. If a plaintiff had been libelled, the jury had nothing to do with the question of malice. What did it matter to a person whose professional character was ruined by such means whether the person who had libelled him acted with malice or not? The only question was what damage he had suffered, and, in his (Mr. Kelly's) opinion, that was a matter which might safely be left to a jury. There were cases in which vindictive damages against a newspaper had been awarded by a jury; but such cases were very rare, and what he wished to impress upon the Committee—and he had paid a great deal of attention to the matter, having for a long time occupied the humble position of reporter in that Division of the High Court of Justice in which actions for libel were most frequently brought—was that there were very few cases in which the newspapers proceeded against had not been in the wrong, principally in consequence of the employment of careless and inefficient reporters. He would also state, unhesitatingly, that in his experience very few cases had occurred in which a newspaper proprietor had been treated hardly. Such cases were so insignificant in number and in character that they could not fairly be taken into consideration. He would not detain the Committee longer; but upon the grounds he had brought forward he trusted that hon. Members would support him and reject the clause.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Clause 2.—(*Mr. Kelly.*)

Question proposed, "That the Cluase stand part of the Bill."

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he was extremely sorry that his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Kelly), whose experience in the matter no one could doubt, should have given the advantage of his powerful advocacy to a class of action to which he would have hoped and expected the hon. and learned Gentleman would have been one of the first to desire to put an end. He (Mr. Addison) also had had considerable experience, and the result of that experience was to satisfy him that, so far from these actions being brought in any way to maintain or clear the character of a person who had been unjustly assailed, they were usually brought by people whose character was of no value at all, or rather whose character had no value except the factitious value given to it for the purpose of obtaining damages in an action of that kind. His hon. and learned Friend was of opinion that the repeal of the 2nd clause of the Newspaper Libel and Registration Act would be of advantage to society newspapers in regard to the publication of scandalous and frivolous paragraphs; but, so far as the society newspapers were concerned, these proposals made no difference whatever. He could not remember any society paper having been punished for publishing reports of proceedings in any Court exercising judicial authority, or the proceedings of public meetings, such as those mentioned in the 4th section of the Bill. It was not by giving such reports that these papers made their money, but by little paragraphs sometimes amusing, generally scandalous, often frivolous, and perhaps foolish; what ladies had worn, or what gentlemen did in their homes, or had said on some particular occasion. That evil was not affected in the least by this section, but what was affected was that class of action with regard to slips made by reporters which was often brought against high-class newspapers who were perfectly anxious to set the matter right, and would be willing to make compensation for the mistake. But instead of that an action was brought against them. And what happened? It often happened that, even where the jury only gave a farthing damages to the plaintiff, it had lately become the practice of the Judges to allow the plaintiff his costs, so that the newspaper proprietor was put to a considerable expense, even where the damages were assessed at a farthing. He regretted the tone which, in many instances, had been taken recently by the Judges with regard to the Press. He was bound to say—and he did not say it unadvisedly—that the notion had appeared to have come into the minds of many of the learned Judges and of his learned Friends that newspaper proprietors were a part of the community who had no duties or rights whatever. Juries were sometimes told, and he had heard it over and over again, that they ought not to pay any respect or regard, or show any mercy whatever, even to the most respectable newspaper, because it only published such things for its own profit. With this magnificent contempt for the Press, if the matter were left to the Judges of the time of Lord Mansfield down to the present, newspapers would have no rights and privileges, but would be held up to the odium and contempt of the community. In his opinion, it was their duty in some respects to support that which was a most useful, admirable, and beneficial institution. The 4th clause would extend the privilege of newspapers in regard to the reports of proceedings of public meetings, or of meetings of Vestries, Town Councils, School Boards, and Boards of Guardians. He asked whether privilege ought not to extend to the proceedings of Local Authorities in which everybody was interested? No doubt, by the 4th clause, the definition of what were public meetings was much enlarged. It was said that the words "public meeting" required no definition, because everybody knew what they meant; but in regard to the reports of the proceedings of Town Councils, School Boards, Boards of Guardians, and Vestries, he himself knew a case in which a most respectable newspaper had been put to great expense in consequence of actions of that kind.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) rose to Order. The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Addison) was now discussing the 4th clause; but he (Mr. Anderson) understood that the Committee were considering the propriety of repealing Section 2 of the Newspaper Libel and Registration Act, 1881.

Mr. ADDISON said, he did not propose to detain the Committee much longer, and his hon. and learned Friend would then have full opportunity of stating all that he had to say in reply. The words "public meeting" nobody meant to define closely, and with regard to the meeting of Town Councils, School Boards, Boards of Guardians, &c., he could only say that a most respectable newspaper in the North of England was put to the expense of a law suit, in which a nominal verdict was found against it, not because an unfair report had been published of what had happened at a meeting of a Board of Guardians, but because it was held that privilege did not extend to members of the Board of Guardians. His own opinion was that privilege should be extended to the proceedings of Boards of Guardians, Railway Boards, and Local Authorities under statute, in the proceedings of which everybody was interested. Exception was taken to the omission of the words "for the public benefit;" but he asked how was a respectable editor of a newspaper, receiving a report of a meeting, to decide whether all the statements of the report were for the public benefit or not? There was a meeting on Saturday last in Hyde Park, at which speeches were delivered by the hon. Baronet the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) and others. Would it have been right for the editor to go through all the speeches delivered there in order to determine what was for the benefit of the public or not? [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Then, if that were so, if he were editor, he should strike out five-sixths of the speeches altogether as not being for the public benefit at all. If the reporter reported fairly and honestly what took place at a meeting, it was not for the editor to decide what was or what was not for the public benefit. It should be left to the public to say that. It was often suggested that the privilege of newspapers ought not to exceed those of the person who circulated handbills; but, surely, there ought to be a distinction between what was circulated for one person's benefit and gratification and the publication of a newspaper. There certainly was a wide distinction between the publication in a newspaper of a report supplied by its own reporters in the way of business and the distribution of libellous matter distributed for a special purpose. He supported the Bill, because he was of opinion that it was necessary to extend for the public advantage the fair rights and privileges of newspapers; and, secondly, that it was unfair to impose upon the editor the duty of expurgating the proceedings of public meetings, and of making them a sort of index as to what ought or ought not to have been said. He could not help thinking that the proposal of the Bill was very fair indeed. He was sorry that certain hon. Members approached these matters with a notion that newspapers were not a public benefit, and that their position ought to be made as uncomfortable as possible. Well, such persons would, of course, vote against the Bill; but he could not help thinking that the great majority believed that the newspapers were of benefit, and that the old notions of Lord Mansfield were a little out of date.

Mr. ANDERSON said, he had not risen to a point of Order for the purpose of curtailing the remarks of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Addison), which were, no doubt, very valuable on a question of this kind, but he thought that they were more applicable to the 4th clause than the one now under discussion. What had already occurred showed the great inconvenience of the course which had been pursued in regard to the Bill. The protection it was now proposed to give to newspaper proprietors was of great importance; but up to the present moment there had been no statement from anyone showing why the section referred to ought to be repealed. That was a most inconvenient and unusual course, and he thought the promoters of the Bill should have brought forward that case which the House invariably required to be brought forward when it was proposed to repeal an enactment. Nothing, however, of that kind had been done, nor had any cases been brought forward to show that the law, as it stood, prevented free discussion. No one was more in favour of the freedom of the Press than he was; but he thought the Committee had a right to complain of being kept completely in the dark as to the necessity of the Bill. All they knew was that the Bill was brought forward by hon. Members connected with the Press, and that created a suspicion at once that it was to avert inconvenient actions which they thought ought not to be brought against them, and therefore that it was a purely interested measure on the part of the Press, and not brought forward, or intended to be brought forward, in the interests of the public. As far as he knew, if they went into the questions that ought to be gone into, he was not aware that the existing law was complained of on the part of the public. Perhaps the Committee would allow him to place before them what the existing law was which the hon. Baronet the Member for South Kensington (Sir Algernon Borthwick) proposed to repeal. It provided that any report published in any newspaper of the proceedings of a public meeting should be privileged if such meeting was lawfully convened for a lawful purpose and open to the public, and if such report was fair and accurate, and published without malice, and if the publication of the matter complained of was for the public benefit. Provided always that this protection given by the section should not be available as a defence if the plaintiff or the prosecutor could show that the defendant had refused to insert in the newspaper a reasonable letter, statement, or explanation of such report on behalf of the plaintiff or prosecutor. He would call the attention of the Committee to two material parts of that section. It was proposed now by the Bill to omit words of the highest importance—namely, "if such meeting was lawfully convened for a lawful purpose, and open to the public." Those words did not appear in the 4th clause of the Bill—that was to say, that at a meeting convened for a criminal or an immoral purpose, people might make statements of the most immoral and criminal character, and a newspaper was to be permitted to publish them, and spread them all over the country without rendering the proprietor liable to an action. He should like the Committee to consider what that meant. It meant this—that public morality and private character were to be at the mercy of anyone who chose to get up what he was pleased to call a meeting, at which anyone could be libelled. That was brought forward in the interests of the freedom of the Press. [Mr. ADDISON: Hear, hear!] The hon. and learned Member said "Hear, hear;" but he did not think of private character. [Mr. ADDISON: Oh, no!] Of course not, and the newspaper proprietor was to be protected from all action for damages, however criminal or immoral the statements to which he might have given currency, and whatever private reputations were attacked. So long as the meeting came within the 4th clause, and the statement appeared to have been made without malice, the newspaper proprietors were to be free from responsibility. The words "without malice," however, were a mere sham. It was impossible, and the hon. and learned Member who had just addressed the Committee knew how difficult it was to prove malice against a newspaper proprietor. The question was surrounded with all sorts of technicalities, and, above all, it was surrounded with such great difficulties that it was impossible to get at the malicious person who uttered the libel. In most cases, the newspaper proprietor was put in motion by some person who had private objects to serve. [Mr. ADDISON said, the Bill included "reckless statements."] The question of malice was one which was well understood, but it was very difficult to prove it. His hon. and learned Friend spoke of a reckless man who might go to a meeting and make reckless and violent statements attacking the character of a private person. No doubt, such person would be liable to an action for malice, because he had acted maliciously; but the newspaper which published the libel would not be liable, because there was no malice. Therefore, they had this extraordinary state of things—that some person who might be a man of straw could be bribed by somebody else to make a malicious, unfounded, venomous, and violent attack. The man who made the attack was not worth proceeding against, and the newspaper which published an accurate report of the speech was privileged. All the reporter would have to say was that he heard the speech made, that the report was a faithful report of it, and, as there was no evidence of malice against the proprietor, he would be protected by the 4th clause. Then the words "open to the public" were omitted from the 4th clause. To his mind, it was very important that no privileges could attach to a meeting that was open to the public. He could not imagine what the object of the promoters of the Bill was. They put in the 4th clause the words "public meeting," but left out the words "open to the public." There were many meetings, such as those of the Unionists and others, which were ticket meetings, and were not open to the public. He could describe a great number of so-called "public meetings" which were not open to the public. His hon. and learned Friend had referred to the Hyde Park meeting on Saturday, and he (Mr. Anderson) might tell him that that meeting, although it had been made the subject of satire, afforded a very favourable contrast to the meetings held by certain political Parties in that House, which were described as public meetings which were not open to the public. The next important omission was of the words "and if the publication of the matter complained of was for the public benefit." Why were those words omitted? He thought it was one of the great safeguards they had against licentious practices. It was the section of an Act of Parliament containing provisions of that salutary character which the Committee were now asked to repeal. He hoped the Committee would think several times before they entered upon any such course. He believed that if they allowed this section to be repealed, they would embark upon a task of great difficulty in dealing with the 4th clause, because it took upon itself the specification of the meetings which were to be protected. But where were they to draw a line? That was the difficulty. He trusted they would reject the 4th clause. He hoped that clause would not be carried, and it would not then be necessary to proceed with the Bill. The Bill was drawn without due consideration, and drawn solely in the interest of one class —namely, the newspaper proprietors, and not on account of any public want. He trusted that the Committee would reject the clause.

Sir ALGERNON BORTHWICK (Kensington, S.) said, he trusted that the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for North Camberwell (Mr. Kelly) would be rejected, and the Bill would be allowed to proceed. He did not intend, as the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had done, to discuss Clause 4, but he would confine his observations to an outline of the scope of the Bill, which was not at all brought in in the interests of the newspaper proprietors, but directly for the benefit of the public.

Mr. KELLY rose to Order. He wished to know whether the hon. Member was regular in entering into the scope and general object of the Bill?

The CHAIRMAN said, the Amendment went to the root of the Bill, and the hon. Baronet was not out of Order.

Sir ALGERNON BORTHWICK said, he had no desire, as his hon. and learned Friend seemed to fear, to go into the whole merits of the Bill, but he simply intended to make a short statement of his reasons for resisting the Motion now before the Committee. It was found under the existing law, that, the Press generally were not privileged at present, and the County Councils it was proposed to establish would be in a similar position. The local Press of England, which would have to report these County Councils, was one of the great features of the public life in the country, and threw as much sound light upon that life as could be obtained. The object of the Press was to shed light upon everything that went forward, and to do it fairly. So fair as the protection of the newspaper proprietor was concerned, he said distinctly that if there was anything in the Bill which protected the libeller, he would be the first to consent to excision. There was nothing of the kind. The Press was perfectly willing to accept the consequences of its misdeeds when it misconducted itself. It was willing to accept the consequences of negligence wherever shown, but under the existing law there were actions brought against the newspapers for which there was no justification whatever. When a newspaper committed a libel, it could always be had up and punished in a Court of Law, but the public were so satisfied with the fairness of the Press generally that when a mistake was made an action was seldom pressed, and an explanation and an apology were accepted. But there were persons who were perpetually on the watch for some error, and then went to a class of attorneys who were always on the look out for such matters. From his own personal knowledge he might state that many newspapers never appeared in court; they nearly always compromised libel actions. Many newspapers suffered great loss in defending these actions, for when they were successful they were not able to recover costs. He knew of one newspaper which spent something like £2,000 last year in resisting small actions, although it won nearly all of them. The actions were brought by men of straw, who had no genuine case at all. It was only fair to say that the great Press of the country was a valuable public servant, which did its best for the advantage of the public. He hoped the House would recognize that the 1,200 newspapers of England were conducted with great care and honesty, and with a general determination on all sides to work for the public good. As to any paragraphs of a scurrilous nature, this Bill did not give any protection whatever, but the law remained exactly where it was. In such cases persons would have no difficulty in recovering damages, and if they did not take advantage of the law, that was not the fault of the respectable portions of the Press. The persons libelled were only deterred by the cross-examination to which they would be subjected in regard to their antecedents and the whole history of their lives. The promoters of the Bill were asking merely for a measure to enable the Press to transact its business in a more efficient way than it could do under the present law. He thought the Committee, if they decided upon entering upon the consideration of the various clauses of the Bill, would see that there was nothing contained in them but what was perfectly fair. It was not a Bill to protect newspaper proprietors. There was only one clause affecting them, and that was the clause concerning the punishment of the proprietor himself by commitment to prison, which he thought the Committee would agree was a perfect anomaly and a great blot in the present law. If a newspaper committed a libel, it was undoubtedly right that it should be punished by a fine, even to the extent of £5,000; but he failed to see why the proprietor or the publisher, who had nothing to do with the editing of the paper, should be the persons who were punished by imprisonment. He hoped the hon. and learned Member for North Camberwell would withdraw his Amendment. If not, then he should have to take the sense of the House, and see whether the Bill was to be proceeded with or not.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, there was one suggestion he wished to make to the promoters of the Bill, and if it were not adopted he should have to vote against the clause which was now under the consideration of the Committee. He thought the hon. and learned Gentleman who spoke from above the Gangway had struck the real blot in the Bill when he called attention to the omission of the words "if such a meeting be lawfully convened for a lawful purpose and open to the public." Unless those words were retained, he should vote for the Amendment.

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK admitted that the words "public meeting lawfully convened" were desirable, but the hon. Member must really understand that it should be a lawful meeting. For instance, if after the declaration of the poll an hon. Member hurried off to address his constituents, that would not be a meeting lawfully convened.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, he rather disagreed with the hon. Baronet in that, but as he was only a layman he would not dispute the point. He did not think any objection could be urged against retaining the words "public meeting lawfully convened," which simply meant a lawful meeting of which sufficient notice had been given. Unless the promoters of the Bill agreed to insert those words in line 15 of Clause 4, he should vote against the Bill.

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK said, he was prepared to accept the suggestion of the hon. Member.

MR. JENNINGS (Stockport) said, the hon. and learned Member for North Camberwell (Mr. Kelly), who moved the rejection of the clause, appeared to object to the whole of the Bill because he had had no opportunity of making himself familiar with its provisions. Now the Bill had been in print for some time, and had been before the House, so that the usual means were afforded to the hon. and learned Member of making himself acquainted with the objects of the Bill, and if he failed to do so, the promoters were not to be censured.

Mr. KELLY said, he had not intended to assert that no opportunity had been afforded to hon. Members of making themselves familiar with the provisions of the Bill until yesterday morning. He had not said anything of the kind, but what he had said was that the Amendments put down last night, and which had not been printed until this morning, altered the whole scope of the Bill, and that sufficient time had not been given to consider them.

Mr. JENNINGS said, the hon. and learned Member had misrepresented, no doubt unintentionally, the real scope and objects of the Bill, and the reasons for passing it into law. The hon. and learned Member had asserted—on the strength of what he said was a considerable experience in the Law Courts—that genuine and honest reports of trials were invariably privileged, and that newspapers never suffered for giving publicity to them. He must say that the hon. and learned Member's experience must be extremely limited; indeed, the whole history of the Press and of actions for libel tended to disprove the assertion he had made. The most recent action of this kind which he could call to mind was against a highly respectable newspaper, *The City Press*, in February last. It was not denied that the newspaper had published a fair and accurate report of certain proceedings in the Lord Mayor's Court. The case was tried before Mr. Justice Manisty, who directed the jury that the report was fair and reasonably accurate, and that although it might reflect upon the character of some persons, the newspaper ought not to be made liable. Nevertheless, in the teeth of that direction of the learned Judge, the jury found a verdict for the plaintiff in the sum of £20. This Bill would prevent such a state of affairs as that. Surely it was desirable that a newspaper should be privileged if it published a fair, reasonable, and accurate report of the proceedings in a Court of Justice, or in a lawfully constituted meeting. The hon. and learned Member for North Camberwell had made a strong assertion which was denied by the hon. and learned Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Addison)—namely, that there had never been a case in which a newspaper, when proceeded against by an action for libel, was not in the wrong. The case he had instanced was that of a newspaper which did no more than publish an accurate report of certain proceedings in a Court of Justice, and yet was fined £20 for doing so. That case confirmed the remark of the hon. and learned Member for Ashton-under-Lyne, that, as a rule, lawyers and Judges were adverse to the Press and to the removal of any restrictions upon its fair liberties. The history of the Press had been a long history of resolute opposition to the means taken by Judges and lawyers to keep it down, and to suppress even the liberty which it possessed now. So far as his experience had gone, there was no class of the community more obsequious to the Press than Judges and lawyers when they needed its aid, and no class was so ready to kick at it when they no longer required its assistance. The newspapers were exposed to actions by men of indifferent character or of no character at all; and it was contended that in such cases the newspaper ought to be liable. The Press had certain duties to perform in the interests of the public, and it generally performed them fearlessly. Now, the 2nd clause, while repealing a section of the existing Act, substituted for it one having precisely the same object in view, and not conferring any privilege for the publication of false and scandalous stories. The society papers had no more to do with the clause than with the Book of Genesis. What the clause proposed to do was slightly to enlarge the liberty of the Press as regarded the publication of fair and reasonably accurate reports. It had already been stated by the promoters of the Bill, that if there was anything in the measure which opened the door to libellers wider than now they were ready to amend it. But, in point of fact, there was nothing of the kind, and anybody who examined the Bill would see at once that it merely protected newspapers which published proper, reasonable, and accurate reports. The objections raised to the clause were so slight that it was almost impossible to close with them. The hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn (Mr. Anderson) objected to the Bill, because he said it had been framed largely by persons connected with the Press. But why in the world should not persons familiar with the hardships inflicted upon newspapers be as free to bring a Bill into the House as lawyers, who fattened on actions for libel, were to attack it? There was a certain class of lawyers who lived largely by spurious actions for libel. One of the best things that could happen to some persons was to have three or four inaccurate lines published about them in a newspaper; they would make it worth more to them than a Government annuity. He knew of one case in which 65 actions were brought by one person against as many newspapers through a report transmitted through a foreign Agency, published with innocence of its intention, and without any malice whatever, and, he should think, with no power of inflicting serious damage on the person's character. Yet from year to year the man in question kept on bringing these actions, until at last one of the Judges, moved he need hardly say by no sympathy for the Press, but by a sense of indignation at what was evidently becoming a public scandal, pronounced an opinion that money enough had been got by the man out of this particular report. Was that a state of things that the hon. and learned Member desired to perpetuate? Did he desire to abridge and restrict liberties of the Press in order that actions for libel might continue to flourish? The general public had no such desire, but, on the contrary, wished to keep the Press free, because they knew how much they owed to it already. He thought the House would see that the object of the Bill was nothing more than to authorize the publication of reports which it was of advantage to the general public to have placed before them.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) said, he had listened with entire impartiality to the statement which had been made by the hon. Baronet the Member for South Kensington (Sir Algernon Borthwick) who introduced the Bill, but he was sorry to say that he was not at all satisfied as to the necessity of the Bill. Nor had the statement of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) satisfied him as to the necessity of the measure; or that, in the second place, hon. Members had had a fair and reasonable time to consider the provisions of the Bill. His great objection to the Bill was, and it was impossible for hon. Members to arrive at any other conclusion, that it did not apply to the law of libel generally, but simply to the Act of 1881 as far as it related to newspapers. In his opinion, it was very much to be regretted that a Bill containing such drastic provisions should be allowed to pass a second reading without any discussion or any explanation of its character whatever, and he regretted that the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Kelly), who moved the Amendment, should have thought it desirable to interfere with the hon. Baronet who introduced the Bill in any explanation he desired to make to the Committee. As the Amendment struck at the whole Bill, it was only fair to the hon. Baronet who introduced it that the Committee should be placed in possession of every information which could be given in support of it before it proceeded to reject the measure *in toto.* He confessed, however, that the statements which had been made by the hon. Baronet and by the hon. Member for Stockport did not satisfy him that there was any necessity for altering the Act of 1881, and, therefore, he should support the Amendment which had been moved by the hon. Member for North Camberwell. He thought most hon. Members would admit that some clearer definition was necessary in regard to public meetings than was contained in clause 4. Since he had placed Amendments on the paper, to leave out clauses 5, 6 and 7, the Attorney-General had done the same yesterday, and therefore he thought the Government ought not to have allowed this Bill to be smuggled through as it had been. The Bill was badly drafted, and clauses 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 would practically give newspaper proprietors and editors immunity from libel. The hon. Member was then proceeding to refer specifically to clause 4, when——

The CHAIRMAN said, the discussion was taking a very inconvenient turn, owing to the way the Bill had been drafted, and he must ask hon. Members to confine themselves to arguments which applied to the clause now under the consideration of the Committee.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, E.) said, he regretted that this clause, which repealed the old law, had not been inserted in the proper and usual place—namely, the end of the Bill. As it was, the Committee were discussing the subject the wrong end upwards. A great deal had been said in the course of the discussion, but no hon. Member had yet drawn attention to what it was that was really proposed to be done. The repeal of the 2nd section of the Act of 1881 would be merely a preliminary process. At present, under that section, full protection was given for fair and accurate reports of public meetings. The object of Section 4 was to extend the same protection to School Boards, Town Councils, Boards of Guardians, and various Public Authorities which were in the habit of discussing their affairs in open meeting. That was the primary and essential object of Section 4, and whatever defects might be found in it could easily be remedied when the section was reached. The question which the Committee were now asked to decide was whether the same protection should be given to newspapers in regard to the reports of the proceedings of these Public Bod[illegible] was now given in regard to reports of the proceedings at a public meeting which might be convened by any person for a public purpose.

Mr. DARLING (Deptford) said, it had been disputed that any alteration in the law was necessary since the 2nd section of the Act of 1881 conferred its privileges upon newspapers. But let him point out that, almost directly that Act was passed, it was discovered by a gentleman—whose authority was as high on legal matters of this kind as that of any Gentleman in the House—that Section 2 of the Act of 1881 really gave no more protection to newspapers than newspapers already had at Common Law. The work of Mr. Odgers—the gentleman to whom he was alluding—was a work well known as the best existing book on the Law of Libel. Mr. Odgers set out the 2nd section of the Act of 1881, and then went on to say—

> "I do not think this section will afford much protection to the newspaper. The privilege conferred is very cautiously guarded."

And then, further, he went on to say—

> "I think that at Common Law, without this section at all, the report which complies with all the above conditions would be held to be no libel. For, I presume, no publication will be held to be to the public benefit unless it relates to some matter of public interest."

Although the Bill omitted the words "public benefit," it provided that the matter should be of public interest; that it should be a matter which newspapers might fairly take to comment upon, and, therefore, it was unfair to say that the Bill as drawn merely repealed the law, and put nothing in its place. It had been alleged that there was no sufficient reason for altering the law as it stood; but he thought that it could not be gainsaid that, within a few years of the Act of 1881 being passed, it was found that it really conferred no benefit on newspapers. Hon. Members would admit that, somehow or other, the Parliament of 1881 failed to carry out the intention it had before it. Now, the omission of this clause was really an intricate way of moving the rejection of the Bill. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Camberwell (Mr. Kelly) said that he had only just become aware of what the Bill actually proposed. As a matter of fact, the Bill was printed some time ago, and he (Mr. Darling) himself put down Amendments on the Paper on the 10th of last month. His hon. and learned Friend had paid very little attention to those Amendments, for he had actually gone to the trouble of putting down one Amendment at least which was already on the Paper nearly three weeks ago. If the hon. and learned Gentleman was not aware until yesterday morning of the purport of the Bill, he obviously had denied himself the gratification of reading *The Times*, or any other newspaper, for the last fortnight. His hon. and learned Friend complained that the Bill was either at fault or not at fault—he (Mr. Darling) could not make out which—because it did not in some fashion deal with what he (Mr. Kelly) called society papers. The hon. Baronet the Member for South Kensington (Sir Algernon Borthwick) had no feeling, nor had hon. Members, he hoped, for the society papers which would prompt them to make especial laws for those papers. In respect to those papers they could not have better laws than at present existed, and if the law was not put in force it must be that, for some reason or other the people libelled did not care to go into a Court of Justice. This Bill proposed to deal with matters some of which were grievances which had been left unredressed by the Act of 1881, and some of which were grievances which were unredressed by that Act, because they had arisen since. There was the question of public meeting. The question of public meeting had immensely developed since 1881. The franchise had been enlarged, and there were more public meetings. New bodies had been created, and more were about to be created, and it was necessary that these should be protected. Parliament would have to pass this Act next year, if they did not pass it now. He could not help feeling that there had been several recent instances which brought home to the minds of hon. Gentlemen that a newspaper stood in need of protection where it reported what was said, sometimes by eminent people, at public meetings, because everybody expected to have the words of such people reported. There would probably be a revolution if the words of eminent men were not reported, yet it was quite possible that those words might be slanderous. If those words were printed, and they proved to be slanderous, the newspaper was open to an action at law. There had been numerous instances of this, and he appealed to hon. Gentlemen whether a remedy was not necessary? If, for example, an eminent man in the course of a speech accused a colonel—in every sense a colonel—of attempting to assassinate a boy—in every sense a boy—by presenting a gun at him, the newspaper which printed that statement would become liable to a criminal prosecution as well as to a civil action, whereas no sort of criminal proceeding could be taken against the gentleman who gave utterance to that pleasing fiction. So that hon. Members would observe that if two persons did an injustice, as in this case, one would be liable to be twice punished, while the other was hardly liable to be punished at all. Therefore he thought that the Committee would see that this, on the whole, was a reasonable Bill. It should not be argued as if there were nothing done except repealing Section 2 of the Newspaper Act of 1881. Since the Bill was drawn many Amendments to it had appeared on the Paper. The Amendment suggested by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had been set down by the hon. Baronet (Sir Algernon Borthwick) in charge of the Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Camberwell (Mr. Kelly) had put down Amendments to the Bill, and it was notorious that the hon. Baronet was prepared to accept every one of the Amendments. If hon. Gentlemen would look at the Paper of Amendments, they would find that in the case of nearly every clause the hon. Baronet had himself put down Amendments more drastic than those he (Mr. Darling) or any of his hon. Friends had put down. There the Amendments were, and they must be moved by the hon. Baronet or by someone else. Did the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Kelly) want a week to consider the putting back into the Bill of matters which were the law of the land already? The Amendments put them into the Bill, and when they were there his hon. and learned Friend himself must recognize them as portion of the present law of the land. If this Bill passed it would pass with these Amendments and not without them, and therefore it was wholly unfair to discuss the Bill without looking at the Amendments on the Paper.

Mr. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.) said, he was certainly one of those who did not notice this Bill, or, if he had seen it, he certainly should not have allowed it to be read a second time without strenuous opposition on his part; for, in his opinion, the Bill—he was not going to discuss the whole of it—was simply a Bill to enable the newspaper Press to libel with impunity. What was the point they were now considering? It was whether the 2nd section of the Act of 1881 should or should not be repealed. Something, of course, was to be put in its place if it was repealed. What that something should be he was prepared to discuss if ever they got to it. Was it not fair that when a privilege was given to newspapers alone, it should be limited to cases where the meeting was really open to the public? Was it not fair also that the privilege should be limited to the case where the publication of the matter complained of was for the public benefit? It was proposed by this Bill absolutely to remove that restriction which existed in the law of the land at the present time, and which, he believed, was absolutely essential for the safeguarding of private rights. The private individual could not bring an action for libel unless some lie had been told about him. They were dealing altogether with statements which were lies with regard to the characters of private individuals. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Yes; if the statement were not a falsehood the newspaper could justify it and get off. He asserted with the greatest confidence, and any lawyer of any experience would not deny for one moment that, if they could show in a civil action that the statement complained of was not a falsehood, it was no libel; and, therefore, what they were dealing with, and what the gentlemen of the Press were trying to get, were facilities for escaping the consequences of telling lies about the private life and conduct of individuals. He maintained that, before they put privileges in the hands of the newspaper Press, for the purpose of circulating falsehoods about the character or private conduct of individuals, it was at least necessary to show that it was not mere idle gossip inserted in the paper for the purpose of making money, but that it was inserted for the public benefit. It was essential to the protection of the newspaper Press in these matters that the statements which were admittedly necessarily false statements should have been made for public benefit. The subsequent provisions in the Bill were still more objectionable, for further licence was given to newspapers. The only excuse he could offer for not having adverted to this Bill at an earlier stage was that the honoured name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) appeared on the back of the Bill. He had no objection to hon. Gentlemen who were deeply interested in the Press, and who, no doubt, were ornaments of the Press, and exemplary in the manner in which they conducted their business, putting their names on the back of the Bill. But what they had come to Parliament for was to ask for unfair and perfectly unnecessary privileges for the newspaper Press, not for other persons, not for private individuals. When the Committee remembered what the newspaper Press could do, they ought to be very chary in extending its privileges. There were 20, 30, or 40 newspapers, if their own advertisements could be believed, circulating some of them 80,000 and 90,000 copies daily, and a lie that once got 10 minutes' start was very difficult to catch up. Was a man's reputation to be liable to be blasted by an anonymous scribbler, who declined to give his name, sheltering himself under the editorial "we." He had no words too strong to express his entire sympathy with the liberty of the Press, liberty to discuss all public affairs and questions of public interest in the fullest and freeest way. No one would go further than he in that direction; but he would not go one single step in enabling the Press, which was too powerful as against individuals as it was, to slander the characters of private individuals with impunity. The only good clause which he could find in the Bill was that providing that the Bill should not apply to Scotland.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) confessed that he did not see what the speech of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. R. T. Reid) had to do with the Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman complained of inaccuracies; but his own speech was one string of inaccuracies. He told them that this was a Bill to enable newspaper proprietors to libel people with impunity. The Bill did not enable newspaper proprietors to libel at all. Where was there any clause in the Bill giving any privilege for a libel to be perpetrated by the proprietor of a newspaper, or by his servant editorially? What the Bill provided for was immunity in the case of the publication of incorrect statements, made in public bodies; but that was only an extension of a well recognised principle in the present law. His hon. and learned Friend held up as open to tremendous opprobrium a proposal to confer any privilege upon reports of meetings not open to the public. Did his hon. and learned Friend ever hear that the reports of the proceedings of this House were privileged, and that the privilege of reports did not depend upon whether the public were admitted or not—the privilege extended to reports of proceedings after the public and reporters had been ordered to withdraw? The hon. and learned Gentleman said that a libel action could only be sustained where a lie had been told?

Mr. R. T. REID said, that what he said was, that unless a statement was false it was not actionable. If a newspaper held a man up to ridicule and contempt, the truth of the statement could be pleaded, and was a good defence.

DR. CAMERON said, that that, however, was a very minor point. He thought the discussion had travelled rather wide of the subject before the House. He was a Member of the Select Committee which considered the Law of Libel prior to the introduction of the Bill of 1881, and perhaps he might say a word or two in regard to the way in which the Bill came to be brought forward. Evidence was given before the Committee which led them to consider what they had to regard as the benefit of the public in the publication of certain reports. The Courts of Law had taken the matter into consideration, and had over-ridden the Common Law of the land, and declared the reports of the proceedings of certain bodies privileged. They declared, for instance, the reports of proceedings of Parliament and fair reports of the proceedings of the Law Courts privileged. The question was whether that privilege should not be extended. It was resolved by the Committee to extend it by the adoption of the words which were found in the Bill of 1881—namely, "That the privilege should extend to the reports of meetings lawfully convened for lawful purposes, and open to the public," and so on. Some Members of the Committee wished to specify more particularly the bodies the reports of whose proceedings should be held to be privileged; but others—he thought it was a principle which was very much favoured by draughtsmen—thought it better to give a general description which they believed would be interpreted by the Judges to include all the Committee wished to include, and accordingly the words he had quoted were adopted. The result was that the words had been interpreted as not including the reports of all bodies which were certainly, to all intents and purposes, as public, and whose proceedings it was as desirable should be published, as those of the Houses of Parliament, or of the Law Courts. The hon. Baronet (Sir Algernon Borthwick) proposed to amend the interpretation which had been put on the words; he proposed to include among the privileged reports the reports of the proceedings of a number of statutory, administrative, and other bodies which he enumerated in Section 4 of the Bill. Something had been said as to the Bill being backed only by interested persons. He had no interest in the Bill, because it did not apply to Scotland; but in order to dissipate the bogey raised as to the terrible consequences which would ensue if the Bill became law, he might say that what was decreed under Section 4 was practically the law of Scotland at the present time. Evidence to that effect was given before the Committee; the Committee were told that it was not necessary to deal with Scotland, because the reports of the proceedings of those bodies were held by Judges in Scotland to be privileged. His hon. and learned Friend (Mr. R. T. Reid) was a Scotch Member, and he and the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn (Mr. Anderson) and the hon. Member for the Camlachie Division of Glasgow (Mr. Watt) had, without knowing, been living under this terrible state of the law in Scotland long before they entered the House.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.) said, that this discussion had been raised and continued for two reasons. The first was, that the Bill was badly drafted; and the second was, that Amendments had been put on the Paper so very recently which entirely altered the character of the Bill, and which deprived it of all those harmful characteristics supposed to exist in it by certain hon. Members. It was to be regretted that they had not been allowed to go straight through the clauses of the Bill, because, in that case, they would have found in what way the hon. Baronet the Member for South Kensington (Sir Algernon Borthwick) proposed to alter the Bill, and what the effect of those alterations would have been. Already the hon. Baronet had said he would accept the words "lawfully convened meetings, and open to the public." What were the drastic changes which Clause 4 was supposed to make in the law of the land? Nothing but this, that certain public meetings, the reports of which were always inserted in newspapers, and which not to insert would destroy their circulation—reports which everyone who read newspapers expected to find in newspapers, should be privileged. That, he ventured to say, was the only change. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Elgin and Nairn (Mr. Anderson) had spoken of the words "actual malice and gross negligence" as something new. As a matter of fact, they were in Lord Campbell's Act, which was now upwards of 40 years old. Many of the objections which had been raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Camberwell (Mr. Kelly) actually applied to words which had existed almost as long on the Statute Book, and had never, so far as was known, been objected to. He hoped that they would forthwith proceed to a vote on this Motion, which was aimed, as his hon. and learned Friend admitted, at the vitality of the Bill itself, so that, in the event of its being rejected, they might go on clause by clause to consider the measure, which might be deemed by some to effect considerable changes in the law. So far as he had studied this particular branch of law, the changes effected would be very small indeed when the amendments proposed in the Bill were made.

Mr. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) said, he hoped his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dumfries (Mr. Reid) would pardon him if he expressed a doubt as to whether he had read the Bill. He was persuaded that, if the hon. and learned Gentleman had read the Bill, he would hardly have given such an extraordinary account as they had heard from him of the character of the Bill and the motives of its promoters. He hoped, too, that his hon. and learned Friend would excuse him if he said that his sneer at newspaper men was a little unworthy of him. This Bill was not brought in any more in the interests of the Press than in the interests of the public. It had been pointed out several times that the privileges suggested in regard to the reports of meetings and proceedings of public bodies, which, as had been said, were about to be multiplied, were to be given, because it was of the utmost interest—of course, it was as much so in London as elsewhere—that they should be constantly presented for public discussion and consideration. He could not understand the line his hon. and learned Friend took when he talked of the extension of the editorial "we;" there was no shelter given in the Bill for matters of comment. The Committee would understand, he hoped, that Pressmen would not have any greater scope for libelling, by way of comment, in articles or paragraphs, than they had now, and, therefore, what his hon. and learned Friend said about the editorial "we" had no application whatever. If the hon. and learned Gentleman wanted the words "for the public benefit" to be inserted, let him propose an Amendment to that effect, and not oppose the Bill as a whole. All that was wanted was to secure the privilege in matters which were of public interest and a fair subject of newspaper report. Such were the words used in the Bill, and he did not think that those words could meet with any legitimate objection. To talk of the Bill as one for promoting promiscuous libel was a travesty, which he hoped his hon. and learned Friend now realized.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight) said, that he had been unwilling to interfere earlier in the discussion, because it seemed the desire of the Committee that there should be a general discussion as to whether the Bill should be allowed to proceed or not. Some complaint was made against the hon. Baronet (Sir Algernon Borthwick) because there was no discussion upon the second reading of the Bill. Of course, it would have been competent for any hon. Member to oppose the second reading. He was free to confess that had the Bill been intended to stand in the shape in which it was introduced, he personally could not have supported it; and, while he desired to say a word or two in favour of the Amendment now under consideration, it must be understood that upon this occasion he did not speak as a Member of Her Majesty's Government, because this was a matter for the judgment of Members of the House themselves. There had been a great deal of misunderstanding underlying the discussion, and he thought the hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill (Sir Algernon Borthwick) had hardly been treated with perfect fairness. The Amendment would absolutely take away all special privileges from newspapers, and therefore the argument of those who supported the Amendment was somewhat inconsistent. The real question was—Whether the House would or would not assent to that which is proposed by Clause 4 of the Bill, and he had already stated that if Clause 4 was intended to stand as it was originally introduced, he could not have supported it. One of the gravest attacks upon the Bill had been made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dumfries (Mr. Reid), who made a very remarkable speech with reference to the importance of the words "matters of public interest." He (Sir Richard Webster) entirely agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman as to the importance of those words, but he thought it would have been fairer to the hon. Baronet (Sir Algernon Borthwick) if the hon. and learned Gentleman had allowed himself five or six minutes leisure to look at the Paper of Amendments, and to see what Amendments to the Bill the hon. Baronet had put down. For instance, the hon. Baronet proposed to add to the Proviso at the end of Clause 4, the words "or shall privilege the publication of any matter not of public interest." Although he should have been unwilling to allow Clause 4 to pass without those words being inserted, still it did seem to him, as the hon. Baronet had expressed his intention of moving the insertion of those words, it was scarcely fair to him to attack the Bill, and to attack him as though he was not willing to insert such words. Then he would call attention to another matter. The question was not whether a particular privilege should be given to a newspaper, but in respect to what meeting it should be given. Hon. Members would observe, that practically speaking, all the protection of Section 2 of the Act of 1881 was restored by the Amendment of the hon. Baronet. For instance, there were words in the Bill which forced a proprietor to insert "a reasonable letter or statement by way of contradiction or explanation to such report or other publication." And when the hon. Baronet's attention was called to the words "public meeting," he at once indicated that he was ready to adopt not exactly the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling), but one which almost amounted to the same thing—namely, "meeting for lawful purpose and open to the public." Therefore, it was scarcely fair to suggest that the hon. Baronet desired to get a number of fresh privileges for newspapers, when what he did desire was to get the same privileges for different meetings. Hon. Members would note that the hon. Baronet had put down an Amendment whereby he proposed to take out the very general words—

> "Or of any other duly and legally constituted body, or persons acting in a public capacity and for public purposes, and the publication by any newspaper of any notice or report issued for the information of the public by, or by order of any Government Office or Department, Officer of State, Commissioner of Police or Chief Constable, or by any of the bodies or authorities hereinbefore mentioned, or of any other matter of public interest which is a fair subject of newspaper report."

The hon. Baronet therefore suggested that the report of the proceedings of a public meeting or of any meeting of a Vestry, Town Council, School Board, Board of Guardians, board or Local Authority, should be privileged, subject to the condition that there was no malice, and that it was a matter of public interest, and that the proprietor should be compelled to insert in his newspaper a letter or statement by way of contradiction or explanation of the report. Therefore, the sole question for the Committee was, did or did they not consider that the general scope of the clause the hon. Baronet suggested extending the privileges of the Act of 1881 to other meetings ought or ought not to be adopted. He submitted to the Committee that whatever might be their view in reference to the propriety and sufficiency of Clause 4, at any rate, there could be no object in declining to repeal Clause 2 of the Newspaper Libel and Registration Act of 1881. The repealing of that section certainly could do no harm.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said, that that was the first time that he had ever understood that matters of public interest and matters for the public benefit were identical. He thought that the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Darling) who used the expression in the first place would have stood alone in that respect; but it seemed to him it had been adopted by the highest legal authority in the House that matters of public interest and matters for the public benefit were identical. He (Mr. Howell), however, thought that the speeches which had already been made showed that matters of public interest and matters for the public benefit might be at any rate very divergent. There were often in society journals exciting or sensational paragraphs which were matters of public interest, no doubt, to certain sections of the community. Besides, they often saw paragraphs in respectable newspapers of a similar kind. No doubt they were matters of public interest to a certain section of the people, but whether they were matters for the public benefit was a question as to which there might be disagreement. He thought it was altogether unwise to repeal the section of the Act of 1881, which had already, in his opinion, worked tolerably well. The Act of 1881 had given to newspaper proprietors greater latitude than they deserved. Respectable newspapers were getting in the habit, just as well as society journals, of feeding the public taste with sensational articles in which the personal character of individuals was largely criticized. [An hon. MEMBER: No, no!] An hon. Gentleman who had some experience as a newspaper conductor, if not as proprietor, cried "No, no!" He (Mr. Howell) had some experience of the matter from another point of view, and he was painfully aware that a section of the men he represented to some extent in the House of Commons had had to suffer over and over again from attacks made upon them in newspapers. He and some of his Colleagues had been able to understand, more perhaps than any other Gentleman in the House, the extent to which a newspaper could libel a certain section of the people, and libel them with impunity. Reference had been made to the word "malice" in the Bill, but it was well known that it was almost impossible to prove malice. Take the case of a respectable newspaper, a newspaper as respectable as that in which the hon. Baronet (Sir Algernon Borthwick) himself was interested. Reports apparently of a *bonâ fide* character were sent to it, and inserted. Of course there was no malice on the part of the editor or proprietor, and yet it might turn out that the report was of a most libellous character. Who was to be held responsible? Some penny-a-liner might have supplied the paragraph or report, and the newspaper editor or proprietor or publisher would plead there was no malice. The person who supplied the report was perhaps a man of straw, and the jury would refuse to convict him of any criminal libel. How, in such a case, would the aggrieved party even get his costs? But in the case of public meetings a great evil had of late grown up. During the last 14 or 15 years absolutely bogus meetings had often been reported in the newspapers. They might have the name of a public-house in some locality given, or they might not have the place given at all, and all the particulars of the alleged meeting would be clearly set forth. Paragraphs purporting to give particulars of so-called meetings, but which meetings had no existence in fact, were constantly going the rounds of the Press, and those paragraphs frequently contained attacks upon the characters of private individuals. There was scarcely a respectable newspaper in the Metropolis, and that was going a long way, that had not inserted paragraphs of that kind. Against whom could actions be brought, and malice proved in such cases? Perhaps the Committee would bear with him while he reminded them of a case which occurred at the Central Criminal Court a short time ago. A case in which he (Mr. Howell) was concerned came on at that Court, and a farmed report was offered to all the London newspapers. Only two newspapers in London, *The Times* being one, refused to accept such a report, preferring to be directly represented at the trial. As a matter of fact, the farmed report was a very garbled account of what occurred. On the second day of the trial the person aggrieved complained, and the newspapers had to publish a contradiction. In that case, of course, there was no malice. The editors of the papers accepted the report as a *bonâ fide* record of the proceedings in Court. What use would it have been to have proceeded against the person who sent out the report? What was wanted was not that the liberty of the Press should be curtailed, but that the licence of the Press should be prevented. Again, in some of the vestries, peculiar scenes had taken place during the last year or two. An individual was able to get up at vestries and make speeches against men or firms without being held responsible. The owner of the newspaper in which the remarks were given a wider area ought to be held responsible. What was wanted was that there should be protection of private characters. It was of greater importance to protect individual character than it was to protect the purses of some 1,200 newspaper proprietors. He did not wish, and he presumed none of those who had preceded him in the discussion wished, to insinuate in any way whatever that the great majority of the editors or proprietors or reporters of newspapers desired to libel individual men or women. What, however, he and his hon. Friends asserted was that the Press of the country was of immense power, and it was absolutely necessary for the protection of individual character that proper restraints should be placed on the exercise of that power. Holding these views, he should certainly support the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for North Camberwell (Mr. Kelly).

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme) said, he was asked a short time ago by the editor of a newspaper to support the second reading of this Bill, and he said he would do so. After examining the Bill, however, he found there were one or two clauses which he could not possibly support, and if the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Kelly) went to a Division he should go with him into the lobby. It was as well to point out that an apology published in a newspaper subsequently to a libel was really no reparation at all to a private individual. It might happen that the libel was read by one set of people, and that the apology was read by another set of people. In recent years a good many laws had been passed in favour of the Press. The law was placed on a satisfactory basis by the Act of 1881, and if they were to go further in the way of privileged legislation for the Press, they would soon find the Press were like the Irish tenants—always coming forward with a request for more. This was a contest between the rights of the public and the rights of a privileged class, and, as a Member of the public, and not a Member of that privileged class, he should vote for the rights of the public. The hon. Member for West St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson) had told them this Bill was really to be passed on behalf of the public. If so, it was a great pity the names of some Members of the public were not to be found on the back of the Bill. As a matter of fact, every Gentleman who had backed the Bill was more or less intimately connected with the Press. [*Cries of* "Morley!"] He understood that the right hon. Gentleman was connected with the Press; certainly he had been more or less in the past. It seemed strange to him that the two classes who now came to the House clamouring for protection were the two classes who were most prosperous and best able to protect themselves—namely, the Press and the publicans. He hoped the Committee would view this Bill with the greatest suspicion.

MR. COMMINS (Roscommon, S.) said, that at present, newspapers were privileged in certain instances to publish defamatory matter without incurring any liability to punishment. An individual might get up in a public meeting, and might utter the grossest slanders upon the character of some person. The slanderer would escape without any punishment [*Cries of* "No!"] Yes; unless he charged an individual with some professional misconduct or some crime, he was free from any action for slander. The question was whether they were to extend that protection—were they to allow newspapers to spread with impunity slanders uttered in public meetings. The Committee ought to be very careful in extending any further the privileges of the Press. He had known the grossest slanders uttered by irresponsible persons in public meetings circulated widely through the agency of newspapers. It had been said that newspapers were persecuted by actions for libel. Why did they publish libels? Nothing was easier than to prevent the publication of libels. What was an editor for? He understood that the business of an editor was to see what was to be kept out of a paper, rather than to see what was inserted. Newspaper people simply wanted the privilege of publishing libels which other people uttered, and to be protected from the legal consequences which now attached to their action. He was very jealous of any extension of the privileges of the Press. This was not a question of the freedom of the Press. It was a question of the freedom to propagate libel, and such freedom ought not to be given, unless substantial reason was shown.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, it seemed to him that a great deal of time would have been saved if hon. Members who had spoken had been more careful to distinguish between newspaper articles and newspaper reports. He could not gather that there was anything whatever in the Bill in respect to editorial paragraphs or comments of any kind. The Bill simply had reference to reports.

Mr. HOWELL: There are the words "or of any other matter of public interest."

Mr. CONYBEARE said, they were not now discussing Clause 4. They were considering whether Clause 2 of the Act of 1881 should be repealed. It seemed to him that every provision of Clause 2 was proposed to be re-enacted with the single exception of the words "if the publication is for the public benefit." The hon. and learned Attorney General had referred them to the proposal of the hon. Baronet (Sir Algernon Borthwick) to insert the words "or shall privilege the publication of any matter not of public interest." He thought the objection raised by the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) was a perfectly sound one. "Public interest" was not the same as "public benefit." He (Mr. Conybeare) himself had suffered from libel, and he was exceedingly anxious to protect individual characters. He, therefore, suggested that the hon. Baronet should accept the words "public benefit." Of course, Clause 4 needed other improvements; but he would not deal with them now. There was, however, one further remark he had to make. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) spoke of garbled reports, and complained that such reports of official proceedings or otherwise should be circulated to the detriment of private individuals. But both the Act of 1882 and Clause 4 of this Bill protected anyone against garbled reports, because an essential thing was that the report should be a fair and accurate report. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Addison) had spoken of discretion being left to the editor of a newspaper to omit matter the publication of which he did not consider would lead to the public benefit. It seemed to him (Mr. Conybeare) that if it were left to the discretion of a newspaper editor to cut and carve reports, to leave out what he considered would not lead to the public benefit, the public would get the garbled reports which the hon. Member for North-East Bethnal Green had just denounced. If the hon. Baronet (Sir Algernon Borthwick) would accept the re-introduction into the Bill of the words "public benefit," it would, he was sure, greatly facilitate the progress of the measure. He should suggest, too, that the question of reports being for the public benefit or not should rest, not with the editor, because that would constitute every editor a censor of the public Press, which no one, he was sure, desired, but with the jury who had to try any particular case in which the question arose.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 181; Noes 99: Majority 82.—(Div. List, No. 127.)

Clause 3 (Newspaper reports of proceedings of Courts exercising judicial authority privileged).

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 11, to leave out the word "published."—(*Sir Algernon Borthwick.*)

Question, "That the word proposed to be left out stands part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Mr. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) proposed to omit the words "of and," in line 12, and insert "heard before." In putting down the Amendment, he had before his mind a case which recently occurred in Scotland. A wife made the gravest possible charges against her husband and a lady, and these charges a paper in Glasgow published. The charges were baseless, and it was shown that the reporter had copied them from the printed pleadings, which had never been used in Court. He believed that, under the words of the clause, there would be power to publish defamatory matter before a case came before a Court. His desire was to limit the publication to what actually came before the Court.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 12, to leave out the words "of and," and insert the words "heard before."—(*Mr. Kelly.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'of and' stand part of the Clause."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight) suggested that the promoters of the Bill should accept the Amendment, because otherwise matters might be published before they ought to be. The matter referred to by his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Kelly) might, however, in his opinion have been treated as contempt of Court. He did not suppose the promoters of the Bill wished to give power to publish proceedings which might be compromised or never come before the public at all.

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries) said, he did not think it was sufficient to say "heard before any Court." In the first place a report of proceedings heard *ex parte* ought not to be privileged in the way suggested. The law relating to *ex parte* proceedings was different to that existing in cases in which both sides were heard. He thought the words ought to be "publicly heard before any Court."

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK said, he was quite ready to accept the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Camberwell.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER thought that what the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dumfries had said was also worthy of consideration. The words "publicly heard before any Court" might very properly be accepted.

MR. R. T. REID: And *ex parte?*

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL did not think it was desirable to insert those words.

THE CHAIRMAN: Those words would form a subsequent Amendment.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words 'publicly heard before' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. R. T. REID proposed to insert after "report" the words "not being *ex parte.*" He hoped these words would be accepted. He moved them for the purpose of preventing what he thought hon. Gentlemen desired to prevent, the publication of matters which were heard at a time when the party incriminated had no opportunity of reply.

Amendment proposed after the word "report" to insert the words "not being *ex parte.*"—(*Mr. Reid.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK understood there were many cases which were only heard *ex parte,*

MR. KELLY remarked that there were many cases in which the incriminated person would not appear, and which ought to be known to the public, but this could not be the case if the proposed Amendment were accepted.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, he did not think the proposal made would be quite sufficient, because they knew there were cases in which evidence was brought from abroad in manuscript form, and had to be read. That evidence, although not taken in open Court in this country, should be reported. The mere fact of a name not being mentioned did not seem to him to be sufficient to justify cutting that evidence out of the proceedings. He was bound to say that he thought there were a good many *ex parte* statements which ought to be reported, with respect to which it could not be said that any moral or legal wrong would be done by reporting them—statements which often led to reparation being made to the parties by whom the Court was moved. Therefore, while he went with the hon. and learned Gentleman to the extent that newspapers should only report cases for the public benefit, he did not think it was wise to go the whole length the hon. and learned Gentleman was prepared to go.

Question put, and *negatived.*

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK (Kensington, S.) said, he begged to move the next Amendment standing in his name on the Paper — namely, p. 1, line 12, after "shall," to insert "if published contemporaneously with such proceedings." The object of this Amendment was to provide that newspapers should only report proceedings on the day they occurred—that was to say, absolutely contemporaneously, and to prevent the raking up of old trials which might be highly disagreeable and injurious to individuals. If this Amendment were not accepted, a newspaper wishing to annoy some person would be able to rake up the circumstances of a trial which took place 10 or even 50 years before, and claim protection under this clause. The Amendment would put a stop to any such nuisance as that.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 12, after the word "shall," insert "if published contemporaneously with such proceedings." — (*Sir Algernon Borthwick.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he fully appreciated the object of the hon. Baronet in his Amendment, but must confess he could not understand what was meant by "publishing reports contemporaneously with proceedings." It was not possible to do that. In the nature of things it was necessary that the report of certain proceedings should be published after those proceedings had taken place, it might be a day, a week, or a month, in the case of daily, weekly, and monthly papers respectively. The only contemporaneous report or reports which most nearly deserved that name were those they sometimes saw on tapes at the clubs. He should think it would be better to say, "within a reasonable time," or "in due course," instead of contemporaneously with the proceedings. He should like to know, as he did not like to vote against the Amendment unless it were absolutely necessary, whether the words of the hon. Baronet would have an intelligible meaning.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, he had carefully examined the Amendment, and he must say it seemed to him the exact point it was desirable to deal with. They all knew what "contemporaneous publication" meant. Contemporaneous publication in the case of a weekly newspaper would mean the publication of proceedings which had transpired during the week prior to the day of publication, and contemporaneous publication in the case of a daily paper would be the publication of proceedings which had taken place on the day of publication, or the day before publication, or within a reasonable time of publication. The words "within a reasonable time," or "in due course," might give a wider construction to the clause, and might enable a newspaper to go back upon proceedings which had taken place six weeks or three months before. He did not think any lawyer could have a doubt upon this matter, but if it were thought desirable to make the meaning of the Amendment clearer than it was, he should be prepared to suggest words for that purpose.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) said, *The Times* reports, for instance, were very frequently held over for a day or two; but the hon. and learned Attorney General had said that in the case of a daily newspaper, contemporaneous publication would mean publication on the day the proceedings occurred.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: I said the day of the proceedings, or the day after.

Dr. CAMERON said that, if on consideration some more elastic words could be devised, it would be better. He did not wish to permit newspaper proprietors to publish reports of proceedings six weeks after they had occurred, but surely they should be allowed to publish a thing a couple of days old without losing the privileges of the Act.

Mr. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) said, he should like to ask the hon. and learned Attorney General what his opinion was as to the effect of the Amendment on weekly and monthly newspapers.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, the hon. Gentleman had evidently not caught what he had said. His view was that "contemporaneously" must be construed with reference to the issue of the paper. A contemporaneous report by a weekly paper such as, for instance, *The Illustrated London News*, published on Saturday, would be a report of anything which had taken place in the week preceding the publication—that was to say, since the last issue.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Sir ALGERNON BORTHWICK said, the next Amendment was in his name. The wording of the clause as drafted was that these reports should be "absolutely privileged." He thought, however, that the word, "absolutely" should be omitted, and he begged to move an Amendment to that effect.

Amendment proposed in page 1, line 13, to leave out the word "absolutely."—(*Sir Algernon Borthwick.*)

Question proposed, "That the word proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. ADDISON said, he should be very sorry if the hon. Baronet omitted this word, and he was sure that the hon. Baronet's attention had not been carefully directed to the point. The proposal of the hon. Baronet, if accepted, would enable any cantankerous person to bring an action on the ground that the way in which a report had been put together showed that there had been, what amounted in law, to what was called malice. The effect of the Amendment did not really cover all that the hon. Baronet meant, or that the Committee would desire. The words "absolutely privileged" were well known at the Bar. There was privilege in this House, there was privilege to a witness for what he said in a Court of Justice, there was privilege for a Judge, and he submitted that it should not be in the power of a plaintiff to get rid of the privilege of a newspaper proprietor, by pulling a report to pieces. He could not help thinking that if, in the first words of this section, a report was "fair and accurate," that such report ought to be protected from the power on the part of the plaintiff of pulling it to pieces by all sorts of suggestions of negligence and malice.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, that his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Addison) out-Heroded Herod altogether. He appeared to be prepared to say that a newspaper, which published a report for malice, should be absolutely privileged. All he (Sir Richard Webster) could say was, that if he knew that his hon. and learned Friend desired to press protection of newspapers so far as that, nothing would have induced him to support the hon. and learned Gentleman's arguments so far as he had done. If the words "absolutely privileged" remained, reports published with malice would be protected, but according to the Amendment the protection would only be given where no malice was shown. If the hon. and learned Gentleman pressed his view of the matter to a Division, he (Sir Richard Webster) should not vote with him.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said he thought that the hon. Baronet was well advised in modifying his Bill by that Amendment. He did not think it was desirable to make the provision too strong in the interests of the Press itself, for otherwise it might be the duty of the House to discuss these questions again at no distant date. He (Sir Albert Rollit) had known cases in which the sting of a libel had absolutely been in the heading, which was not a part of the legitimate report, and it was not desirable that privilege should be granted in such a case.

Question put, and *negatived.*

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK said, the next Amendment which stood stood in his name was a very important one. It stood on the Paper in these words—

> "To insert, in line 13, after 'privilege' the following Proviso: 'Provided, That nothing in this section should authorize the publication of any blasphemous, indecent, or scandalous matter, or of any legal proceedings the publication of which is prohibited by a Court or a Judge.'"

He would prefer to leave out the last of these words—namely, "or of any legal proceedings the publication of which is prohibited by the Court or a Judge;" because the Court or Judge, he took it, had full power to sit in camera, or to sit in private, or in various other ways, or to clear the Court. It seemed to him (Sir Algernon Borthwick) that these last words of the Amendment would give a Judge power to stop reports at any stage in the evidence, although those reports might be of public interest. The Judge would, in fact, become a censor over the reporters in his own Court. There were cases which could be easily imagined in which a Judge could become a censor of the Press in cases of great public interest, and capable of suppressing the publication of proceedings. It appeared to him, therefore, that the Proviso would be quite sufficient if it declared merely that nothing in the section should authorize the publication of blasphemous, indecent, or scandalous matter.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Baronet move the Amendment or not?

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK: I move it, with the omission of the words I have referred to.

Amendment proposed,

> In page 1, line 13, after the word "privileged" to insert the following Proviso: "Provided, That nothing in this section should authorize the publication of any blasphemous, indecent, or scandalous matter."—(*Sir Algernon orthwick.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, he was sorry the hon. Baronet had not moved the Amendment in its original form, and he should feel it his duty, if the Amendment of the hon. Baronet was agreed to, to move, on his own behalf, the addition of the words omitted. He thought that those concluding words ought to be added.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) thought the Amendment of the hon. Baronet was a most important one, and trusted that the Committee would agree to it. He wished to call attention, however, to the fact that it was necessary to pass a similar Amendment in Section 4. He had put down an Amendment to that section carrying out that principle, and he trusted that when they came to it it would be agreed to.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, he now begged to move the addition of the words omitted from the last Amendment—namely, after the word "matter" to insert "or of any legal proceedings the publication of which is prohibited by the Court or a Judge." They were dealing not only with the case of the law as it stood, but as it might probably stand in the future. It was always possible that the Court might alter its rules. He had pointed out on a Bill in which hon. Members took great interest last year, that at the present time the Court sat in public, unless the Judge otherwise ordered it. It was possible, however, that a Judge might order that proceedings should be taken in camera, and if a Judge so decided, it would be unfair if newspapers had the privilege of reporting those proceedings. If a Judge made an order that the Court should be cleared, the newspaper reporters should be required to leave with the rest of the public.

Amendment proposed,

To insert after the last Amendment the words "or of any legal proceedings the publication of which is prohibited by the Court or a Judge." —(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he desired to offer his strongest opposition to the Amendment just moved by the hon. and learned Attorney General. It was introducing a power into the English procedure, which he trusted might never become part of the law of the country, and which, if introduced, should only be introduced after full Notice and with that kind of gravity in the discussion of it which would follow from the subject being thoroughly understood. It should not be sprung upon the House by an Amendment put upon the Paper that morning in a Bill of this kind. So far as he (Mr. Bradlaugh) was aware, there was at present no power in any Judge of the Realm to prohibit the publication of legal proceedings openly heard in his Court. This Amendment did not apply to matter described as blasphemous, indecent, or scandalous, which had already been dealt with by the previous Amendment the Committee had accepted. He trusted there would not be such a thing adopted in their proceedings as to render it possible for any Judge, on any trial, no matter what its nature, to make an order that the proceedings should not be published. It was a monstrous proposal, which he trusted the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General or the Committee would reject.

Mr. R. T. REID said, he thought the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had not only misunderstood the present law, but the effect of the Amendment. What was proposed would not enable a Judge to prevent the publication of anything whatsoever, but would simply build up the Common Law as it existed at present. The effect of the introduction of these words into the third clause would be simply to prevent the Bill from conferring privilege upon the report of a case under particular circumstances. They would be simply saying that the Bill should not confer that privilege to proceedings which were reported, in spite of the fact that the Judge had prohibited their being reported.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that if the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Reid) would permit him to say so, his words presumed some legal power on the part of the Judge to prohibit and the making of an order in the exercise of that power.

Mr. R. T. REID said, on the contrary, that such a legal power existed was a fact known to everyone connected with the Bar. He would give two illustrations. In the first place, proceedings in Judges' Chambers, where the Judge perpetually prohibited the publication of proceedings and treated them as private; and, secondly, proceedings heard *in camera*—proceedings in the Divorce Court, which, he was sorry to say, were matters more nearly to daily than to weekly or unfrequent occurrence. He thought the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bradlaugh) had misunderstood the provision. They did nothing in the world, in this Amendment, but build up, in the words of an Act of Parliament, the Common Law as it existed at the present moment, and, for his own part, he maintained that, according to the dicta of many Judges, they could not confer privilege to reports in Courts of Justice where the Court prohibited the publication of the proceedings.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he thought the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries (Mr. Reid), in correcting the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), had laid himself open to a criticism of the same description. He had given them instances of proceedings in private; but he had forgotten that the Committee were dealing with the fair and accurate report published in newspapers of proceedings "heard publicly." That removed from the argument all proceedings heard in Judges' Chambers and *in camera*, and the proposal now was to confer on Judges in this country a power which he ventured to say they did not possess at present. He attached so much importance to the clause and to this proposal that he had no hesitation in saying he would much rather see the Bill thrown out altogether than that those words should be accepted. He was anxious to see the Law of Libel amended; but he thought it would be a most dangerous thing for Parliament to sanction the suggestion that the Judges had power to prohibit the publication of proceedings, not on the ground that they were blasphemous, indecent, or scandalous, but because they thought they ought not to be published.

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) said, it should be in the power of every Judge of every Court to prohibit the publication of any evidence given in proceedings heard in public which he thought ought to be prohibited. In the interests of morality it was desirable that the Judges in our Courts should have that power in connection even with a certain portion of a witness's evidence. It would, perhaps, meet the objection of hon. Gentlemen opposite if the Amendment were qualified by the insertion of words expressly conferring upon Judges this power, which would unquestionably be in the true interests of morality. He should not object to the Amendment if modified in that way, and he could not see that it would be in any way the initiation of a dangerous doctrine in our Courts of Law.

MR. R. T. REID said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) stated that he (Mr. Reid) was wrong in regard to the law; but he repeated what he had said, that the Court had and did exercise the power of prohibiting the publication of proceedings. The very first authority he laid his hand on was a book which had been mentioned by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling) as a great authority, and he found there two cases laid down where reports of judicial proceedings, though fair and accurate, were not privileged, and were, indeed, illegal. The first was where the Court prohibited publication, as it very frequently had done in former days. Every Court had the power by the Common Law—[Mr. BRADLAUGH: Hear, hear!] Perhaps the hon. Gentleman was not aware that the Common Law of this country was 700 years old. Every Court had the power to prevent the publication of proceedings pending litigation. [Mr. BRADLAUGH: Pending litigation!] Yes; it was in those cases that the Courts prohibited the publication of proceedings, and not otherwise. His point was, that if the Court did exercise that power without entering into the circumstances under which it might exercise it, that the Bill ought not to make those reports privileged which were published contrary to the prohibition of the Judge. He cited his authority.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries had rather harshly corrected him (Mr. Bradlaugh), and now endeavoured to bring forward some authority for his statement of the law, and he (Mr. Bradlaugh) should like to be permitted to say a word in his own defence, although he was only an ignorant layman. It was acknowledged that the Bill, as pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), would not apply, as now amended, to either the cases heard *in camera* or cases heard in Judges' Chambers, and that the authority cited by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dumfries (Mr. Reid) did not justify the proposition he had put before the Committee. The power of preventing the publication of proceedings pending litigation had never been held in this country, so far as he (Mr. Bradlaugh) was aware, to apply after hearing to proceedings at a trial which took place in open Court and in connection with evidence heard under circumstances to which the Bill generally would apply.

Dr. CAMERON said, there was an Amendment inserted in the clause a few minutes before which required the publication to be contemporaneous with the proceedings in order to be privileged. Now, if a Judge said that certain proceedings should not be published, say, for six months, until certain other proceedings had been completed, the privilege of contemporaneous publication would be a mere mockery. It would be impossible to publish proceedings contemporaneously if they were not allowed to be published until subsequently. The Amendment they had adopted was altogether inconsistent with the meaning the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dumfries put upon the present proposal. A Judge might order that proceedings taking place to-day should not be published until proceedings which could not take place for some months had been completed.

Mr. S. SMITH said, he would ask whether the words they had already adopted in the last Amendment were not sufficient—namely, that the publication of any blasphemous, indecent, or scandalous matter should not be authorized? Should they not limit the power of the Judge to the publication of proceedings which the Court considered to come under either of those categories?

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT said, that the cases in which a Judge would be likely to prohibit the publication were already provided for, and therefore the additional words were hardly necessary. It was laid down that the publication could be prohibited of any blasphemous, indecent, or scandalous matter. With reference to the general point raised, he would ask the Committee to bear in mind that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dumfries had only mentioned in the authority to which he had referred that a Judge had power to prohibit the publication of proceedings. The hon. and learned Member had not, however, mentioned a single modern case at Common Law where the Judge had ventured to exercise that power. The prohibition in question was one which some Members on that (the Ministerial) side of the House took great exception to.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, he would venture to withdraw the Amendment, which was a matter he had not had an opportunity of considering before he had seen it on the Paper that morning. Though he thought it would be a good amendment of the law, under the circumstances, it might be well to withdraw it. If the question were to be considered, it, perhaps, ought to be from a wider point of view.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Motion made, and Question, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Newspaper reports of proceedings of public meetings and of certain bodies and persons privileged).

Mr. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) said, the first Amendment to the clause was in his name, and was in line 14, to leave out "fair" and insert "true." He did not, however, propose to move this Amendment.

Sir ALGERNON BORTHWICK (Kensington, S.) said, he begged to move, in line 15, before the word "public," to insert the word "lawful," which would make the clause apply to a fair and accurate report published in any newspaper of the proceedings of a lawful public meeting.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 15, before the word "public," to insert the word "lawful."—(*Sir Algernon Borthwick.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'lawful' be there inserted."

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) said, he objected to the introduction of the word, on the ground that it seemed to be introducing into the law of England a principle which was only at present in operation in Ireland. [Several hon. Members: No, no!] Of course, he was not learned in the law, and all he could say was that the principle should not be introduced here, as it would be for the first time if this Amendment were persisted in.

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK said, that the Amendment was to apply simply to lawfully convened meetings.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, it seemed to be thought that some change was being introduced into the law; but he would point out that since the Act of 1881 the words bearing upon this point had been "if a meeting is lawfully convened."

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Baronet withdraw his Amendment?

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK: I will accept the words "convened for a lawful purpose."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. DARLING (Deptford) said, that he would now move, in line 15, after "meeting," to insert "lawfully convened for a lawful purpose;" and if that were adopted, the first part of the clause would be to the effect that a fair and accurate report published in any newspaper of the proceedings of a public meeting lawfully convened for a lawful purpose should be privileged. The words would have the effect of making the law differ from the law as it now stood. The law as it stood in the present Newspaper Act applied to "a public meeting lawfully convened for a lawful purpose and open to the public." He proposed to stop at the word "purpose," and not to use the words "and open to the public." He had no reason for omitting these words, except that he did not imagine that a public meeting could be a public meeting if it was not "open to the public." All hole-and-corner meetings which were not open to the public it appeared to him it was impossible to call public meetings, and he did not think such meetings should come under the privilege of this clause. He thought the whole case would be provided for if they accepted the words of this Amendment, and he begged, therefore, to move that these words be inserted.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 15, after the word "meeting," to insert the words "lawfully convened for a lawful purpose."—(*Mr. Darling.*)

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he would move to amend the Amendment by adding the words "and open to the public."

THE CHAIRMAN: It would be better to do that later on in the form of a new Amendment.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, he would move to insert in the Amendment, after the words "lawfully convened," the words "or held." It was possible for a meeting not convened at all, but still held, to be legal, such as meetings to hear the declaration of the poll, after contested elections.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, after the word "convened," to add the words "or held."—(*Mr. Gedge.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment, as amended, *agreed to.*

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) said, he would now move to add to the Amendment the words "and open to the public." He could conceive cases where the Press might be admitted and the public were not, and he did not think the privilege of the clause should be extended to the Press under such circumstances.

Amendment proposed, after the words last inserted, to add the words "and open to the public."—(*Mr. Kelly.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) said, he would point out to the Committee and to the hon. and learned Gentleman who moved the Amendment that, in consequence of the enormous magnitude of the population of the Metropolis, even the largest meetings were always summoned by ticket. The meetings held at St. James Hall were not open to the public in the literal sense of the words, but people from different quarters of London were admitted by ticket. They were public meetings, although not open to the public. When it was found desirable to limit a meeting to the actual electors of a district they were obliged, in order to prevent outsiders from coming in, to issue orders of admission. Therefore, a meeting might be a genuine public meeting, although not open to the public, and he thought it would be undesirable to restrict the liberty of the Press in respect to such meetings.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, there was so much force in what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Member for West St. Pancras that he trusted the hon. and learned Member who had moved the Amendment would be satisfied with the words "public meeting" as they stood in the clause. Those words would include such meetings as the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had mentioned, whereas the words "and open to the public" would only tend to obscure the matter and raise a quibble which it was not desirable should be raised.

MR. KELLY said, that what they were bound to legislate against were meetings held for the purpose of blackening a man's character and immunity being granted to a report of such meetings. "And open to the public" were the words of the old Act, and as they had never led to any trouble he did not see why they should not be adopted in this Bill.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) said, he did not see that anything would be added to the sense of the clause by the acceptance of these words. A public meeting open to the public would only be tautological and not a serious addition to the section. Apart from that, once they admitted that reports of large meetings were to be published without fear of libel by a newspaper, he thought the fewer restrictions and technicalities cast around the liberties of the people the better. As had been already pointed out, there were meetings in every respect public at which 4,000, 6,000, or 10,000 people were present, and yet the fact of three or four people, well known as disturbers of the peace, coming there with tickets and being refused admission, might, if the words proposed were accepted, enable persons dissatisfied with the character of the meeting to contend that the newspapers reporting the proceedings were outside the benefit of the 4th section of this Bill. He could conceive no tactics more likely and more easy to be adopted than those.

MR. KELLY said, that he had been under the impression that in this Amendment he had been adopting the words of the previous Act, but it had been shown to him that he had been wrong in that supposition, the words having been slightly different—namely, "Such meeting" to be "open to the public." He would, therefore, withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. Addison

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK said that, with the permission of the Committee and the Chairman, he wished to propose an Amendment in lines 17 and 18, which was not upon the Paper. The clause as drafted said—

> "A fair and accurate report published in any newspaper of the proceedings of a public meeting, or of any meeting of a Vestry, Town Council, School Board, Board of Guardians, board, or Local Authority formed or constituted under the provisions of the Public Health Act, 1875, or of any Act amending the same, &c."

He proposed to leave out the words, "the Public Health Act, 1875, or any Act amending the same," in order to put in their place the words, "any public Act of Parliament." Those words would, of course, apply to County Councils, and would be a simplification of the clause altogether.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, lines 17 and 18, to leave out "the Public Health Act, 1875," in order to insert "any public Act of Parliament."—(*Sir Algernon Borthwick.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, that a great number of these bodies were constituted under the provisions of private and not of public Acts of Parliament.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, the governing words were—

> "Or of any meeting of a Vestry, Town Council, School Board, Board of Guardians, board, or Local Authority,"

therefore the meetings would necessarily be constituted by Act of Parliament.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER said, that if the word "public" were left out, the difficulty would be got over.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK said, he would move to leave out the words "the Public Health Act, 1875," in order to put in their place, "any Act of Parliament."

Amendment proposed,

> In page 1, lines 17 and 18, to leave out the words "The Public Health Act, 1875," in order to insert the words "any Act of Parliament."—(*Sir Algernon Borthwick.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK said, his next Amendment was in line 24, on the same page. He proposed to omit the words—

> "Or of any other duly and legally constituted body, or persons acting in a public capacity and for public purposes, and the publication by any newpaper of any notice or report issued for the information of the public by, or by order of, any Government office or department, officer of State, commissioner of police, or chief constable, or by any of the bodies or authorities hereinbefore mentioned, or of any other matter of public interest which is a fair subject of newspaper report,"

The first part of this Amendment, he thought, would be a great improvement, that was, so far as it related to the abandonment of the words—

> "Or of any other duly and legally constituted body or persons acting in a public capacity and for public purposes,"

as those words were, no doubt, vague and practically useless; but he should abandon with great regret the second portion of these words—namely,

> "And the publication by any newspaper of any notice or report issued for the information of the public by, or order of, any Government office or department, officer of State, commissioner of police, or chief constable, or by any of the bodies or authorities hereinbefore mentioned, or of any other matter of public interest which is a fair subject of newspaper report."

He had reasons for proposing that these words should be given up; but he was very unwilling to make the Motion, because he considered that a newspaper ought to be privileged to publish any notice or report so issued for the information of the public. He would call the attention of the Committee to the case of the convict Benson, who was about as bad a character as a man could possily be. This man, having suffered his term of imprisonment and got out, had gone over to Geneva, where he had engaged in great and extensive frauds. For these frauds the police "wanted" him, as the expression was, and a circular was issued giving a description of him, and calling attention to him. Well, he (Sir Algernon Borthwick) held it to be for the benefit of the public that newspapers should assist the police in such cases; but it happened in this case that *The Times* and *Daily Telegraph* were both attacked by the convict for libelling him by publishing this circular. It was held by the Court that the convict had been libelled, and he thought it was a very monstrous thing that the Government should be able to placard all London with descriptions of certain individuals, and to declare that they were wanted for murder or felony, and that newspapers should be punished for publishing the same placards in their columns. He regarded it as a great pity that he should have to give up the second part of the words he had read, and he would make an appeal to the hon. and learned Attorney General to allow the second part to stand.

Amendment proposed,

> In page 1, line 24, to omit the words "or any other duly and legally constituted body or persons acting in a public capacity and for public purposes."—(*Sir Algernon Borthwick.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. LAWSON said, that as the hon. Baronet had told them, in his ingenuous speech, he was not responsible for the latter part of this Amendment, he (Mr. Lawson) should like the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General to inform the Committee exactly why it was he thought these latter words should be struck out. It seemed to him (Mr. Lawson) desirable, in the interests of justice and for the detection of crime, that the words should be retained. Perhaps the hon. and learned Gentleman, or someone on the Treasury Bench, would tell them why they were to be struck out?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, that the hon. Member was scarcely justified in what he said. He (Sir Richard Webster) had gone over these Amendments as carefully as he could with a view of seeing whether he could abstain from opposing the Bill of the hon. Baronet, but there was no ground for the hon. Gentleman opposite suggesting that he (Sir Richard Webster) was to take the responsibility of the Amendment. All he had done had been to point out those parts of the Bill which he considered objectionable. It was true that it was proposed in the Amendment to omit the words—

> "And the publication by any newspaper or any notice or report issued for the information

of the public by or by order of any Government office or department, officer of State, commissioner of police, or chief constable, or by any of the bodies or authorities hereinbefore mentioned, or of any other matter of public interest which is a fair subject of newspaper report;"

but newspapers, of course, would still be able to publish these things, and the only question was, whether they should be protected against actions for libel in so doing. He thought good reasons could be given why they should not be so protected. Proclamations of this kind were placed upon the walls by the authority of Public Departments, and there was a broad distinction between proclamations being published by a Public Department on its own authority, and being published in the newspapers. If a newspaper editor published in his paper the name and description and alleged offence of a man which he saw placarded on a wall, he did it at his own peril. There was no analogy whatever between the publication of such descriptions and the reports of public meetings. So far as he (Sir Richard Webster) was concerned, he had thought it would meet the objections he entertained to the clause if it were altered in the way suggested in this Amendment. He failed to see the similarity between the publication of such documents by Departments of the State and publication broadcast in newspapers on private authority simply because it might contain attractive details which these newspapers might consider it likely they would make something out of.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) said, it appeared to him to be very much against the public interest to place any obstacle in the way of a newspaper publishing for the use of the public any information issued by a Public Department. Take the case of a Royal Commission. The Report of a Royal Commission was issued by order of the Home Office. Such Report might contain statements which in themselves might be grossly libellous, but which it was of importance to the public should be disseminated through the land—through some more popular medium than the pages of a Blue Book. The same argument applied to *Gazette* notices. He doubted very much whether there ever was a case where it was more desirable that privilege should be given to newspapers—in which newspapers should be allowed to publish information without fear of consequences. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had shown no reason why the same privilege should not be given in these cases as was given in the case of reports of proceedings of the House of Commons. It seemed to him that the necessity for conferring this privilege extended in quite the same degree to the publication of reports by Public Departments, and he hoped that, as the hon. Baronet who moved the Amendment had confessed his dislike of the latter portion of it, he would not object to someone else attempting to keep in the words he himself was loth to part with—namely,

"And the publication by any newspaper of any notice or report issued for the information of the public by or by order of any Government Office or Department, Officer of State, Commissioner of Police, or Chief Constable, or by any of the bodies or authorities hereinbefore mentioned, or of any other matter of public interest which is a fair subject of newspaper report."

He did not think the hon. and learned Attorney General had given any sufficient reason for withholding privilege from these publications. To do so would cast a slur upon the discretion of Officers of State, and lead the public to believe that their reports were more calculated to harm individuals than to be of use to the public.

Mr. CHANCE said, he was not sure that the words it was proposed should be left out did not really govern the whole section. The clause was merely divided in two by a comma, and, if they got rid of these words, the newspapers would be left in a very different position, speaking generally, to that which they would otherwise have been in.

The CHAIRMAN said, he had put the Amendment so as not to touch the last words, which would come on in the shape of a subsequent Amendment.

Mr. CHANCE: Then the present Amendment only goes down to the words "public purposes?"

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. LAWSON said, newspapers were protected in reporting evidence given before Committees of this House to which reporters were admitted, but that, he thought, did not apply to reports of Royal Commissions, or the evidence given before a Royal Commission, which was of the same kind to all intents and purposes as that given before their Committees. Take the case of such a Commission as that which inquired into the housing of the working classes. The names of individuals were frequently mentioned and even held up to public odium, and he must say he thought newspapers should have the same privileges in such cases as they had in relation to evidence given before the Select Committees where reporters were admitted. Under this Amendment a newspaper might not be privileged in publishing the contents of a Blue Book, such a Blue Book would come under the words it was proposed to leave out being published by order of the Secretary for the Home Department.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.) said, that the clause already privileged newspapers in publishing a fair and accurate report

> "Of any Committee appointed by any of the above-mentioned bodies, or of any meeting of any Commissioners authorized to act by Letters Patent, Act of Parliament, Warrant under the Royal Sign Manual, or other lawful warrant or authority, &c."

The difficulty pointed out by hon. Members opposite, he thought, would be met by those words.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

> In page 1, line 26, to leave out the words "and the publication by any newspaper of any notice or report issued for the information of the public by or by order of any Government office or department, officer of state, commissioner of police, or chief constable, or by any of the bodies or authorities hereinbefore mentioned, or of any other matter of public interest which is a fair subject of newspaper report."—(*Sir Algernon Borthwick.*)

Question "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

MR. KELLY said, he wished to move, in the same Clause, in page 2, line 3, to leave out the words—

> "Unless it should be proved by the plaintiff or prosecutor, as the case may be, that such report or publication was published or made with actual malice."

It was, he contended, unreasonable to enact that an aggrieved person should be shut out from recovering compensation unless he could prove that a newspaper proprietor had acted maliciously. It was of no sort of importance to the person libelled whether the act was done maliciously or recklessly; the damage was the same to him, and the only question ought to be as to the amount of injury he had suffered.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 3, to leave out the words from "unless" to "malice," in line 5, inclusive.—(*Mr. Kelly.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. CHANCE said, he thought that without those words reports published with actual malice would be completely protected.

MR. ADDISON said, he thought the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Kelly) was for once wrong in the law on this subject. The word privileged was well known, and would never be permitted to apply to that which it had been proved had been done maliciously.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said, it was the duty of a newspaper editor to see that no libels found their way into the reports in his paper. He employed the reporters, and it was his duty to see that their reports were correct. What was wanted was that the particular class of reporters who had at their mercy the characters of a great number of people should not be freed from responsibility in regard to the reports they furnished. What he held was this, that if reporters supplied false or incorrect reports, the person taking them and publishing them should be the person liable to punishment.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, he was of opinion that the words proposed to be left out should be retained, and that he had some doubt whether it might not be necessary to add guarding words to the previous part of the section. He thought the words should remain in to prevent the suggestion that there was absolute privilege, and he ventured to submit to the Committee that he found some ground for this on referring to the Act of 1881, for he there found words to the effect that any report was to be privileged if the meeting was lawfully convened and open to the public, and if the report was fair and accurate and without malice. In the present clause it was set forth that the report should be privileged unless it could be proved by the plaintiff or prosecutor that the publication was published or made with actual malice.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, he agreed with what had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, but he would call attention to the distinction between the passage the hon. Member had read in the existing law and the present Amendment. There were no such words as "actual malice" used in the existing law. They knew what the law of libel was, and they should adhere to that, but if they put in the words "actual malice," they would mean something else. He (Sir William Harcourt), however, would be glad to leave this matter to the hon. and learned Attorney General, who would, no doubt, take care that the subject was properly guarded, but he certainly thought that the limit "actual" malice was too wide, and that the limiting objection should be struck out. He was not sure whether some further protection would not be wanted. A newspaper proprietor did not as a rule publish a thing out of malice. A private individual very often made a statement out of malice, but a newspaper very often published these matters not for malice in fact, but because it answered their purpose to do so, and it must be remembered that it was a very difficult thing to bring absolute proof of actual malice.

Mr. RADCLIFFE COOKE said, that "actual malice" as used in the law at the present time had been known for 40 years, and was as it appeared in Lord Campbell's Act. His chief objection to the retention of this provision was that it threw the onus of proving actual malice upon the wrong person.

Mr. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.) said, he did not wish to enter into the question, which he admitted to be a difficult one, as to what were the conflicting penalties where malice was proved, and where it was not proved, but he thought it would be far better to omit the word "actual" as qualifying malice, and to use instead the word "express." According to the rule at present, if the libel was false it was held to be malicious unless the occasion was privileged, in which case the malice was "express." He thought they had better adhere to the words known to the English law, and he would suggest that the clause should be amended in that sense; and then a fair and accurate report would be privileged unless it could be shown that there was express malice.

Mr. CHANCE said, that before anything of that sort was done he had an objection to take to an earlier part of these words. Objection was taken that a plaintiff or prosecutor should be put to the proof of actual or express malice. That might be held to require extrinsic proof other than the production of the libel itself. He understood that in many cases production of the libel itself would be proof of malice, and of course in a libel case the whole question went to the jury, and he did not see why they should not be allowed to infer actual malice from the libel itself. He would, therefore, move to leave out the words "Provided always that the production——

The CHAIRMAN: The present Question before the Committee is as to the exclusion of the words—

> "Unless it should be proved by the plaintiff or prosecutor, as the case may be, that such report was published or made with actual malice."

That Amendment must be withdrawn before the hon. Member can move any other.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, he sympathized with the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Chance), and thought his object might be met by leaving out the words "by the plaintiff or prosecutor as the case may be." He did not see any magic in those words.

Mr. CHANCE said, he was afraid that according to the words of the clause as they stood, extrinsic evidence might be held to be necessary.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT suggested that the words proposed to be left out should stand with the exception of the words "with actual malice," and for which he suggested that the word "maliciously" should be substituted.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, he should be guided very much by the sense of the Committee in regard to this matter. He was in favour of leaving out the words "actual malice," and inserting "maliciously," because he did not think that newspapers under ordinary circumstances inserted reports with actual malice, but merely did so in the course of business. Supposing a large sum of money was paid to an editor to insert a particular thing, then it seemed to him that that would be inserted maliciously. It might not be actual malice, or express malice, but it would be malicious. He would propose that the words "plaintiff or prosecutor" should be left out.

THE CHAIRMAN: Unless the Amendment before it is withdrawn, I am afraid no alteration can be made.

MR. KELLY said, he was afraid he must persist in pressing his Amendment, as he did not think it right that a prosecutor or plaintiff should have thrown upon him the onus of proving that a libel upon him had been published maliciously.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT asked, whether, supposing this Amendment were carried, it would not then be possible to adopt the proposal of the hon. and learned Attorney General?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes; by putting it in an entirely new setting.

DR. CAMERON said, the best plan would be to allow the Amendment before the Committee to be carried, and then to propose an Amendment in the sense of the suggestion of the hon. and learned Attorney General.

Question put, and *negatived.*

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, he now moved to insert the words "unless it should be proved that such report or publication was published or made maliciously."

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 3, to insert the words "unless it should be proved that such report or publication was published or made maliciously."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. CHANCE desired to know why they should say "unless it should be proved?"

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he would suggest to leave out the words "or made."

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked, why they did not adopt the phraseology of the Act of 1881, which had stood the test of time? It seemed to him that they would be able to meet the difficulty very simply by inserting, in the first line of the Clause, "published without malice."

THE CHAIRMAN: We have passed that.

MR. PICKERSGILL said, he was quite aware of that fact; but the point could be revived at a subsequent Sitting.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire) said, he had to move an Amendment he had mentioned some time ago—namely, in line 5, page 2, after the word "malice," to extend to this clause of the Bill the Proviso they had adopted in Clause 3—namely—

"Provided, That nothing in this section should authorize the publication of any blasphemous, indecent, or scandalous matter."

It might be held that the words already adopted would apply to the whole Bill; but it was possible that they might be taken as simply applying to Clause 3, and he, therefore, wished to be on the safe side, and have them also inserted in Clause 4. They all knew that there was a certain class of meetings whose proceedings were not fit for publication, and the Committee would, no doubt, agree with him that these words should be inserted in the clause.

MR. CHANCE said, the words would more properly come in at the end of the clause.

Amendment proposed,

After the last Amendment, to insert the words, "Provided, That nothing in this section should authorize the publication of any blasphemous, indecent, or scandalous matter."—(*Mr. S. Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. HUNTER said, this would come in very awkwardly here, and if the hon. Member for Flint would postpone the Amendment to the end, it would be more convenient.

MR. S. SMITH said, if it was the desire of the Committee that he should do that, he should be very glad to fall in with it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. COMMINS (Roscommon, S.) said, he thought they ought to extend the penalty and make the person who uttered the scandalous words liable, as well as the author of the publication. That was the purport of one part of the Amendment he had to move. The second part was to make it incumbent on the editor or proprietor of the newspaper to give up the notes on which the report was based, and the name and address of the reporter or other person by whom the same were taken or furnished.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he objected to the Amendment, on the ground that it was not within the Instruction of the Committee. It was a proposal to make that which came under the Law of Slander bear the same penalties as libel.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, as he understood the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman, he doubted whether it was within the scope of the Bill.

On the Motion of Mr. Darling, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, line 8, leave out "can show," and insert "shall prove," instead thereof.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 8, leave out "requested," and insert "required in writing."—(*Mr. Chance*).

Question proposed, "That the word 'requested' stand part of the Clause."

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, as he understood the object of the hon. Gentleman, it was that they should ensure that there should be no neglect or refusal on the part of the newspaper proprietor to insert a letter or statement by way of contradiction or explanation. But he would point out that the words of the Act of 1881 were that "the defendant has refused to insert, &c." There was no reason why the request should be expressed in writing, and he thought the simple expression "has been requested" was all that was required.

Mr. COMMINS said he would suggest that the words of the Act of 1881 should be followed.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, since he spoke it had occurred to him that they had to deal with the case of neglecting to answer, although there might not be any positive refusal. He therefore suggested that they should follow the general scheme of the clause, and make such an Amendment further on as might be necessary.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Sir Henry James, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, line 8, leave out—

"By such plaintiff or prosecutor or by some other person acting on his behalf or by his authority."

The CHAIRMAN having read the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Roscommon (Mr. Commins) said, that it did not appear to him to be out of Order.

Mr. COMMINS said, the Amendment handed to the Chairman appeared to him to be only a reasonable provision. A good many of the reports in question might be actionable *per se*, and such as would injure the character of individuals. It seemed to him that in order to escape the penalty, the proprietors should be compelled to give all the information requisite to bring the offending person to justice, and he would therefore move the Amendment read.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 14, after "same," insert, "or as refused to deliver up any proof or transcript of notes or other authority on which the publication complained of was made, together with the name and address of the reporter or other person by whom the same were taken or furnished."—(*Mr. Commins.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. HUNTER said, he hoped the Committee would pause before accepting the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman. What was the effect of the Proviso? At the present moment the reporter who made the report to the newspaper was not the criminal; it was the person whose words he reported that was the slanderer, and the reporter was simply the human machine by which his words were transmitted to the newspaper. The effect of the Proviso, however, would be to make the reporter the publisher of the incriminatory matter, and, consequently, they were asked to give the person complaining a right of action against him. But the reporter was not the person they wanted to get at; it was the person who uttered the slander. For these reasons he objected to the Amendment, as not being germane to the Bill.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he could not, for his part, agree to the principle of the Amendment; but, apart from that, there were detailed objections to the Amendment itself. There might be other matters in the notes amounting to libel, and if the notes were given up to one, other persons affected might be left without remedy. The privilege, although given nominally to several complainants, could only be used by one.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, the Amendment did not go to the point at issue. The persons to be made liable were not the reporters, but those who uttered the slanderous words or those who published them. He thought the Amendment would be hard on those who were merely carrying out the orders of their superiors.

Mr. COMMINS said, the object of his Amendment had been misapprehended. A person injured might have absolutely no means of bringing home responsibility to the right person, except through the reporter, and the Amendment merely required that the name and address should be given, in order to make him a witness to prove the utterance of the words complained of. Suppose the case of a public meeting at which a slander was uttered, and that the gentleman concerned complained of the report; he might have no means of getting at the slanderer without the notes, and therefore the editor, or proprietor, ought to be bound to produce the notes and the person who took them.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE said, the clause began with the words "a fair and accurate report," and it would be necessary for the publisher to show his notes in order to prove the fairness and accuracy of the report. Further, a plaintiff could always get the reporter's name on interrogatory, and therefore the Amendment was not needed.

Mr. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, they were going to give to the newspaper publishers or proprietors a special protection. At present, if a man were defamed, he could make the newspaper proprietor responsible. But now they were going to defend him, and if they now interposed such a barrier, it was not unreasonable to say that they would put any aggrieved man in possession of facts which would enable him to get at the person who was the author of the libel. Surely they ought not to put him in such a position that he would have to say—"Formerly I could go against the proprietor, but now I have no means of redress, because I cannot get at the notes of the reporter."

Dr. CAMERON said, it might be that no action would lie against a Member of the House on account of words uttered in the House; but when Privilege was extended in 1881 no such Proviso as this was made. There had never been any complaint or difficulty because the reports of the debates dealt with under the Act of 1881 were privileged. The practice had worked perfectly well, and no one had ever suggested such a course as that proposed by the hon. Member for South Roscommon (Mr. Commins). If, then, no such safeguard had been found necessary with regard to speeches in that House, he did not think it would be necessary in the case of the very guarded form of publication contemplated by the clause.

Mr. HOWELL said, the Bill had for its object the protection of the proprietor and publisher of the newspaper. The supporters of the Bill now wanted to protect the person who supplied the report—to be logical they might as well protect the person who uttered the words.

Mr. CHANCE said, the position taken up by himself and his hon. Friends was, that the newspaper proprietors did not want to libel anyone; they were simply the means of publication of certain reports. If the reports were made in the discharge of a public duty, they ought not to be called upon to furnish the names of their reporters.

Sir CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.) said, he was not about to pledge himself to the wording of the Amendment. The Bill was intended to take away the right of action against newspaper proprietors. He did not object to that; but there might be many cases in which, under the law as it now stood, the person who uttered the speech would be actionable. He thought it was right, therefore, when they were throwing this shield over the publisher, that some means of redress should be left against the person who uttered the words.

Sir HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, he agreed with all that his hon. and learned Friend had said. The question was, whether, in order to give redress to the person who complained of scandalous words spoken, they should fix upon a particular individual—namely, the reporter, and drag him forward and sacrifice him for the purpose. He thought that that would be very hard upon a particular class of persons—namely, the reporters. Besides, when scandalous words were spoken at a public meeting there were numerous other witnesses who could be summoned.

Sir CHARLES RUSSELL said, that he did not want to drag forward reporters in any way; but what he asked was, whether the hon. and learned Attorney General would not introduce some words to place the complainant in a position to call for the report furnished to the newspaper proprietors?

Mr. R. T. REID said, that he had a strong objection to the proposal of the hon. Member for South Roscommon (Mr. Commins). On the one hand, they had the newspaper proprietor who made a profit by selling 20,000 or 30,000 copies, and, on the other hand, they had the reporter earning, he did not know exactly what, but a comparatively small salary, who was simply a person discharging a duty imposed upon him by his superiors. But, besides that, the proposal was to compel by statute this unfortunate man to be brought forward in order that he might suffer for the sins of the person who made all the profit. He was quite sure that his hon. Friend would not encourage that proceeding if he knew it to be the real scope of his Amendment; but it was the scope of it nevertheless, and hon. Members would find upon examination that this was the case. It would be seen that, while it was proposing to throw a shield in front of the wealthy newspaper proprietor, it afforded no protection to individuals who were carrying out their duty.

Sir ALGERNON BORTHWICK said, he would take upon himself, in the name of all the newspaper proprietors, to say that they would rather give up the whole Bill than sacrifice the reporter. While there was a code of honour in many professions, he believed that in no profession was the code of honour stronger than that which existed in connection with the Press. He did not believe there was a case in which a newspaper proprietor had ever given up the name of an individual who had imparted to him information in confidence, and no proprietor had, as far as he ever heard, been ready to sacrifice one of his servants. They were all prepared to take upon themselves the responsibility involved, and with it liability; and by this Bill they were not seeking to escape from any reasonable or lawful liability whatever. So far as this Amendment was concerned, requiring that the reporter's notes should be given up, they were not in favour of it.

Mr. WADDY said, that all this chivalry was uncalled for. There was no desire to sacrifice the reporter at all. In the case of a slander uttered at a public meeting the mischief was done because the newspaper had a large circulation, and copies containing it went all over the country. Now, they were going to protect the proprietors, and the persons who were libelled would require to get at the man who spoke the libel. In order to do so, they were asked to get the proprietor to prove that the speech was fairly reported. But the reporter was the one witness who would be able to do this more readily than anybody else; he was the best evidence that could be produced, and, in practice, he is the very person who always gives evidence for his employer. If there were any danger to the reporter to be apprehended as the consequence of this Amendment, by all means let the necessary clause be inserted into the Bill to hold the reporter as harmless as the editor or the publisher; but let the injured man have the means of getting at the author of the libel.

Mr. LAWSON said, it was absolutely wrong to say that by this Amendment the reporter would not be touched. The Amendment required that his name and address should be given, and he (Mr. Lawson) said that to do this would be to destroy the central principle of newspaper organization. He contended that the anonymous character of reporting must be preserved, and he regarded the Amendment on that ground as wholly objectionable.

Mr. COMMINS said, that the whole discussion which had taken place on his Amendment was beside the mark. In all cases of the kind contemplated the reporter must be called, and that reporters were called was within his own knowledge. Defendants in these actions always had the reporter, with his notes in his hand, to prove that the report was a fair one, and now it was said that the practice was absolutely contrary to the principle of reporting. The reporter was the only person in the world who had the notes; he was bound to have them for his own protection, and he (Mr. Commins) could see no reason why the report should be withheld from the cognizance of the injured party.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 18, at the end, add "or shall privilege the publication of any matter not of public interest."—(*Sir Algernon Borthwick.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

DR. CAMERON said, however necessary these words might have been before they had struck out the words "or any other matter of public interest which is a fair subject of newspaper report," now that the clause dealt with the reports of certain specified meetings, he could not see how the introduction of the words proposed by the hon. Baronet could lead to anything else than increased litigation.

SIR HENRY JAMES said, he objected to the words "shall privilege the publication" in the Amendment.

MR. CHANCE said, he also objected to the words "shall privilege the publication," and suggested that they should be left out of the Amendment.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. KELLY said, they did not want to protect newspaper proprietors, nor were they called upon to do so, except when the matter of the report was of public interest and for the public benefit. He trusted, therefore, that the hon. Baronet would agree to add the words "for the public benefit."

Amendment proposed, to add, after the word "interest" in the preceding Amendment, the words "and which is for the public benefit."—(*Mr. Kelly.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. LAWSON said, that this Amendment dealt with ground that had already been gone over by the Committee, and was, therefore, inadmissible.

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK said, the words were pure surplusage; the wording of his Amendment being ample, in his opinion, to secure the object in view.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER said, if he had seen the Amendment of the hon. Baronet before, he should have objected to it in the form in which it appeared in the Paper. By the terms of the Amendment they were asked to privilege the publication of any matter of public interest. He never had any intention whatever of protecting the publication of anything on the ground that it was interesting to the public. He should, therefore, be bound to resist any attempt to cut down the condition that privilege should only be extended to matter published for the public benefit. So far as he was concerned, the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Camberwell carried out his intention.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said, it had been pointed out that there was a tendency in the Bill to extend the privileges of newspaper proprietors and editors, so that they might take hold of almost everything, and plead that it was published in the public interest. The Committee ought distinctly to know whether hon. Gentlemen who objected to the addition of the words understood the terms "of public interest" and "for the public benefit" to be synonymous. They were certainly not so in newspaper work, and, therefore, he thought that the words "for the public benefit" should be added.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he hoped the hon. Baronet would not give way, and insert the words "public benefit." The object was to protect such matter as fairly concerned the public interest; but, by introducing the words "public benefit," they would place editors at the mercy of any person who chose to bring an action, and say that, although the subject might be of public interest, it was not for the public benefit that it should be published. He should be very sorry to have to prove to a mixed jury that all the statements made at a public meeting were for the benefit of the public. Many hon. Members would be inclined to think that much of what was said at public meetings was not for the public benefit, and surely it was not wise to make the reporter the censor of the speeches delivered. All he could say was, that if he had to go through the speeches and say that so much was for the public benefit, and so much not, he would have to strike his pen through three-fourths of them. Some speeches had been delivered very recently in that House the reports of which were certainly not for the public benefit, but it would be unfair to make the reporter the judge of their fitness.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, he thought it right to point out, that when he voted for the repeal of the section of the Act of 1881, he made the distinct statement that he did so on the understanding that words were to be inserted to show that protection was given only in the case of matter published for the public benefit.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.) said, he would point out that, by Lord Campbell's Act, it was no defence that a libel was true, unless it was for the public benefit that such libel should be published. He did not see why, if they had the words "public benefit" in an Act of Parliament on a cognate subject, they should not have them in this Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) the following Amendment made:—In page 2, at the end, add—

"Provided that nothing in this Act shall authorize the publication of any blasphemous, indecent, or scandalous matter."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Howell.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, that it would be perfectly competent to deal with the clauses on the Paper on Report, and he would suggest that the Committee go on for the remaining quarter of an hour at their disposal.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (where defendant in action for libel has raised plea under Section 2 of 6 & 7 *Vict.* c. 96, only special damage to be recovered in certain cases. 6 & 7 Vict. 96 s. 2.).

On the Motion of Mr. KELLY, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, line 25, to leave out the word "actual" and the word "gross."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.) said, that the clause provided that where the defendant in an action for libel had raised a plea under the 2nd section of the 6 & 7 *Vict.* c. 96, only special damage could be recovered from him. That was to say, special damage only could be recovered after the passing of this Act, where the defendant chose to publish an apology, even without paying money into Court, when the plea was that there was no malice. But take what was a very ordinary case. A libel might be published of a most defamatory and cruel character with reference to a man. In 99 such cases out of 100, it could not be proved that special damage had been sustained; but, at the same time, everyone of common sense must know that the individual's reputation had been seriously impaired, although it could not be proved that any damage had been suffered. It was actually proposed that, under this clause, the newspaper proprietor, having cast the foulest aspersions without malice and scattered them all over the country, upon inserting an apology, was to give the injured individual no sort of compensation whatever because he could not prove special damage. He (Mr. Reid) ventured to say there had been a considerable amount of legislation in favour of newspapers, for the very wise and proper purpose of protecting them; but no one had ever made such a suggestion as that. It was competent now, under the Act referred to, to make an apology and pay an adequate sum into Court, and the whole object of the present clause was to dispense with the necessity of making pecuniary indemnity. The framers of the Bill were prepared to swallow their pride by making an apology; but they wanted to get off the pecuniary compensation by which the apology had now to be accompanied. It was very much to be regretted, in his opinion, that such a proposal should have been made, and he could not help thinking that the draftsman was responsible, because he was sure the hon. Baronet (Sir Algernon Borthwick) would not have presented such a clause to the House if he had been aware of its effect.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.) said, the point raised by the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries was a very important one, and, in order to give time for consideration, he thought that Progress should now be reported.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, that at present the law stood thus:—A man must pay money into Court at the same time that he made his apology, and the question to be considered was, whether it was or was not desirable to alter the law in regard to cases in which no special damage had been sustained. It was unfortunate that his hon. and learned Friend had not raised that question on the earlier lines of the Bill, because there was a middle course well worthy of consideration. It was a question whether it would not be well to make it incumbent on the newspaper proprietor to pay money into Court to meet general damages, leaving special damages to be recovered. He made these remarks to assist the Committee to come to a conclusion, and it was for the Committee to decide whether there should be an alteration of the wording or not.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.) said, he was not at all sure that the framers of the clause had in their minds the technical meaning attached to the words "special damage." In giving general damages in an action for libel, the jury took into consideration that the character of a man had suffered; but in case of special damage it had to be proved that a man had suffered loss directly traceable to the libel in question. He thought it would be impossible in cases of the most grievous libel to prove that, except in the case of small tradesmen who had lost custom. How could a gentleman or a lady prove special damage in the case of words which might constitute a most gross libel? He thought, therefore, it would be better to allow the law to remain as it was at present.

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK (Kensington, S.) said, there had been an action against *The Globe* newspaper in the case of a person named Colledge, in which the plaintiff recovered £1,000; he then went on to prosecute a number of other newspapers, and recovered, he believed, altogether about £7,000. Surely it was necessary that there should be protection against proceedings of that kind.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL said, his answer to the hon. Baronet was, that such cases as he had referred to appeared to be dealt with by Clause 6, which gave power to the defendant to give certain evidence in mitigation of damages.

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK said, that in the cases referred to, all the newspapers sued might have pleaded that they acted without prejudice.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, he thought the effect of the clause had not been quite appreciated. He contended that if it were carried it would have a very serious effect in respect of costs, because the person bringing the action would have to go through the whole process at his own expense. That seemed to be a very unfair proposal.

It being half an hour after Five of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee to sit again upon *Friday*.

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY BILL.

(*Mr. Bryce, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Jacob Bright, Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr. Whitley, Sir Lyon Playfair, Mr. Francis Powell.*)

[BILL 198.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Exemption from Mortmain Act of Victoria University).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said, he hoped they would be allowed to proceed with the Bill.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Extension of privileges to graduates).

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 23, to leave out the words "or any regulation of any public authority."—(*Sir Albert Rollit.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. BRYCE said, he hoped the hon. Gentleman would not persevere with his Amendment, when he told him that he had an Amendment to move at the end of the clause to deal with the question of privilege and exemptions.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, to add, at the end of the Clause, "Provided, that the exemptions and privileges herein mentioned shall not include exemptions and privileges conferred by any regulations of any Public Authority for the time being on other than the Victoria University."—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford) said, with that restriction he was prepared to accept the clause, the terms of which, as they stood, were, in his opinion, too wide.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Friday.*

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS ACT (1866) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 161.]

(*Mr. Dugdale, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Curzon, Mr Dixon, Mr. Mark Stewart.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 31st May.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Cause 2 (29 & 30 Vict. c. 117, c. 14. Youthful offenders may be sent to certified reformatory schools without the imposition of a term of imprisonment).

On the Motion of Mr. DUGDALE, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 13, leave out the second "in."

MR. DUGDALE (Warwickshire, Nuneaton) said, he proposed to move a further Amendment, to enable Justices of the Peace, where a child had been sent for admission to any reformatory, if no vacancy in such reformatory was found within seven days, to determine within 14 days where the convicted child should be sent.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 24, to leave out all the words after "any" to end of Clause, and insert the words "Justice of the Peace acting in and for the petty sessional division of the county or in and for the borough where the offence has been committed,"—(*Mr. Dugdale,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) said, the Government were preparing to frame a Bill to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commissioners on Reformatory Schools dealing with this particular point. On the present occasion, therefore, he must reserve very large liberty of action to the Government. He thought, however, his hon. and learned Friend's Amendment was an improvement of the law, and, as far as he was concerned, he was willing to agree to it.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he thought the Government ought to state definitely what was its opinion on a matter of this kind. In order that the House might have an opportunity of ascertaining the opinion of the Government, he would move that Progress be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, if the right hon. Gentleman had paid him the compliment of attending to his statement, he would have understood that the Government did approve the general principle of the Bill. Their consent to the second reading, of course, involved that approval.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, it was waste of time to discuss any Amendment to the Bill, if the Government seriously intended to bring in another measure. Would it not be better to discuss the whole question *de novo* when the Government Bill was before them?

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he entirely disclaimed having misunderstood the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stuart-Wortley). He had understood him perfectly. They were now settling the details of a Bill, and the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department said—"I propose to reserve all consideration of details to the future."

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Friday.*

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC [SALARIES, &c.].—REPORT.

Order for Consideration of Report read.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) said, he objected to the Report being now considered.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.), said, he must ask the hon. Member not to persist in his objection.

MR. CHANCE: No, Sir; I will accede to no appeal.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, that the Order had been placed first on Monday's Business Paper, in order that an opportunity might be given for discussion upon it, and that opportunity was not then taken. It was simply a formal Resolution, without which the Bill relating to the subject could not be proceeded with; and, therefore, he hoped that the hon. Member would withdraw his opposition.

MR. CHANCE: I shall do no such thing.

Report *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

QUESTIONS.

LAW OF LIMITED LIABILITY—LEGISLATION.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he can state what the Government proposes to do in respect to the amendment of the Law relating to Limited Liability?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.), in reply, said, that his right hon. Friend the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) authorized him to state that there was every reason to hope that the Bill on that subject would be introduced in "another place" in a short time.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—STATEMENT.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he might take the opportunity of intimating that the Leader of the House would to-morrow move that when the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill was put down for Tuesday and Friday the House should meet at 2 o'clock.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 12) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to the Improvement Act District of Bingley, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 283.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 7th June, 1888.

MINUTES.]—SAT FIRST IN PARLIAMENT—The Lord Berwick, after the death of his uncle.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Committee*—Liability of Trustees (111); Universities (Scotland) (*re-comm.*) (128-133).

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS — *First Reading*— Metropolitan Police * (134); Pier and Harbour * (135); Public Health (Scotland) (Denny and Dunipace Water) * (136); Water * (137).

Second Reading—Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough, &c.) * (104); Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse) * (105).

Committee — Report — Local Government (Ireland) (Dublin Markets) * (85).

Withdrawn — Oyster and Mussel Fisheries (West Loch Tarbert) * (126).

WIMBLEDON—THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION.—OBSERVATIONS.

LORD ORANMORE and BROWNE said, that on a former day he had given Notice of his intention to ask several Questions to-morrow with reference to the severance of the National Rifle Association from Wimbledon. He should not, however, act upon the Notice, as the matter to which the Questions referred was, he understood, still under consideration. He wished to guard himself against any misapprehension by stating that he had not the smallest sympathy with the remarks that had lately appeared in an illustrated paper with reference to the illustrious Duke the Commander-in-Chief. On the contrary, he considered these remarks most unjust and ungenerous.

ZANZIBAR—ITALIAN DEMANDS OF TERRITORY.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I wish to ask whether the noble Marquess at the head of the Government can give the House any information with regard to the unfortunate difficulty that has arisen between the Italian Consul and the Sultan of Zanzibar?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, the information which we possess is exclusively telegraphic. The incident has come upon us somewhat suddenly, and I do not think that we know very much more than appears in the newspapers. The Italian Consul states that he has suffered an affront at the hands of the Sultan of Zanzibar, and requires, as reparation for that affront, the cession of certain territory called Kismayu, on the mainland. He further states that this territory was promised to the Italian Government by the Sultan. Both these allegations, I understand, are denied by the Sultan himself, and that is where the matter stands at the present moment. I see that the Italian Consul has lowered his flag.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS — INQUIRY INTO THE STANDING ORDERS.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY), in moving that the Notice of Motion for a Select Committee to inquire into the Standing Orders of the House, which stood in the name of the Lord Privy Seal, should have precedence over the other Business upon the Paper, pointed out that the first Order of the Day related to the University (Scotland) Bill, which was a Government measure. Therefore, his Motion amounted to no more than a proposal to substitute one Government Order for another. Thus private Members, who, by the way, were not as sensitive as many private Members were "elsewhere," could not oppose with justice the proposal which he submitted to the House.

Moved, "That the first and third paragraphs of standing Order No. XX. be suspended, and that the Lord Privy Seal's Motion have precedence of the Orders of the Day and Notice which stand before it."—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

LORD DENMAN said, he was opposed to the Motion on technical grounds.

EARL GRANVILLE said, he hoped the Motion of the noble Marquess would not meet wth serious opposition.

Motion *agreed to.*

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN): My Lords, I rise to move—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to examine and report upon those Standing Orders of this House which relate to the conduct of Public Business."

It is somewhat ominous that at the commencement of a discussion upon the Standing Orders of this House we should find it necessary to suspend one of the best known Rules of our Procedure. I can promise the House, however, that I shall not detain it any great length. It will be the more easy for me to abbreviate my speech, because the House has already had the opportunity on three occasions during the present Session of discussing its Rules of Procedure and its constitution. The first occasion arose on the Motion of the late Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (the Earl of Rosebery) for the appointment of a Committee to revise the constitution of this House, when it was thought by your Lordships that to appoint a Committee to consider so large and important a subject was a step which could not be taken with perfect safety. Another noble Lord (Stratheden and Campbell) on a subsequent occasion proposed a Motion for a Commission to inquire into the subject of the Standing Orders of this House. The view of the noble Lord, I understand, was that it was desirable that we should examine that subject with the assistance of some Members of the other House and of other gentlemen whom he thought qualified to join in the work of inquiry. That view also failed to commend itself to your Lordships. The third occasion was when my noble Friend behind me (the Earl of Dunraven), with characteristic independence and courage, brought forward a Bill embodying the various changes which he considered it was desirable to carry out in the constitution of this House. That Bill was fully debated before your Lordships on the Motion for second reading and was withdrawn. These discussions, if they did nothing else, revealed a considerable difference of opinion between those who had turned their attention to the subject of the constitution of the House. The noble Earl the late Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, at the conclusion of his speech, used the following expression:—

"He trusted that their Lordships would without further delay undertake the duty of repairing, renovating, and reconstructing their House."

Now, I believe that in the opinion of this House it is necessary and desirable to proceed without delay to repair and renovate this House, but I am not equally sure that we are prepared at this moment to undertake its complete reconstruction. Between the very divergent opinions upon this subject—the opinions of those who are in favour of abolishing the House of Lords as at present constituted, and, on the other hand, the opinions of those who think that there are no changes that can be carried out with propriety—I think that there are certain middle views upon which useful legislation can be founded and useful action taken. It is possible that it may be necessary to reconstruct this House at some future time; but in order to reconstruct you must first pull down, and before doing so I believe that it is the opinion of your Lordships that we ought to exhaust all measures of reform, repair, and renovation on and within the lines of the present constitution of the House. In reforming the House of Lords with a view to increase its efficiency I believe that we shall have to proceed on the lines indicated by the noble Earl opposite, who was once Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. In a speech during the debate on the Bill of my noble Friend behind me the noble Earl said that the reform of the House should be undertaken in a tentative, guarded, prudent, and careful manner. I believe the noble Earl on that occasion spoke the opinions of the majority of your Lordships. I believe that the ancient method of the inclined plane is the method best suited to the Assembly with which we have to deal. It is a method which we ought to prefer to the more violent methods of modern science. In accordance with this spirit the Prime Minister, in the debate on the Bill of my noble Friend, announced to the House the policy which the Government were prepared to pursue with reference to this question, and he said that he would be willing to introduce a measure to facilitate the entrance of Life Peers into your Lordships' House. He also stated that he would be prepared to bring in a measure to give power to this House—a power which we do not at present possess—to expel from our midst any of our Members who may have been convicted of offences rendering them in the opinion of all right-thinking men unworthy to sit in a House representing a branch of the Legislature. Those two matters will have to be dealt with by a measure which the Prime Minister will introduce before long. But there are besides many points connected with the procedure of this House which it will be necessary to deal with if we wish to treat the whole of this subject in a thorough and comprehensive manner. The Prime Minister intimated in his speech—and I believe we all agree with him—that the procedure of this House is open to considerable objection and requires renovation. It is with this view that I have given Notice of a Motion for a Committee to inquire into the subject of the Standing Orders of the House. I do not pretend for one minute that by a recasting of the Standing Orders you can remove all the objections that are entertained to the composition of the House and its constitution; but the speeches that have been made and the writings that have appeared during the last few months have convinced us that there are many matters which are not suitable for legislation, but which can and ought to be dealt with under the Standing Orders. Let me point to one difficulty that meets us upon the very threshold of the subject. I have found the utmost difficulty in ascertaining exactly the position of some of our Rules and regulations. They have grown up, some of them under prescriptive right, some of them by immemorial custom, and some of them exist on our Journals simply in the form of Resolutions. Others, again, occupy places in the book containing the Standing Orders. It would be much simpler and much more useful if the majority of the Resolutions which are passed by this House with reference to its proceedings could find a place among the Standing Orders. This is now far from being the practice in our House, although it is the practice in the other House. Let me refer, by way of example, to the question of the hour at which this House meets. Some few years ago a noble Lord moved that the House should meet for Public Business at half-past 4 o'clock instead of at half-past 5, and a Resolution was passed to that effect; but I cannot find that there is any Standing Order upon the subject. This shows how difficult it is to classify the Rules that regulate our Procedure, and to find the sanction under which those Rules have been established. Now, I propose to enumerate the chief complaints and criticisms which have been brought against the Procedure of this House, and to show that they constitute a justification for the appointment of a Committee such as that for which I now move.

The first and most important subject which can be dealt with under the Standing Orders is the quorum of this House. The late Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on both occasions of his bringing this subject before the House, dwelt at some length upon the utter inadequacy of the quorum of three, which, he believed, was held to be the quorum of our House. I cannot ascertain under what authority the quorum is fixed, but it does stand at as low a figure as three. The noble Earl gave us some amusing anecdotes illustrating the impropriety of a quorum being fixed at so low a figure. I do not propose to enumerate them, but I should like to tell the House what I believe to be the greatest inconvenience of so small a quorum and the strongest reason which exists for an alteration in our Rules in this respect. The greatest objection I conceive to be this—that it is quite possible that the House of Commons may have spent several weeks in the discussion and elaboration of a measure which it sends up to this House in a late period of the Session, and which it is in the power of this House to rèject by the votes of an unduly small number of Members of this House. I can find within recent years two instances of such a proceeding. In the year 1878, on the 5th of August, the Tenant Right (Ireland) Bill was brought up to this House, having been passed by the House of Commons. A Motion was made to read the Bill on that day three months, and a Division took place, consisting of 25 Non-Contents and eight Contents. In so small a Division as this the measure was rejected. A still worse case occurred last year on the 12th of August. The Agricultural Labourers' Holdings (Scotland) Bill, which had passed the House of Commons, was brought up to this House. On the Motion to go into Committee on the Bill there were nine Contents and nine Non-Contents. The Committee was, therefore, negatived, and the Bill was lost. I only give these two cases because they show a state of things against which it is our duty to guard. I will give some instances of smaller Divisions in this House. In August, 1867, in a Division there voted on the one side one and on the other side nine—total, 10. In the same month of the same year in a Division there voted on one side seven, on the other 11—total, 18. In 1868 in a Division on one side there voted 13, on the other side six—total, 19. In 1871 there voted in a Division on one side seven, on the other eight—total, 15. In 1879 in a Division on one side there were three, on the other 13—total, 16. In 1885 in a Division on one sidet here voted seven, and on the other six—total, 13. I do not want to found any very strong argument on these figures, but I do think they show that when we have a quorum such as that under which we perform our legislative duties it is possible that measures may be rejected by a very inadequate number of votes. I commend that subject to the attention of the Committee if your Lordships should grant it. Then, with regard to the question of the attendance of your Lordships in this House, I approach a very difficult and, perhaps, a very delicate matter. My noble Friend behind me, in the debate a few weeks ago, suggested that a minimum of attendance by your Lordships at the debates in this House should constitute the right to vote. Whether your Lordships would agree to that I do not know, but of this I am sure, that it is within the power of the House, though perhaps some of your Lordships may not be aware of it, to enforce the attendance of its Members not only at Committees, but also at any other time during the progress of legislative Business in this House. Whether or not measures should be adopted to enforce a better attendance I know not, but undoubtedly the subject is one which should receive the attention of the Committee. Then my noble Friend the late Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs called the attention of the House to the functions of the Lord Speaker, or rather to his want of functions. My noble Friend who introduced a Bill on the subject of Procedure in this House also told us that the want of authority by our Speaker paralyzed the energies of the Members of this House and prevented a large number of able Members from taking part in our debates. I have never been able to understand why the Chairman of the House of Lords should not exercise the rights and enjoy the authority exercised and enjoyed by any chairman of any meeting throughout the whole country. It is a fact that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack does possess the authority and the right to call Peers to Order, although I have heard that doubted. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] I find on page 17 of the Standing Orders the following Rule:—

> "If any Lord has occasion to speak with another Lord while the House is sitting they are to retire to the Prince's Chamber and not converse in the space behind the Woolsack, or else the Lord Speaker is to call them to Order, and, if necessary, to stop the business in agitation."

Thus the Lord Speaker has authority to call us to Order, and, therefore, he has authority to regulate our proceedings, at all events, in some respects. If that is the case, why should he not be allowed to select those who are to address the House in their turn? My noble Friend opposite, I think, more than once called attention to the inconvenient and almost unseemly character of these contests which occasionally take place between noble Lords in their natural desire and ambition to address your Lordships. Two noble Lords gave us an excellent illustration of this difficulty during the last debate upon our Procedure, and I cannot help hoping that if we do revise our Standing Orders in this respect, our Speaker will, in future, have the right to call upon any noble Lord to address the House, instead of its being left to one of the Leaders of either side to make the Motion that one of two speakers should be heard. Then there was the subject, and it was one of great importance, of resignation by life Peers of their office and *status* of Peers. My noble Friend opposite alluded to this question in his able and eloquent speech on a former occasion. He said that in 1678 a Resolution was passed by the House affirming that no Peer could divest himself of his Peerage, or that, in other words, it was impossible that any Peer should resign his seat and his post in this House; and my noble Friend argued that, inasmuch as it was in the power of the House to pass this Resolution, by the same reasoning it must be within the power of the House to pass a Resolution affirming the right which they had previously denied. I am bound to say that I cannot quite coincide with the view of my noble Friend. But let me say that in the Standing Orders there is a Resolution that no Peer can take his seat until he has attained the age of 21, and if the reasoning of my noble Friend is correct, it would be equally impossible for us to assert that a Peer should not take his seat until he was 25 years of age, which is an Amendment I have heard suggested by many who take an interest in this question. I have mentioned these matters because I think that when we come to examine into the Standing Orders we shall find that we must be very careful in the Resolutions which we place upon the Paper, and we must take into view the analogy which will be drawn from any Resolutions which we may so insert. My noble Friend opposite suggested in the course of his speech that Joint Committees of both Houses should sit to consider the state of Business in each House, for the purpose of relieving the congestion of our House, and the inactivity of the other by a consideration of the Bills to be brought forward in both. That was a very important suggestion; but in looking over the Standing Orders of this House I could not help being struck with the fact that the regulations to guide and control our proceedings when we are sitting in conference or on Joint Committees with the other House are such as to discourage to a very high degree any such negotiations between the two Houses. No language of mine can, I think, sufficiently well describe the inconvenience of the Standing Orders affecting our proceedings in conjunction with the other House of Parliament. The House will bear with me if I read what is the present condition of our Rules on the subject of conferences with the other House—

> "The place of meeting with the Lower House upon conference is usually the Painted Chamber, where they are commonly before we come and expecting our leisure. We are to come in thither in a whole body, and not some Lords scattering before the rest, which both takes from the gravity of the Lords and besides may hinder the Lords from taking their proper places. We are to sit there and to be covered, and they are at no Committee or conference even either to be covered or to sit down in our presence, unless it be some infirm person, and that by connivance in a corner out of sight, to sit but not to be covered."

That, undoubtedly, does seem absurd and a mere laughing matter; but I cannot help thinking that if we are to encourage, as I hope we always shall encourage, joint action on the part of both Houses of Parliament, it is impossible to keep on our Standing Orders such a Rule as that which I have just read, and I trust that the Committee which will revise our Standing Orders will once for all obliterate it from our Rules. Then there are many other small matters which affect the dignity and convenience of our debates. There is, for instance, the question which was also mentioned by my noble Friend as to the difficulty which arises from our not being allowed to name each other in debate. That is a small matter, but it affects the convenience of the House. There is likewise the question of the hours of sitting, which I have previously mentioned, and also that of whether there should be an adjournment at a certain hour for dinner as some have suggested. There is another question of some importance—namely, that of the reporting in this House and the arrangements which may have to be made to facilitate the obtaining of better reports of our proceedings. I have the honour to be Chairman of a Committee of both Houses on this subject, which has not yet concluded its deliberations, and therefore I cannot now refer to the matter in any detail; but, if it is thought necessary that an official report should be made of the proceedings in Parliament, it would probably be found requisite that the reporters should be allowed to come within the sacred precincts in which we sit, and in that case the Standing Orders would have to be altered. Then, if the Prime Minister introduces and succeeds in passing his Bill to enable us to expel any Member of this House who is thought unworthy to sit in it, an alteration of the Standing Orders will be necessary in regard to that subject. I have, my Lords, now enumerated the chief points with which the Committee that we desire to appoint would deal. As I have said before, the policy of the Government is to repair and renovate within the lines of the present constitution of the House, and I believe that in the Bill which my noble Friend will present, and in the action of the Committee which I trust your Lordships will appoint, remedies will be found for many of the criticisms which are passed upon this House. I will say also for this Motion that it does not compete with and is not antagonistic to any more ambitious schemes which we have heard suggested in various quarters, and which I do not believe the action of this Committee will in any sense prejudice. It is designed to meet many reasonable objections, to remedy obvious defects, and to disarm some legitimate criticism. That being the scope and object of the Committee which I beg to move, I think I am entitled to express the hope that noble Lords on both sides of the House in dealing with this question will co-operate with the Government in the honest attempt which they are making so to improve the Procedure of this Assembly as to maintain the traditions and to enhance the influence and authority of the House of Lords.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to examine and report upon those Standing Orders of the House which relate to the conduct of public business."—(*The Lord Privy Seal.*)

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, although I do not rise to offer the slightest objection to the appointment of the Committee which has been proposed by the Lord Privy Seal, I am not perfectly sure that I should not have preferred that he should not have given his reasons for his Motion, but should have simply moved it. The first ground which he adduced for the appointment of the Committee I confess I did not think was a very strong one. He wishes to change some obsolete and ridiculous Standing Order in regard to maintaining a formal superiority for Members of this House over Members of the other House when they meet in conference. With respect to the question of a quorum, the noble Earl certainly made as much as he possibly could of that point; but, notwithstanding the instances which he quoted of Divisions taken in this House when very small numbers were present, I am not aware that any great practical inconvenience has arisen from that cause; while, on the other hand, if a quorum consisting of a considerable number of Peers were adopted, enormous practical inconvenience might result, more especially for any Liberal Government which might be in Office. With regard to his suggestion as to the authority of the Lord Chancellor in this House, I am entirely opposed to it in principle. The noble Earl referred to the powers of the Speaker of the House of Commons; but it should be remembered that the Speaker is elected by the House of Commons, and is considered to be a perfectly neutral person and perfectly impartial. On the other hand, the Lord Chancellor is a political officer, and is generally, if not always, a Member of the Government; and that gives him a political character. Although I am sure that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, like his immediate predecessors, would wish to be perfectly impartial, yet it is impossible that on any vexed question of a Party nature suddenly arising, the decision which he gave might not be supposed at least to have been influenced by political or Party feeling. Then, again, I have great doubts whether we should extend the age of admission to this House from 21 to 25 years. I do not think that would be an advantage. I think that every encouragement should be given to young Peers to come into the House at 21, in order that they may be allowed as early as possible to become acquainted with Public Business. With regard to the practice of Members of the House referring to each other by their titles, the same objection applies as in "another place," that it might possibly add a little to the direct acerbity of debate. The Committee might do some service by removing Standing Orders that are obsolete, and by classifying the remainder, but I hope that in other respects it will do more good than the speech of the noble Earl has foreshadowed.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, I think that the Motion might have met with a somewhat less ungracious reception from the noble Earl opposite. It is not to be expected that those who are in favour of this Committee should all hold exactly the same views as to the matters which will come before it for consideration. The noble Earl naturally differs from my noble Friend as to some of the points that will come before the Committee; but, while we should be glad to avoid that melancholy result as much as possible, I cannot admit that that is an argument against appointing the Committee. Undoubtedly, there are some matters in the Standing Orders of this House which will require very little alteration, but there are others which ought to be put upon a more reasonable footing than they are at present. Some of these points are of considerable importance. Two of them are of great importance—namely, the question of the quorum and the question of securing the attendance of noble Lords during the debates. There are, I think, other matters for consideration, as to the apportionment of time, especially in view of the circumstance, which appears now to have become permanent, that we have to wait very often a considerable period while the House of Commons is not doing its work, until that House sends up measures, and we have to approach a vast mass of accumulated Business at an advanced period of the Session. It might, therefore, be considered whether some possible alterations of detail in our modes of proceeding would not make it more easy to meet that difficulty. All that I intend to urge is that I do not think we should necessarily abstain from appointing this Committee, either because we may be unable to find solutions in which all will agree, or because the alterations to be made are not of first-rate and revolutionary importance. We do not undertake, as I have had the honour of saying to your Lordships before, to make any startling or dramatic changes in the character or constitution of this House. We wish, as the noble Earl has said, that any reform we attempt should be made tentatively, believing that the work will be done better if it is done slowly and by small steps, if we are careful never to depart from the original lines which the traditions of this House have brought down to us, and if we are careful also to avoid conforming to a mere passing and accidental impulse, remembering that the process of improvement ought to be constantly going on, and ought not to be the subject of sudden, large, and sensational steps. I hope that will be the spirit that will always animate your Lordships' House, from whatever side the Government may be constituted; and I have very little doubt that if we address ourselves in that spirit to the task before us we shall materially and sensibly add to the influence of this House, and to the value of the services which it is capable of rendering to the country.

Motion *agreed to.*

LIABILITY OF TRUSTEES BILL.

(*The Lord Herschell.*)

(NO. 24.) COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order).

Clauses 1 to 6, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Trustee may insure buildings).

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, it appeared to him that some Amendments were necessary in the drafting of the clause. He expressed a doubt whether the Statute of Limitations should apply to cases of gross negligence on the part of trustees, and whether in that respect the clause had not gone too far.

LORD HERSCHELL said, he should be willing to accept any necessary alterations in the drafting of the clause, but he must dissent from the view taken by the Lord Chancellor in reference to the application of the Statute of Limitations to the cases of negligent trustees, who had not been guilty of fraud. He would, however, carefully consider any Amendment which the Lord Chancellor might place upon the Paper with regard to the point.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 8 (Statute of limitation may be pleaded by trustees) *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Extent of Act's application).

LORD HALSBURY said, he might mention that the Rule Committee of Judges had power to settle the list of investments for funds in Court, and that it might be desirable to await the determination of the list upon which the Judges were then engaged, and which might render the greater part of the clause unnecessary. With regard to the Sub-section (f), he thought it would be better to include all the inscribed stocks of Colonial Governments, so as to avoid applications to the Courts, which were most expensive to the parties and liable to do injury to any securities which might not be approved.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, he viewed the matter from the point of view of a layman and not from the legal point of view. He stated, with all respect, that in this matter of dealing with trust property lay as well as legal opinion should be considered. He thought that the Judges had been somewhat extreme—he might almost say superstitious—in the restraints they had imposed on investment. Although it was true that that caution on the part of the Courts might here and there be of advantage in the interests of safety, yet at the same time he thought that some trusts were exposed to loss. He should, therefore, be disposed to say that where there was reasonable ground for considering the investment to be safe, they ought to think, not only of the few persons affected by the investment if it should fail, but of the persons who would be injured if they were excluded from the benefit of it. He protested against the doctrine that they ought to be guided by the opinion of the Judges exclusively in this matter. He was in favour of very considerable latitude in the investment of trust funds, because he believed that very great benefit would accrue, especially in these times, when persons could not afford to sacrifice the margin of advantageous investment.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY was understood to refer to the difficulties surrounding the action of trustees and to generally approve the view just stated by the noble Marquess. He expressed the hope that nothing would be done to discourage investment in Colonial Stock.

LORD HERSCHELL said, he was disposed to share the lay view of the noble Marquess. He was most unwilling to leave this matter to a general order of the Courts. It was a matter in which both Houses of Parliament were just as able to judge as the Judges; and, therefore, he should prefer the determination of the question by Parliament. Sub-section (f) arose in this way. It was in the present form in the Scotch Investment Act of 1884. The Scotch trustees had been empowered to invest in Colonial Stocks; and, therefore, it was thought desirable that the English trustees should possess the same power. Then the question had to be considered whether power could be given to invest in inscribed stock of every British Colony without any control. This applied not only to existing inscribed stock, but to those stocks which might hereafter be inscribed. After full consideration of the question, the Committee of the House came to the conclusion that they could not recommend unlimited power to invest in every inscribed stock of every British Colony. Then there was the further question whether it was possible to lay down any guiding line which should enable a distinction to be drawn between those stocks which would be safe and those which would not. The Committee could not see their way to suggest any method of discriminating in the matter.

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses *agreed to.*

The Report of the Amendment to be received on *Tuesday* the 19*th instant.*

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(*The Marquess of Lothian.*)

(NO. 47.) COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order).

Clauses 1 and 2 *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Definitions).

The Earl of ROSEBERY moved to insert the following definition of "affiliation":—

"'Affiliation' for the purposes of this Act shall mean such a connection between an existing University and College as shall be entered into by their mutual consent, under conditions approved by the Commissioners, or, after the determination of their powers, by the Scottish Universities Committee of the Privy Council."

He thought if the noble Marquess accepted his Amendment it would greatly simplify the Bill, and get rid of the words "added to" and "addition," which were particularly bare and meagre.

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (The Marquess of Lothian) said, he was quite willing to accept the Amendment of the noble Earl. He was afraid, however, that the word "affiliation" had two or three meanings and was not quite understood. He preferred the word "addition." The object he had in view in leaving out the words "affiliation and incorporation," and any other form of union, and inserting the words "added to," was to give the widest possible meaning to the term employed.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he hoped the noble Earl would retain the word "affiliation," because it was a term which they all knew quite well, and one which was used in connection with the Universities. The word "addition," on the other hand, meant anything in the world. He was glad the noble Marquess was willing to accept the Amendment of his noble Friend.

Lord WATSON thought the Amendment made the meaning of the word "affiliation" perfectly clear.

The Duke of ARGYLL said, he must confess that he did not see any objection to the Bill as it originally stood.

The Marquess of LOTHIAN said, he was quite willing to accept the word "affiliation."

Lord NAPIER and ETTRICK said, that if the word "affiliation" was to be substituted throughout for the words "added to," he should withdraw his proposal to substitute "associated with" instead of "added to."

Amendment *agreed to.*

On the Motion of The Marquess of Lothian, the following Amendment made:—In page 2, at end of Clause 3, add—

"'College,' where by the context it does not apply to a college presently forming part of any university, means any institution which may be added as a college to such university by the Commissioners, or after the expiry of their powers by the university court under this Act.

"'Governing body' means a body constituted on a permanent footing, and charged, by Act of Parliament, Royal Charter, deed of endowment and trust, or otherwise, with the management and administration of any fund devoted to higher education.

"'Students Representative Council' means a students' representative council in any university, constituted in such manner as shall be fixed by the Commissioners under this Act."

Amendment *moved,*

After the word "institution" omit the words "which may be added as a College to such University by the Commissioners, or after the expiry of their powers by the University Court under this Act," in order to insert the following—"established on a permanent footing for the purpose of teaching the higher branches of education, and which shall be sufficiently endowed, in the opinion of the Commissioners, and after the expiry of their powers by the University Committee.—(*The Lord Watson.*)

The Marquess of LOTHIAN said, that so far as he understood the Amendment he was prepared to accept it, but he should not like to do so off-hand. Therefore he would state what he proposed to do on Report.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he would appeal to the noble Marquess to allow the Amendment to be inserted now, and, if necessary, it could be dealt with on Report.

The Marquess of LOTHIAN assented to the Amendment.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Commencement of Act).

Clause 5 (University Courts).

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he should like to refer to this clause.

Sub-section (*c*) provided "the head of each College presently existing in or which may hereafter be affiliated to or incorporated with the University" might hereafter be added to the University Court. He could not see that it was necessary that the head of the College should be part of the University Court. Objection had been taken that these courts were too bulky, and he thought it would be a good commencement to omit these words and leave it entirely to the Commissioners under Sub-section 1 to add such number of the Governing Body of any College affiliated to the university as they might see fit. He moved the omission of Sub-section (*c*).

Amendment *moved* to omit Sub-section (*c*).—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

Lord WATSON said, he quite agreed that this was a matter of very considerable importance, because the University Court would be a very unwieldly and cumbrous body, and it was obvious that if a great number of small Colleges took advantage of the provisions of the Bill, and if it was imperative that the head of each College should be a member of the Court, too many members would be added to the Courts in proportion to the University representatives. Although there was a difficulty in laying down any imperative rule, it would be wise to impose some reasonable limitation on the numbers who were to represent affiliated Colleges. Therefore it appeared to him to be necessary to make some alteration in the direction suggested by the noble Earl. It might be left to the Commissioners to fix the amount of representation, having regard to the proportion of the teachers and the number of their students as compared with the number of University students and teachers. He did not say the proportion should be precisely the same, because some Universities contained a very large number of students; but, at the same time, considering the nature of these bodies, he thought the representation should bear some proportion to the total number of the teachers and the students whom they brought in as affiliated to the University, and that should not only apply to their representation on the Court, but to the purposes for which they sat.

The Earl of ROSEBERY said, that it was a very great pity that, in order to conciliate the various claims to sit in the Courts, these bodies had been swollen to a very unwieldly size. He confessed that, where they were giving such very large powers to the Commissioners, he thought it would have been a simpler solution of the matter to leave the composition of the University Court to the Commission. But as a different course had been taken it appeared to him that Sub-section 1 more than covered what was put forward by Sub-section (*c*). In many cases the head of a College would not be engaged in teaching. He had in his mind one great College where the head would be in that position, and he would be forced to be a member of the University Court, probably against his will. He would also remind the Committee that the Bill gave a certain fixed proportion to the great University on the University Court, and that the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow might double their classes without having any power to increase their representatives; while, on the other hand, each small College might have two representatives, and have at least one. So that the result might be that the affiliated Colleges would altogether swamp a University in the University Court. He would, therefore, suggest to the noble Marquess the following Amendment, which, however, he would not move—

> "That the Commissioners should arrange for the due representation on the University Courts of affiliated colleges, having regard to the relative number of the colleges, of the teaching staffs, of students proceeding to graduation, and of the nature of the connection proposed to be established in each case."

They must remember that affiliation, according to the definition that was to be inserted, and the various forms of union contemplated in the Bill, covered a very great variety of possible relations between the Colleges and the University. They might have a union for purely graduating purposes, and an affiliation of a character approaching incorporation. But under this clause there was no discrimination with regard to the representation, and he thought that the Universities had a fair claim to have their ase reconsidered by the Government.

The Marquess of LOTHIAN said, he was quite willing to admit that grave matters for consideration had been raised, and suggested the postponement of the Amendment to the Report stage.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he was willing to postpone his Amendment to the Report stage.

The Marquess of LOTHIAN remarked that the object of the Government in framing the constitution of the Courts was that they thought it was desirable, as far as possible, to make the numbers statutory. That number might be infringed by Sub-section 2. He still thought that it was desirable that the Court should be constituted by the Bill as far as possible, but was willing to consider the omission of the sub-section under consideration.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

The Earl of ROSEBERY asked for the reason why it was proposed to give the Crown the right to appoint two assessors? He could see no reason for it. He begged to move the sub-section giving that power.

Amendment *moved,* In page 2, line 32, to leave out sub-section (*h*).—(*The Earl of Rosebery*).

The Marquess of LOTHIAN explained that the Government thought it desirable that the Crown should have the right to nominate as members of the Court men of eminence in science, art, or business. It was obvious that such men would be of the greatest possible advantage to a University Court, and there appeared to be no other easy manner of obtaining the advantage of their assistance than that proposed in the clause.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he thought it was undesirable to introduce into the Court any members nominated by the Crown. The Court was to manage the business of the University, and it would be of no use to have members on it who did not regularly attend. If the eminent men referred to by the noble Marquess resided in the place where the University was, they would most likely be nominated by the Senatus, for they would in all probability be connected with the University. If they resided elsewhere, he did not think they would be of much use. As to redressing the balance of parties, he thought it would be a very great mistake for the Crown to nominate any members for that purpose. He moved the omission of the sub-section.

The Marquess of LOTHIAN said, he could not accept the Amendment. He should have thought that the noble Earl would have presumed that the Crown would only nominate members who could attend the meetings of the Court. He was not thinking of political parties in this matter, or in connection with the Bill; and he, therefore, did not think that the Crown nominees would have anything to do with Party politics.

The Duke of ARGYLL said, that considering the enormous power they were placing by statute in the hands of the Court, it was of importance that it should be a body of great weight, including a variety of representatives, and appointed by a number of authorities. Those who administered the Imperial affairs of the country would generally appoint fit persons to take part in the proceedings of the University Court, and he did not view with any alarm the fact of the Crown appointing two assessors.

The Earl of ROSEBERY said, he was not at all re-assured by the explanations. He looked upon these Crown assessors as amiable superfluities, and he failed to find out any reason, good, bad, or indifferent, for their existence. It was admitted that the smaller the body, consistently with due regard to representation, to conduct business, the more efficiently was the business likely to be done. This Court was an inconveniently large body. It almost approached the size of an overgrown modern Cabinet—than which body there could be nothing more ridiculous for the transaction of business. He wished to ask the further question. Where were these superfluous representatives of science and art to be found? Look at Edinburgh. He wanted to know where the representatives of science and art were to be found outside the University? Were they to be found in Glasgow? There was one perhaps in Aberdeen, the ex-principal, but he did not think it likely that the Crown would appoint him. Perhaps there were at St. Andrew's some persons who were prepared to undertake the duty of Crown assessors. If these eminent gentlemen were only to swoop down on great occasions, they would disturb and not redress any balance of parties.

Lord NAPIER and ETTRICK said, he could not disguise from himself that the presence of two eminent and distinguished persons selected by the Government for the time might be of essential use to the University. The Scotch Universities owed a great deal of their financial resources to the Government, and they might in the future wish to obtain additional resources, and these two representatives of the Government on the Court might be useful intermediates between the Government and the University. The balance of advantage was on the side of the proposals in the Bill.

LORD WATSON said, the noble Lord who had just spoken seemed to forget entirely the scheme of this Bill. Great part of the work of a University Court was of an ordinary business character—the administration of property and Revenue, and questions of teaching and discipline—and whenever the Court performed an important Act requiring an ordinance, they necessarily came into contact with the Universities Committee, without whose sanction that act would have no effect. He believed that the men chosen as members of the University Court would be of sufficient mark and ability to give good advice on all questions that would come before them. There would be plenty of them to do the work, and they would not want assistance.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL said, he had not put any Amendments on the Paper, and did not wish to move any which might be adverse to the opinion of his noble Friend; but he wished to point out that his noble Friend had put most inconvenient restriction upon the power of the Rector in the appointment of his assessors. The Rectors in the Scottish Universities were generally political persons. It was one of the traditional privileges of the Scottish students, and one which they very highly prized, that they elected the Rectors of the Universities, and they made it to a large extent notoriously a political matter. There was a Conservative Committee, a Liberal Committee, and possibly a Home Rule Committee, too, in connection with each University. Politics, fortunately, did not always guide the students in their choice. They sometimes chose eminent men in politics and in literature, and very often they chose men of general eminence in the country, but almost invariably they chose men who could not practically take part in the work of the University. Therefore, the Rector came to be represented by his assessors. His noble Friend put the Rector under this extraordinary Parliamentary statutory direction—"The Rector may, before he appoints an assessor, confer with his students." By the insertion of these words they put the Rector in a most invidious position. By law, the Rector had the right, once he was elected by the students, to appoint his assessor, and he almost invariably appointed a good man. But if they compelled him to consult the students, he would he placed in an exceedingly inconvenient and invidious position. The students were eminently capable of deciding upon a man of eminence as Rector, but he did not think they were so well able to choose a good man of business for the working purposes of the University. He would, therefore, suggest that the words he had quoted should be struck out, so that the Rectors should be left free, as they were now, to choose their assessors.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, he was not prepared to accept the Amendment.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, he must press his Amendment to a Division.

On Question, "That the sub-section proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause?" Their Lordships *divided:*—Contents 38; Not Contents 18: Majority 20.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Powers of the University Court).

Amendment *moved,*

In page 5, line 10, leave out "but without the power of alienating, except on application to and under the sanction of the Court of Session."—(*The Earl of Rosebery.*)

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY, in moving that the sub-section giving the University Court generally all the powers necessary for the management and administration of the revenue and property of the University should be amended by leaving out the words—

> "But without the power of alienating, except on application to and under the sanction of the Court of Session,"

said, the omission of these words would rather give larger powers to the University Court in respect to its property. He thought the University Courts, powerfully constituted as they were, more especially with the addition of Crown assessors, would be amply sufficient for the regulation of the property of the Universities. It would only be fair in a case where no jobbery could be suspected that they should have the largest powers conferred upon them.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, he would accept the Amendment.

Amendment *agreed to.*

LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK begged to point out that under this clause the University Council had power to review, on representation made by any of its members, or by any member of the Senatus Academicus, any decision which the Senatus Academicus might come to in the exercise of its powers under Section 7. He thought it should be made distinctly clear what Her Majesty's Government meant, and whether the University Court or the Senatus Academicus was to be the absolute authority in matters of discipline and teaching, whether the resolutions of the Senatus were to be subject to alteration and repeal on the part of the University Court.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, that the word "review" meant what the noble Lord had suggested it meant.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN moved the omission of Sub-sections 8 and 9—first, because they were in the wrong part of the Bill; and secondly, because he considered the Bill would be better without them. When he said they were in the wrong part of the Bill his reason was that if they looked at the Bill they would see that the first six sub-sections dealt with certain administrative acts, and that Sub-sections 8 and 9 contemplated the giving of certain powers to enact regulations, and, in fact, power to introduce all sorts of changes. If they were to be introduced they should have been introduced in Clause 20, which dealt with ordinances.

Amendment *moved* to omit Sub-sections 8 and 9,—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, that he would consider the Amendment on Report.

Amendment *agreed to.*

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY moved the substitution of the following for Sub-section 10:—

"To appoint committees of their own number, consisting of not less than five members, with powers either to transact directly such business as may be entrusted to them by the University or else to report thereon to the University Court."

His reason for moving this Amendment was similar to the reasons he had given for moving a previous Amendment—namely, to enable the University Court to deal more readily and in a more business-like way with their own affairs. He understood the noble Marquess had no objection to the Amendment.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, he would accept the Amendment.

Amendment *agreed to.*

LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK proposed, in page 7, line 17, after Sub-section 10, to insert as a new Sub-section the following:—

"To appoint representatives, being members of the University Court, to act as representatives of the University on the governing body of any college or colleges which may hereafter be associated with the Universities."

He urged that it was desirable in the interests of harmony and good understanding between the Universities and the Colleges affiliated to them that there should be some representation of the Governing Body of the University on the Governing Body of the College. He thought the University Court should be represented on the Governing Body of a College in order to maintain harmony and good understanding between them, not with reference to the management of property and funds, but only with reference to discipline and teaching.

Amendment *moved,*

In page 7, line 17, after Sub-section 10, insert—"11. To appoint representatives, being members of the University Court, to act as representatives of the University on the governing body of any College or Colleges which may be hereafter associated with the Universities."—(*The Lord Napier and Ettrick.*)

LORD WATSON said, he thought it was necessary to keep in mind that the Colleges and the University were to be affiliated of consent and under conditions approved by the Commissioners. He did not doubt that, in some cases at all events, it would be exceedingly distasteful to Colleges managing their own affairs to admit representatives to administer their funds or their patronage. He thought that the University Court ought to have a review of the teaching and discipline of every College associated with it; but beyond that the admission of representatives of the Court to the Governing Body of a College should be a matter of arrangement.

LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK said, that he had a subsequent Amendment which particularly specified that the representatives of the University Court should have no power in the management or regulation of the funds or property of the College other than the contribution of the College to the University funds.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, he did not see the force of the objection raised by the noble and learned Lord (Lord Watson). Taking the definition of affiliation as it had been given, he pointed out that the conditions must be approved by both parties and by the University Commission. In these circumstances, he thought it could not be wrong to make those arrangements by that Court instead of adopting the method provided by the Bill, which was a one-sided arrangement. He thought the noble Marquess, in framing the Bill, had almost precluded by this marked omission the putting of a representative of the Commission on the Governing Body of the College. It ought, therefore, to be made clear in the Bill that a representative was considered by both parties desirable.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN thought that any representative of the University Court on the Governing Body of a College should be a purely optional matter, and he, therefore, could not consent to the Amendment. He remarked that Members of the House had had no opportunity of considering this proposal, as there had been no Notice given of the Amendment.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, he would suggest that an Amendment should be proposed on the Report stage to carry out his suggestion.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN thought he could see his way to accept the principle contained in this suggestion, and offered to consider the Amendment with that view, before the Report stage.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 7, 8, and 9 *agreed to.*

Clause 10 (Appointment of Commissioners and secretary).

Lord Watson

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY remarked, that he did not propose to say a word in regard to the Commission; but it was not to be taken that those on his side of the House approved of it.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, that if the noble Lord did not express an opinion, he must be taken as approving of the Commission.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 11 to 13, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 14 (Power of the Commissioners).

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY moved the insertion of the following sub-section in the part of the clause empowering the Commissioners to make ordinances:—

"(C.) Where it shall seem requisite to frame regulations under which the patronage of existing bursaries vested in private individuals shall be exercised."

He said his object was to leave some discretion to the Commissioners to leave alone those private bursaries which had worked well, and to deal only with those which should be proved to have given rise to jobbery.

Amendment *moved,*

In page 9, to insert the following sub-section:—(*c*) "Where it shall seem requisite to frame regulations under which the patronage of existing bursaries vested in private individuals shall be exercised."—(*The Earl of Rosebery.*)

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, that he had no objection to offer to the noble Lord's Amendment.

LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK said, he desired to congratulate the noble Marquess on having withdrawn from the Bill, as it stood originally, what was really a confiscatory clause.

Amendment *agreed to.*

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN asked the Secretary for Scotland if he thought it necessary that the 13th sub-section of this clause should be retained as it was?—

"To lay down regulations for the constitution and functions of a Students' Representative Council in each University."

It was proposed in another clause that the Rector might consult this Council with regard to his assessor; but the Rector had already that power, and, as a matter of practice, did consult the students now. He thought it was very doubtful as to whether Parliament should by Act of Parliament compel the Commissioners to lay down regulations for the constitution and functions of a Students' Representative Council, and to allot to them certain powers, because it must be remembered that when they said in an Act of Parliament that a thing "may" be done, it was an indication that it ought to be done. They knew nothing about these Students' Councils, and he did not think it was wise to mention them in this Bill.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, that while he admitted that the principle of the sub-section was a new one, he thought it was very desirable, in the interests of the students themselves, that the Commissioners should have this optional power. He saw no reason why the Representative Councils should not be made as efficient as possible, and a responsibility given to their students themselves by their formal recognition. His desire was that the students should be consulted as to the Assessor by the Rector rather than by the Chairman of his Election Committee.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, he could not congratulate the noble Marquess upon having made out a strong case. With the single exception of consulting with the Rector with regard to his Assessor, the Bill did not propose to confer any functions on the Students' Representative Council. As this one function could be performed now without the Bill, he did not see any necessity for the creation of the Council.

LORD WATSON said, he thought it might be proper to lay down certain regulations; but he thought it was going a little too far to say that the Commissioners were to find out what were to be the functions of a Students' Representative Council in each University.

LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK said, he did not concur with the noble Earl (the Earl of Camperdown) with regard to the Students' Representative Council. He contended that the sub-section was an actual Instruction to the Commissioners. There was no doubt that students in the Scottish Universities were an active and rather aggressive body at the present moment. He thought they would take an active part in the management of the Universities, and he therefore thought it would be a wise thing to recognize them as a factor in University affairs, and to give them a recognized constitution and status. That might be done in a dangerous or revolutionary sense; but he thought the constitution of the Commission of which they had heard the names was a very ample provision against any danger of that kind. The matter might be safely entrusted to them.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, he hoped their Lordships would now be satisfied with the discussion that had taken place on the matter.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN intimated that on Report he should move the omission of the sub-section.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

On the Motion of the Marquess of LOTHIAN, the following Clause was inserted after Clause 14:—

(Extension of Universities.)

"The Commissioners, and, after the expiry of their powers, the university court, may, if they think fit, make ordinances to extend any of the universities, by adding new colleges to them, under regulations to be laid down by the Commissioners, subject to the following conditions:—

(1.) The university court, and the college which it is proposed shall form part of the university, shall be consenting parties.

(2.) The approval of the universities committee shall be signified.

(3.) The college shall have been, under its existing constitution, placed on a permanent footing, and shall be sufficiently endowed, in the opinion of the Commissioners, and, after the expiry of their powers, of the universities committee.

(4.) The university and any college or colleges which may be added to it shall severally contribute for the general purposes of the university as increased by such addition such annual sum as the commissioners, and, after the expiry of their powers, the university court, may determine, having regard to the special circumstances of the case.

(5.) Where such college is established on a permanent footing under Act of Parliament, Royal charter, deed of appointment, or other trust, and under its constitution the college funds are managed by persons other than the members of the teaching department, such funds, other than those contributed to the university, shall continue to be managed as heretofore, subject to the control and review of the university court.

(6.) The university court, or any college under which this Act shall have been made part of the university, may respec-

> tively resolve that such college shall cease to form part of such university; and, upon such resolution being passed by the university court, or notified to the university court by such college, the university court shall rescind the ordinance by which such college was made to form part of such university. Provided always, that all questions of payment or repayment of any sums of money which may be alleged to be due or repayable by either the university to the college or by the college to the university, on such ordinance being rescinded, shall be disposed of by an order of the universities committee, after such inquiry as shall to the said committee seem necessary, and whose decision thereon shall be final."

Amendment *moved*, to omit Sub-section 3 of New Clause.—(*The Lord Watson.*)

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, he was willing to assent to the Amendment.

Amendment *agreed to.*

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, he thought the same course should be followed with respect to Sub-sections 4 and 5, and he would move their omission.

Amendment *moved*, to omit sub-sections 4 and 5.—(*The Earl of Rosebery.*)

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, he was prepared to agree to the Amendment.

Amendment *agreed to.*

LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK said, he understood that when a College was to be united with a University, the union was to be effected with the consent of the Universities Court; but from Sub-section 6 of Clause 15, it would appear that the separation of the College from the University might be effected by a resolution of the University Court without the consent of the Universities Committee. He had been told that the consent of the Universities Committee was implied in another part of the Bill, which he failed to discover.

LORD WATSON explained that, as the clause stood, if one of the parties desired to withdraw from the arrangement that had been made, it was imperative on the University Court to rescind the ordinance. Under these circumstances, he thought that under the plain construction of the clause there would be no reference made to the Universities Committee. Whether that was desirable or not was another question.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, that in any case there must be a safeguard against compulsory separation.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN assured the noble Earl that that danger would be guarded against. Clause 19 provided that the ordinances should be laid before Parliament.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 16 to 20, inclusive, *agreed to*, with Amendments.

Clause 21 (Transfer of property by Commissioner of Works and vesting thereof).

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN said, he had an Amendment, the object of which was to exclude the Edinburgh Botanic Gardens from the operation of the Bill. This was a subject of great interest in the Scottish Metropolis. It was difficult to see why it was proposed that this Garden should be handed over to the Edinburgh University, and, so far as he had been able to gather, the University did not want it. Neither the Town Council nor the public approved of the change. As regarded the Town Council, they had indicated their strong wish that the existing arrangement should continue; and they had good grounds for expressing that opinion, including this, that they had spent as much as £19,000 in order to acquire the control of the Arboretum attached to the Garden. The only difficulty in accepting the Amendment was, he supposed, that if it were accepted it might be thought that the sum of money proposed to be awarded to the University of Edinburgh ought to be reduced by the amount now spent in keeping up the Gardens. He should be sorry if such a course was insisted on, because it was obvious that the University of Edinburgh might not spend as much on the Garden as was now spent. They might feel that there were other matters which had a prior claim on their consideration.

Amendment *moved*,

> In page 14, lines 24 to 28, leave out ("but subject as to the Edinburgh Botanic Gardens and all buildings therein as to the provisions hereinafter contained for the redemption of a sum of one hundred and fifty pounds per annum now payable to the Professor of Public Law in the University of Edinburgh").—(*The Earl of Aberdeen.*)

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, that this was a matter entirely in the hands of the Treasury, and that it was out of his power to agree to the Amendment. A similar provision had existed in previous University Bills.

The Earl of ABERDEEN said, he would withdraw his Amendment; but he hoped the question would be raised with greater success in the House of Commons.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 22 to 30 *agreed to.*

Clause 31 (Report on finance to be made annually).

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN moved, as an Amendment, that the Report "be presented to and considered by the General Council of the University," as well as laid before Parliament.

The Earl of ROSEBERY asked, if there was any necessity that the Report should be laid before Parliament?

The Marquess of LOTHIAN stated that he was unable to accept the Amendment, and that he thought it was advisable that the Financial Report should be laid before Parliament.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses *agreed to.*

The Report of the Amendments to be received on *Tuesday* the 19*th instant;* and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 133.)

MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE—LEGISLATION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

The Earl of FIFE asked, Whether it was the intention of the Government to create a Minister for Agriculture according to the promise held out by them? He did not think he needed to offer any apology for introducing this matter, because he did not think the conduct of the Government had been altogether satisfactory with regard to it. If the Bill was ready it should be produced, and he wished to know whether there was any chance of its being introduced in time to be adequately discussed, and to be passed this Session?

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury) said, that a Question on this subject had been already answered in the other House, and he could only repeat the statements that had been made by his right hon. Friend the Leader of the other House. The Government had always intended to introduce a Bill in the House of Commons, and the noble Earl could gather for himself what were the chances of such a Bill making any progress in the other House at the present time. Of course, it would be possible to introduce the Bill in that House, but the great practical objection to that was that it was eminently a financial Bill. The Bill was quite ready, and the Government hoped before long to be able to pass it through the other House. In the meantime he would consider the matter, and if there was no possibility of introducing it in the other House they must attempt to bring it forward in the House of Lords and to pass it this year.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—PETERSHAM PARK—SITE FOR VICARAGE.

QUESTION.

The Earl of MEATH asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether any application had been made to the First Commissioner of Works for the grant of a piece of land in Petersham Park as a site for a Vicarage; and, if so, what reply had been sent to such application?

Lord HENNIKER said, that the Petition with regard to this piece of land was presented to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, who found that it was a matter that should be dealt with by the First Commissioner of Works. An inquiry had been made by the First Commissioner, who ascertained that the piece of land was part of Petersham Park; and, after looking carefully into the matter, his opinion was that, at present at all events, the Petition was one that should not be granted.

House adjourned at a quarter past Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 7th June, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—*Report*—Forest of Dean Turnpike Trust [No. 209].

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Ballina and Killala Railway and Harbour.

Considered as amended—Tottenham Local Board (Division of District).*

Public Bills—*Second Reading*—North Sea Fisheries * [278]; Official Secrets [256], *debate adjourned;* National Debt (Supplemental) [264].

Report of Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure—Mortmain and Charitable Uses [No. 207]; Bail (Scotland [No. 208].

Committee—Local Government (England and Wales) [182] [*First Night*]—R.P.

Third Reading—Habitual Drunkards Act (1879) Amendment (No. 2) * [203], and *passed.*

Provisional Order Bills—*Report*—Local Government (No. 3) * [249]; Local Government (No. 4) * [250]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 6) * [251]; Local Government (Gas) * [252]; Local Government (Ireland) (Bangor and Warrenpoint) * [225].

Considered as amended—Tramways (No. 1) * [222].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

BALLINA AND KILLALA RAILWAY AND HARBOUR BILL

(*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan), in moving, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months, said, it was a Bill which proposed to extend the time for the completion of the railway and causeway and pier authorized by the Ballina and Killala Railway Act so long ago as 1883. During the time which had elapsed since, the promoters of that railway had not endeavoured to raise a single penny of capital for the undertaking, except the amount of money they were bound to lodge in accordance with the usual legal provisions which applied to all Private Bills. Even in regard to that sum of money, the Company did not pretend to have raised it in the form of capital, but appeared to have borrowed it for the purposes to which it was applied under the original Act of 1883. The Company had done a great many unreasonable things. In order to make this railway a nominal capital of £100,000 was authorized, and the district through which the line was to pass guaranteed £40,000. The Act guaranteed payment of 5 per cent upon this capital during the progress of the work, and also gave a guarantee of 5 per cent for 35 years afterwards, to show the *bona fides* of the promoters in regard to the transaction. But, so far as the capital of £100,000 was concerned, power was taken to cancel the greater part of it, and the ratepayers were made responsible for all the money advanced to the Company. Power was given to borrow a further sum of £20,000, so that the Company had the power to cancel £60,000, and the result would be that the unfortunate guarantors would be in this position—that they would be liable to pay the amount of the guarantee at 5 per cent and the interest on the borrowed money. Power was taken by the guarantors—no doubt very properly—to appoint a receiver in case the money was not regularly paid. The ratepayers of the district, who were liable to suffer seriously in consequence, signed a Petition praying to be heard by counsel in the House of Lords in 1885, when the promoters of the scheme applied for an extended power of taxation, by which they proposed an additional sum of £12,000. The Preamble of that Bill was declared not to have been proved, and the Bill was thrown out. The Committee of the House of Lords altogether objected to the scheme. The present Bill was now proposed in the hope that, if it found its way to a Committee of the House of Lords, it might find a more pliable Committee, and it was further hoped that it would pass through the House of Commons unopposed. As a matter of fact, the promoters had raised an objection in the House of Commons to the *locus standi* of the ratepayers who wished to petition against the Bill. The practical effect, if they were responsible in that respect, would be that the Bill would come before the House as an Unopposed Bill, unless some Member of Parliament took a special interest in the matter. Under these circumstances, seeing that the promoters had not raised a single penny of capital in the five years allowed them for the purchase of the land and the construction of the railway—that they had purchased no land at all or carried out any of the powers originally taken, he thought the House ought to refuse to give a second reading to the Bill, and save the locality further responsibility and trouble. One of the original provisions of the Bill was that the expense of this Act of Parliament should be borne by the Company, so that the guarantors would be rendered liable, not only for the expense of making the railway, but also for the cost of any litigation, preliminary expenses, fictitious sums run up in the shape of engineers, and so on, while, in point of fact, the railway might never be made. No provision was contained in the Bill as to the payment of money in the event of the line not paying working expenses, nor was it provided that in such a case the guarantee should cease. If the scheme had been a feasible scheme, the Company could have gone before the Privy Council in Dublin and have the payment imposed upon the ratepayers supplied by a loan from the Treasury to the extent of 2 per cent. These gentlemen, however, were afraid to go before the Privy Council in Dublin, knowing that they had no *bona fides* in connection with the scheme. They were told that the Killala people at one end of the scheme were favourable to it. Of course, the shipowners at Killala were in favour of it, because they expected to get some profit from the outlay, and they hoped to see money raised which would find its way into their own pockets. On the other hand, the people of Ballina, at the other end, the most important town in the district, and a town most exceedingly well situated as a port, were very much opposed to the scheme; and the ratepayers, whom it was proposed to make liable, very strongly objected to it. He might also remark that in the original scheme there was a provision that the landed proprietors should pay one-half of the taxation; and, in addition, there was a provision that they should not be entitled to deduct from that payment any charges upon their own property. Therefore, considering all the circumstances, and especially seeing that the promoters had not been able to advance any money whatever, and that they had really no *bona fides*, he begged to move his Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months.

MR. COMMINS (Roscommon, S.) said, he had great pleasure in seconding the Motion for the rejection of the Bill. Five years ago the promoters undertook to make a railway which was to be completed in the course of five years; but instead of making the railway in five years, and a harbour with a pier at the end of it, they had not even acquired a single rood of land for the purposes of the line. That was clear from their own statements in a document which had been put into his hand since he entered the House. They had not raised one single shilling of the money, nor had they put in force the provision which would have enabled them to have obtained certain advances from the Treasury. Having allowed five years to pass without raising the capital, all they had tried to do having been to take borrowing powers to raise 50 per cent additional capital at the expense of the ratepayers, they had increased their nominal capital from £100,000 to £150,000, on which 5 per cent was to be payable for 35 years. Indeed, the Company had endeavoured to make that payment chargeable for ever upon the unfortunate ratepayers through whose district the railway was to pass. Now, the whole transaction depended upon the *bona fides* of the promoters. They told that House the object of the Bill was to extend the powers already confirmed by the original Act; and they inserted a provision, which practically amounted to an undertaking, that the Directors would not be guilty of embezzlement. In point of fact, the Bill contained one of the most extraordinary provisions he had ever seen in a Bill submitted to Parliament. The Bill said—

> "The Company shall not out of any money which they are by any Act authorized to raise, pay, or deposit any sum which by any Standing Order of either House of Parliament now or hereafter in force may be required to be deposited in respect of any application to Parliament for the purpose of obtaining an Act authorizing the Company to construct any other Railway or to execute any other work or undertaking."

Of course, if they appropriated any of the money authorized by the scheme to any other undertaking, they would render themselves liable to a prosecution for embezzlement, and it was quite superfluous on their part to declare that they had no intention of doing so. The only reason given by the promoters for the Bill was that during the five years which had elapsed since the original Act passed they had done nothing whatever. They had not shown that they had even purchased the land, or a single yard of it, nor had they done one single thing in pursuance of the powers conferred upon them five years ago. Yet they proposed to continue these powers for a further period, so as to enable them for three years longer to speculate on the credit of the ratepayers' money, and try to induce other persons to come in and take this unfortunate project off their hands. He should feel inclined to support any *bonâ fide* proposal for the extension of railway communication for the opening up of the trade in a district of this kind; but the present proposal was one which was stamped on the face of it with a total want of *bona fides*, and the Bill was proposed in reality in order to shut other persons out of the field. What was proposed was pratically that a concession, as it was called on the Continent, should be given to the promoters, and the railway accommodation of the district handed over to them for a certain number of years. So far they had done nothing, nor had they shown any intention of doing anything; but if this Bill passed, Parliament would practically close the door to enterprizing speculators, and prevent them from constructing a railway. He thought the best thing they could do was to let this unfortunate Act expire, and not renew the powers which were given to the Company in 1883.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) said, he did not propose to occupy the time of the House for more than a few minutes in saying a few words in reply to the remarks of the hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar). He regretted the course the hon. Member had taken, and the hostility he had exhibited to a project which had been put forward in order to develop the resources of Ireland. His only reason for intervening at all in the debate was that when he was an Inspector of Irish Fisheries, he had, as a Commissioner on Piers and Harbours, taken part in an inquiry at Killala, as to the desirability of promoting the pier authorized to be constructed under this scheme. He was, therefore, thoroughly acquainted with the circumstances of the district; and, as the result of the inquiry upon that occasion, he was prepared to give his warm and hearty support to the proposition contained in the present Bill. He trusted that the House would not be prevented from giving the Bill a second reading. The Bill itself simply proposed an extension of time for the construction of a line that was authorized five years ago.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N,) said, he doubted very much whether the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan would meet the support and approval of hon. Members on that side of the House. He would only remind the House that his hon. Friend had certain little weaknesses, and that among them was the great weakness of objecting to all railway schemes. [Mr. Biggar: No.] His hon. Friend had opposed nearly every railway scheme in Ireland that had been produced, and he was sorry to say that after a hard struggle his hon. Friend was successful in defeating a project in which his constituents were much interested, and were most anxious to carry out. He (Colonel Nolan) was, therefore, not inclined to take the opinion of his hon. Friend on railroads, as he would be prepared to take it on almost any other question. He supported the Bill for very much the same reason as that which had been expressed by the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston). He had been Chairman of the Commission of which the hon. Member was an efficient Member, and that Commission found that this part of Mayo wanted an harbour, and that Killala offered a splendid position for one. There was a very large quantity of fish there; but the great difficulty was the want of a market, and it was found impossible to get a market without a railway. If he had an opportunity of making inquiries on the spot, he might say he found that Sir Thomas Brady, the senior and best known of the Fishery Commissioners, was also most strong in favour of the Bill. That fact was stated in the document issued by the promoters, and although Sir Thomas Brady was away at that moment, he had no doubt that he was very much in favour of this railway. Personally, he did not pretend to know anything about the place himself; but he believed that a railway would do a great deal of good. He was well acquainted with South Mayo; but this was in North Mayo, and he did not profess to have an intimate knowledge of that locality. The Grand Jury of the County of Mayo had decided in favour of the Bill, and they were not likely to impose a tax on the cesspayers unless that tax was of advantage to the locality. He believed that the Grand Jury of Mayo conducted its business as fairly as any Grand Jury in Ireland, and he would give a reason for saying that. No less than five Members of Parliament belonging to the Irish National Party had been called on to serve upon the Grand Jury, so that it might be said to be as fairly composed as any Grand Jury in Ireland. It was also a most economical Grand Jury. It was in a very different position from other Grand Juries in Ireland, because he knew that in some counties it was the custom not to call Members of Parliament to serve upon it. The Grand Jury of Mayo had decided that the cesspayers should be made liable for this expenditure, which was not likely to be more than 10*d.* in the pound for the guarantee. He would suggest that it was possible to insert a clause in the Bill that if in the present Session, or any future Session, any further advantage was to be given by the Government in the way of developing railway enterprize in Ireland, the guarantees under this Bill should have the full benefit of it. As to the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for South Roscommon (Mr. Commins), he did not know whether, like the hon. Member for West Cavan, he was opposed to all railways; but he would remind his hon. Friend that this was really a case in which the accommodation was much required, and that the cesspayers of the county were in favour of it. Indeed, he believed it would be found that, as a general rule, the cesspayers of most counties were in favour of the extension of railway enterprize.

Mr. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) said, the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Nolan) had told the House that Sir Thomas Brady was in favour of the Bill. He was afraid the hon. and gallant Member had been deceived by a statement which the promoters of the railway had put into the document they had just issued. The hon. and gallant Member had given an extract from one Report of the Fishery Commissioners; but he had carefully avoided referring to a recent Report in which it was stated that, as far as the interest of the fisheries at Killala was concerned, the Commission could not recommend this outlay. So much, therefore, for its being a scheme which Sir Thomas Brady had recommended as being for the benefit of these fisheries. He knew it was a very responsible position to be a party to the throwing out of a Bill on the second reading; but there were circumstances connected with this case which, in his opinion, justified that course in the present case. The promoters had put forward a statement in which they had had the hardihood to say that the parties opposing the Bill had presented a Petition against it, and were applying to be heard by counsel. They had not, however, had the honesty to say that they themselves had taken a technical objection to their being heard, and fully counted upon shutting them out from the inquiry. The Petitioners in question were the cesspayers, who would have to provide the guarantee. The promoters of this Bill had been conspicuous by the absence of all *bona fides* whatever. They had sought in 1885 to have the guarantee of 8*d.* in the pound raised to 10*d.*, and a Petition signed by more than 2,000 cesspayers had been presented against the Bill, which was then rejected. The promoters said that a Petition was being signed in favour of it; but it certainly had taken a very long time to get it up. This, at any rate, was clear. In 1883 the Company obtained power to construct a railway; in 1888 they had not turned a sod. They said they had taken steps to acquire the land; had they taken steps to acquire the capital? They had not ventured to say that they had raised one farthing of the capital. He found that there was scarcely a single fact stated in the document they had issued which could be relied upon. The project was one of speculators simply, who desired to speculate with the money of the ratepayers of a very poor part of Ireland. The Company in 1885 proposed that they should be able to raise 10*d.* in the pound out of the rates in perpetuity; but the House would not consent to that. They had in 1883, however, succeeded in getting a guarantee of 8*d.* in the pound for 35 years. They had obtained that not only for the construction of the railway, but also for all expenses in connection with its promotion. So from first to last the poor, unhappy cesspayers of an impoverished barony would have any liability. They could have gone before the Privy Council in Ireland and have obtained assistance from the Treasury; but they had not done so, because they knew that in the first steps they took it would become apparent that they were simply a body of speculators who were interested in the scheme. He regretted that he felt himself compelled to vote against the hon. Member for Belfast in opposing the Bill, and that he was compelled also to vote against the construction of a railway in a very poor part of Ireland. He did so, however, without any hesitation, because he felt satisfied that if this scheme were put an end to only a short time would elapse before a better scheme was promoted, which would result in the construction of a more satisfactory railway in the district at a very early date.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) said, he thought it was most desirable to open up this country by means of a railway. The only objection he had heard to the proposed railway was that hitherto nothing had been done; but if that objection was to be raised it would apply to almost every scheme for the development of Irish resources during the last five years. Hon. Members knew very well that the circumstances of Ireland had been such as really to prevent any money from being raised by the public for such works. A better state of things was now anticipated, and there was a better prospect of obtaining money for projects of this character. He, therefore, earnestly hoped that the hon. Member for West Cavan would withdraw his opposition, and that the House would give a second reading to the Bill. The hon. and learned Member who spoke last (Mr. Kelly) said that the hon. and gallant Member for North Galway had not studied the recommendations of the Fishery Commission. He (Sir John Colomb) could retort upon the hon. and learned Member himself, because if he had looked at the Report of the Commission carefully, he would have found it officially put down in the Index that Killala was one of the 12 centres of the Irish fisheries. The House had also received personal and direct information from a member of the late Fishery Board who had inquired personally into the matter. The hon. Member for West Cavan had not always proved a true prophet in regard to these railway projects. The hon. and gallant Member for North Galway told the House that the hon. Member generally opposed railway schemes; and he would remind the House that the hon. Member had opposed, in two successive Sessions, an important Bill for railway extension, which was, in the end, carried, and had been of great advantage to the South of Ireland. In view of the fact that this railway was approved by the representative bodies of the locality, he hoped the Amendment would not be persevered with.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA (Monaghan, S.) said, he hoped that his hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan would not press his opposition at all at this stage, or that, at any rate, he would give some more satisfactory reasons for the rejection of the Bill. He thought that if the House took upon itself the task of throwing out a Bill of this nature, instead of sending it to a Committee, it would set a bad example and dishearten persons who took an interest in the extension of Irish railways. There might be many objections urged against the present scheme; but at this stage of the Bill he was of opinion that the House ought not to reject it. Personally, he believed that the construction of the railway would prove of great advantage to the district. He knew something of Killala, having visited it often, and he believed that it was of great importance that a railway should be extended from Ballina to Killala, in order to give proper railway facilities for the North-West of Ireland. He hoped his hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan would withdraw his Motion.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, he sympathized very much with the views which had been expressed by the hon. Member for West Cavan; but he would suggest to the hon. Member that it was not desirable to reject the Bill at the present stage. This was a scheme for the construction of a railway which was approved by Parliament five years ago. The Bill had now been brought before the House—a Bill of an ordinary character, asking for an extension of time for a limited period. According to the Forms of Parliament, at the time the original Act was granted all the details of the scheme were inquired into and examined, and an application for an extension of time simply involved the question whether the promoters had a justifiable excuse for not having put into operation the powers conceded to them. The question now was whether there was a *bonâ fide* intention and prospect on the part of the promoters of going on with the railway within a reasonably short time? With respect to the fact that the powers obtained by the Company had been neglected during the last five years, he presumed it would be allowed that the circumstances of Ireland had not been favourable during those five years for the execution of public works. The question now was whether there was a real intention on the part of the promoters to fulfil their obligations, and to construct a railway? That was a question which would be carefully considered by the Committee appointed by the House to inquire into the Bill. He had suggested that possibly the promoters would be willing to give the Petitioners an opportunity of referring that question to a Committee without disputing their *locus standi* in respect of that point if they desired to have it investigated—namely, whether there was now a *bonâ fide* intention to go on with the railway, and if security could be given as to the future action of the Company? The opponents of the scheme were not satisfied with an inquiry limited to that point, but wished to have the whole question of the policy of this railway re-examined. He could not advise the House to permit such a re-opening of the question, without, as far as he could see, there being any circumstances to justify it. If such a course were taken, it would establish a precedent that would be exceedingly inconvenient, and might be attended by the worst consequences. It might be extremely undesirable if, whenever an extension of time was sought, such re-examination was to be entered into. As to the nature of the guarantee given by the Company for the construction of the railway, that was a further subject for examination, and he would promise that it should be inquired into. He thought, under all the circumstances, the House would be well advised if they consented to the second reading of the Bill. He would vote for the second reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, he thought it must be admitted that the history of the question was not wholly satisfactory. No doubt, the condition of Mayo was an additional excuse for the Company not having carried out the works that were authorized during the five years they had had the power of doing so. He was quite willing to admit that the condition of Mayo during those five years had not been favourable; but he would remind the House that that could not have been the sole reason that influenced the minds of the Company in not carrying out the scheme, because they approached Parliament in 1885 in order to get a further and heavier guarantee from the locality than they had obtained by the Act of 1883. He must say also, in respect of the speech of his hon. Friend the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney), that to a certain extent he thought that the cesspayers of the district were rather harshly treated, although, no doubt, they had, through their Local Authorities, assented to the scheme of 1882 and 1883. It was possible, and not very improbable, that since then circumstances had convinced them that the burden was not one which they ought lightly to impose upon themselves. Arguments had been laid before him which would indicate—although he did not attach value to them either one way or the other—that the railway, when made, would be illusive, and that it would not be specially useful to the area that was to be taxed in order to guarantee it. Something had been said in the course of the debate about the opinion of the Royal Commission. The opinion of the Royal Commission he could very shortly criticize. The Royal Commission desired that there should be a railway from Ballina to Belmullet; and, on the whole, the Commissioners were disposed to think that the railway should pursue the coast route rather than the inland route. They certainly expressed their opinion in that direction, although not very strongly; but they did emphatically say that they did not expect the harbour of Killala would be of much use to the fishing industry. Therefore, the Commission did support a part of this scheme which he understood this Company desired to promote. Although he did not think that the House at this stage ought to throw out the Bill, and although he should be sorry to be in any way instrumental in checking, in the smallest degree, railway enterprize in the West of Ireland, there was a warning which he should like to give to the Gentlemen connected with this scheme. The hon. and gallant Member for North Galway (Colonel Nolan) said he desired to see a clause introduced into the Bill which would give the Company the benefit of any Government assistance which might be hereafter given in the case of railways in Ireland. Now, if any Gentleman connected with this Bill were speculating on any Government assistance, he begged to warn them against any such expectation. If this Bill passed, it must in no way be considered that the Government were pledged in the matter at all. No doubt, there might be a desire to know what the general intentions of the Government were in regard to Irish railways, and the Gentlemen who were promoting this Bill might be anxious to have some notification of that nature; but he specially refrained from giving it. With that warning, he would recommend the House not to reject the second reading of the Bill, but to allow the measure to go before a Select Committee in the ordinary course, and there to be judged upon its merits. He would remind hon. Members that if the Bill appeared to be unsatisfactory when it left the Committee there would still be an opportunity of rejecting it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford N.) said, he thought that, after the statements which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees, some time should be allowed for the promoters and the opponents to reconsider their position. The promoters had now had a very candid statement from the Government—in which he (Mr. T. M. Healy) entirely concurred—that they considered themselves in no way bound to give any future assistance, or any guarantee under any possible future legislation, to the development of Irish railways; and it might be, under those circumstances, that the promoters might feel themselves no longer justified in going on with the Bill. Indeed, they might have been engaged in a fishing expedition with regard to the present measure, and he thought it was desirable to give them power to examine their own consciences, and see if they really intended *bonâ fide* to go on with the Bill. In the second place, it was desirable, after what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees, that the question of *locus standi* should not be raised between the petitioners and the promoters. The question of *locus standi* was a most unfortunate one, and, if a promise were given that the promoters would not oppose the *locus standi*, it might mitigate the sufferings of the opposition which the Bill might meet with in that House. Under the circumstances, he thought the proper course would be to say that the House would defer for a week any action upon the measure, and that there should be an adjournment to enable the parties, who were not at arms' length, to come together and see if they could not arrange their difficulties on the question of *locus standi*. An opportunity would also be afforded to the promotors of ascertaining whether, after the statements of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, which he altogether approved of, as far as the guarantee was concerned, they would proceed with the Bill. As to what had fallen from the hon. and gallant Member who spoke from the Opposition side of the House (Colonel Nolan) with regard to the opposition of his hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan to guarantee legislation, he could only say that he gave a cordial assent to the views of his hon. Friend. The history of guaranteed legislation in Ireland showed that it had been throughout a system of failure and fraud. He thought that, under all the circumstances, the best course to pursue would be to adjourn the debate, and he, therefore, moved that the debate be now adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

MR. COURTNEY said, there was an objection to the course proposed, which he thought the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) would at once see. Under the Rules of the House of Lords the Bill must reach that House by a certain time if it was to be considered at all this Session. Therefore, the course which it was proposed to take would imperil the progress of the Bill. He would, therefore, suggest that the hon. and learned Member would, in these circumstances, withdraw the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, whether an adjournment until Monday would be objected to?

COLONEL NOLAN said, he hoped his hon. and learned Friend would withdraw the Amendment, which was certainly a most objectionable way of defeating a Private Bill. He thought the question ought to be determined one way or another upon its merits, and that it was not right to impose additional expenses upon the promoters of Private Bills by protracting the period of inquiry.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he would withdraw the Motion for Adjournment.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 227; Noes, 51: Majority 176.—(Div. List, No. 128.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

MORTMAIN AND CHARITABLE USES BILL [*Lords*].

Reported from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, with Amendments and a New Title.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be *printed.* [No. 207.]

Bill, as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next, and to be *printed.* [Bill 285.]

BAIL (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be *printed.* [No. 208.]

Bill, as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next, and to be *printed.* [Bill 286.]

QUESTIONS.

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LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) — JURIES — EXEMPTION OF VOLUNTEERS.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in view of the additional obligations to be placed on members joining the Volunteer Service, he will endeavour to bring about their exemption from liability to serve upon juries?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The question of exempting Volunteers from liability to serve on juries is well worthy of consideration; but this House has always been somewhat jealous of any exemption from jury service. It shall, however, be carefully considered in the event of any general legislation on the subject.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — BELFAST POST OFFICE STAFF.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that two members of the Belfast Post Office staff have, within a recent period, been under treatment for mental derangement, and that one of them has succumbed to the malady; whether it is a fact that the deceased was a man of irreproachable character, with 20 years' service; whether he was recently sent on special duty to Dunfanaghy, and placed in a subordinate position to a clerk of equal rank, but his junior by many years; and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the circumstances of the case, with a view to discovering whether the mental attack, which ended in the death of this officer, was in any way attributable to the treatment which he received in his office?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, it was a fact that two members of the Belfast Post Office had, within a recent period, been under treatment for mental derangement, and that one of them succumbed to the malady. He made inquiries into the matter; and the medical officer had assured him that the unfortunate condition of the two men was owing to causes practically unconnected with their duties.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—SUPERVISION OF INCLOSED GARDENS.

Mr. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, since the Metropolitan Police have been withdrawn from the nightly supervision of inclosed gardens, complaints have been made to the Police Authorities that those places have been used by burglars as a base of operations; and, whether the Chief Commissioner proposes to take any, and what, steps in the matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Commissioner of Police that no complaints, such as those suggested, have been made to him. The Reports of the Superintendents show that the withdrawal of men on beat from private grounds has not led to an increase of crime; and the Chief Commissioner is of opinion that this withdrawal has greatly conduced to the safety of the public and their property.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—THE SWINESHEAD CHARITIES.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the hon. Member for Penrith, Whether he has received an intimation that the Vicar of Swineshead declined to allow a poll to be taken by ballot on an election of the Trustees, who were to be chosen in order to carry out the scheme of the Charity Commissioners in respect to the Swineshead Charities, notwithstanding that the Chief Commissioners had written on the 29th of March last—

> "It will be open to the ratepayers, at any meeting for the purpose of appointing a Trustee or Trustees, to determine, if they so desire, that the election shall be by ballot; and that the meeting summoned to choose Trustees decided that the election should be by ballot;"

and, whether, in view of these facts, the Charity Commissioners will cause another election to be held?

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The Charity Commissioners have received an intimation that the Vicar of Swineshead recently declined to allow a poll to be taken by ballot at the election of Trustees to the Swineshead Charities. A Petition has been also received, praying them to withhold their approval of the appointment of the Trustees who were elected. This they have no power to do; but by Clause 50 of the scheme any question affecting the regularity or validity of any proceedings under the scheme shall be determined by the Charity Commissioners upon a proper application being made to them, and they are prepared to entertain such an application.

INDIA (BENGAL)—CIRCULAR OF MR. J. C. VEASEY, INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE.

Mr. SLAGG (Burnley) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Secretary of State for India has had his attention directed to a "confidential" Circular, No. 5, issued by Mr. J. C. Veasey, Inspector General of Police, Bengal, dated Calcutta, December 30, 1887; whether the Circular in question directs Sub-Inspectors to submit weekly to District Superintendents a confidential Report in which—

> "Everything, however apparently trivial, that can have a political significance"

is to be set forth; informs District Superintendents that—

> "Sub-Inspectors should invariably have it impressed upon them that the collection of information for the weekly Report is by no means the least important part of their duties, and that aptitude for this kind of work will recommend them for advancement;"

and directs that among the subjects to be reported upon are to be the following:—

> "Religious excitement; comments on Laws and Government measures; affairs in independent or semi-independent Native States, and rumours regarding them; constitution, objects, and proceedings of Native Societies, whether established for political or ostensibly for other objects; political or mass meetings; their origin, organization, and result as to public feeling in the neighbourhood, selected with especial reference to any tendency towards, or probability of, agrarian excitement;"

whether, in a particular district, an Inspector of Police has considered that this Circular imposed on him the duty of inquiring whether certain persons who attended the meetings of the Indian National Congress at Madras in December last paid their own expenses, or whether those expenses were paid by the public; whether the Secretary of

State will express his disapproval of this system in India which places religious assemblies, jubilee rejoicings, and the political meetings of a loyal population under the scrutiny of the police; and, whether the Secretary of State will lay a copy of the Circular in question upon the Table of the House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State has no official knowledge either of the Circular in question or of the action of the police under it. He will direct inquiries to be made from the Government of India on the subject. Of course, no pledge can be given at the present stage as to laying the Report on the Table.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—POLITICAL SPEECHES—SIR ARTHUR BLACKWOOD.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Postmaster General, If his attention has been called to a report in *The Daily Chronicle* of May 31 of a speech delivered by Sir Arthur Blackwood, a Post Office official, as follows:—

> "He believed that our dangers were no less great and imminent in some senses than they were 200 years ago. They had still the same arch-enemy in the background, and underground, but now their dangers proceeded to a great extent from this fact—that blindly, by a false charity called toleration, the nation had yielded up its liberties, and allowed the rights and privileges conceded to Roman Catholics to be preverted into the right to legislate for the Protestant nation, and had allowed a Romish hierarchy to be established in our midst. Beyond that our chief danger laid from the existence in the largest section of the visible Church in this country of a traitorous clergy Ritualists, who were Romanists under another name, and were working insidiously, determinedly, and persistently to raise up the Romish standard, doctrine, and practice in our midst, and, alas! with too widespread and fatal success all over the land;"

whether other *employés* of the Department are free to address public meetings in an opposite sense, or generally may take part in platform work on public topics; and, is it the fact that the promotion of a great many Catholic and High Church postal servants depends on the favour of this gentleman?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): My attention has not been called to the speech referred to otherwise than by the Question of the hon. and learned Member. Officers of the Post Office are at perfect liberty to take part in public meetings on any subject with the exception of those involving political partizanship; and the occasion on which the speech in question was delivered does not appear to me to fall within that category. The promotion of Post Office officials rests not with the Secretary of the Post Office, but with the Postmaster General, and no consideration of religious creed ever enters into such questions. I may, however, mention that Sir Arthur Blackwood has often recommended for promotion officers who, I happen to be aware, are Roman Catholics.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Do I understand that the permission granted to the Post Office officials is that they may not denounce other people's politics, but they may denounce other people's religion?

[No reply.]

GENERAL POST OFFICE, DUBLIN—THE SORTING OFFICE.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether vacancies in the Sorting Office, General Post Office, Dublin, are usually filled by selection from a class of messengers attached to the Dublin Office; whether boys who are taken into the sorting office during the Christmas pressure are kept on and finally appointed; whether these boys are relatives or friends of the superintendents and overseers of the sorting office; and, whether he will see see that the vacancies are given to the messengers or thrown open for public competition?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University) in reply, said, the boy sorters in the General Post Office, Dublin, were not chosen exclusively from the messengers. Of the 27 appointments made within the last two years 13 were from the class of messengers. A few of the boys taken on during the Christmas pressure had been retained after the pressure had ceased. They had been appointed to vacancies among the sorters. Only one of the boys was a relative of an *employé* in the Post Office. The boy was a son of one of the sorters. He was not aware that any of the others had been appointed on account of friendship. Vacancies were filled up in certain proportions from the messengers. He did not intend to interfere with the present system.

EXCISE (IRELAND)—LICENCE OF A MARQUEE, HOLLYMOUNT, CO. MAYO.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that a marquee kept by Mr. Andrew Grogan, of Claremorris, on the fair ground at Hollymount, in the County of Mayo, on the 16th ultimo, was, about 7.30 a.m. on that day, entered by the local sergeant of the Royal Irish Constabulary, who pronounced Mr. Grogan's licence to be illegal, although his authorization was in due form, and acknowledged by the supervisor of Excise in the district; whether the sergeant then threatened Mr. Grogan with prosecution, and threatened likewise all who might patronize Mr. Grogan's marquee that day; whether Mr. Grogan was twice before prosecuted on like pretext, the charge each time being dismissed; and is there any protection for Mr. Grogan against a repetition of such interference?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Inspector General of Constabulary reported that the local officer did warn Grogan on the occasion in question that his licence was illegal, inasmuch as it was not signed by one of the Justices usually acting at Petty Sessions in the district, as required by law. The sergeant did tell Grogan that he was liable to be prosecuted; but he did not threaten anyone who might patronize the marquee. Mr. Grogan could protect himself by fulfilling the requirements of the law.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked, were the police to judge whether the magistrate who signed the licence was a magistrate within the Petty Sessions Court?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, of course the person to decide that question was the Judge before whom the case came.

COLONEL NOLAN said, what he wanted to know was, whether the police could prevent people going into the marquee when the question of the jurisdiction of the magistrate who signed the licence was undecided?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR replied that the police had not done so in this particular case.

BANKRUPTCY ACTS—THE RUABON COLLIERY, LIMITED.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is true that the Ruabon Colliery, Limited, went into liquidation in the year 1878; whether the colliery was subsequently sold for £10,600, out of which the bondholders have received only about £1,500 in dividends; whether the receiver, in his double capacity as receiver and agent for the bondholders, has been paid a sum of over £2,600 for expenses in winding up; whether it is true that the firm of Hermann Loog, Limited, London Wall, stopped payment on January 1, 1887; and, whether, since that time, no meeting of the creditors has been called, nor any Report made to the creditors as to the progress of the liquidation?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): I am informed that the Ruabon and North Wales Colliery Company (Limited) was ordered to be wound up in October, 1878, and on November 28 of the same year Mr. John S. H. Banner was appointed official liquidator. The proceedings in this case were very complicated; but I shall be very happy to show the right hon. Gentleman the Papers relating to it. The file of the Company does not show that the liquidation was ever closed. The assets of the colliery appear by a contract filed with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies to have been sold by the official liquidator, acting in conjunction with the representatives of the creditors, debenture-holders, and contributories of the Company, to a Company formed for the purpose of purchasing the property, called the Preesgweene Colliery Company (Limited). That Company was ordered to be wound up by Mr. Justice Day in 1882, and the liquidation does not appear to have been closed. With regard to the second Company referred to by the right hon. Gentleman, I am informed that it was ordered to be wound up on January 22, 1887, and that no meeting of creditors has been called, nor any Report made to them.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—GREYSTONES HARBOUR.

MR. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will inquire from some independent quarter, say the Coastguards stationed there, whether it is a fact that the harbour at Greystones is filling up with sand and shingle; and, if such proves to be the case, whether he will call on the Board of Works to take any steps in the matter?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.), in reply, said, the harbour was being carefully watched by the Commissioners of Public Works. They would be glad to get information on the subject. He would call their attention specially to the suggestion the hon. Member made.

INDIA—THE IRRAWADDY FLOTILLA COMPANY—HIRE OF FLATS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether 15,000 rupees per month are now being paid for the hire of three flats from the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company; whether such flats could have been conveniently built in Calcutta at an outside cost of 150,000 rupees; whether very large sums are being paid to the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company for demurrage; and, if he can say by whose fault such demurrage charges arise?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State has no information on this subject; but he will cause inquiry to be made.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked if the Papers which the hon. Gentleman anticipated a week or two ago had yet arrived?

SIR JOHN GORST: No, Sir; unless the Indian mail came in to-day they have not yet arrived.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—SECTION 15—MAIN ROADS AND FOOTPATHS.

MR. F. PARKER (Oxfordshire, Henley) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will consider the desirability of inserting, with reference to the 15th section of the Local Government Bill, words of interpretation to indicate that the term "main roads" includes every foot-path being part of a main road?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The question referred to by my hon. Friend is to be raised in Committee; and I will take care it is fully considered before the Amendment is reached.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—TRANSFER OF COUNTY BOUNDARIES.

MR. BIDDULPH (Herefordshire, Ross) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he will request the Boundary Commissioners to present the Report containing their general recommendations to Parliament at an early date, with a Schedule showing the area and population of the several parts of counties proposed to be transferred from one county to another, distinguishing the cases of wholly or nearly detached parts of counties from those whose transfer is recommended for other reasons, so that the House may be in possession of the Report and Schedule before discussing the Boundary Clauses of the County Government Bill?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have at present no information as to the date at which the Boundary Commissioners will be in a position to make a Report giving the details to which my hon. Friend refers; but I will communicate with the Commissioners, with the view of ascertaining within what time their Report will probably be ready.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH.

SIR GUYER HUNTER (Hackney, Central) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Would he state if it is the intention of Government to insert a clause in the Local Government Bill rendering it necessary for gentlemen appointed Medical Officers of Health to possess a Public Health diploma, such diploma having now obtained State recognition by the Medical Act of 1886, Section 21?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Under the Medical Act, 1886, a medical practitioner who has a diploma for proficiency in sanitary science, public health, or State medicine, which appears to the Privy Council or the General Medical Council to deserve recognition in the Medical Register, may have such diploma entered on the Register. I do not propose to introduce in the Local Government Bill a clause rendering it essential that a medical practitioner, in order to be qualified for holding the office of Medical Officer of Health, should hold one of the diplomas referred to; but, no doubt, the authority appointing the officer, in connection with the applications of the several candidates, will give due consideration to the diplomas which they may hold.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION OF THE EXCISE DUTIES.

Mr. **ROWNTREE** (Scarborough) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is proposed to make any re-adjustment in the distribution of the Excise Duties in aid of local purposes, so as to prevent injustice to those boroughs which will not be treated as counties under the Local Government Bill, and which, whilst taxed equally with other boroughs, have no main roads entitling them to any grant-in-aid in return?

The **PRESIDENT** of the **LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD** (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) (who replied) said: I presume that the hon. Gentleman refers to Quarter Session boroughs, in which at present the County Authority has no power to declare a road to be a main road repairable by the county. The Bill gives such a power, so that Quarter Session boroughs will, in future, possess a right to have their main roads declared such.

INDIA—NAGPUR—THE GOND RAJA

Sir **ROPER LETHBRIDGE** (Kensington, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Government of India recognizes the infant Gond Raja as the lawful representative of the ancient Kings of the Nagpur territory; whether, when the Government of India assumed the direct rule of that territory, the Crown Lands of the late Gond Raja (being also an infant at the time) were taken away, and a cash allowance of much less value settled on the family; whether the late Gond Raja, on coming to years of maturity, made complaint, and was informed that his complaint was barred by lapse of time; whether, in orders dated June 30, 1854, the Government of India stated "that this allowance will be upheld in all its integrity, without any abatement or reservation whatever;" whether, on the death of the late Gond Raja and the succession of his grandson, the present infant Raja, the cash allowance has been reduced to less than half; and, whether the guardians of the infant Raja have memorialized the Secretary of State against this reduction, and have stated that the reduced allowance is insufficient to meet the necessary expenses of the family?

The **UNDER SECRETARY** of **STATE** (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The present Gond Raja, who is the grandson and adopted son of the late Raja, has been recognized by the Government as the head of the Gond family, which once ruled in Nagpur before it was dispossessed by the Mahratta power in the middle of last century. When the Government assumed the direct rule of the Nagpur territory in 1854, on failure of heirs to the Mahratta ruling family, the Gond Rajas appear (from the records in the India Office bearing on the arrangement for the assumption of rule in Nagpur) to have been in receipt of an allowance of 125,000 Nagpur rupees. The family is still in possession of 48 villages, the claim to which seems never to have been interfered with; and there is no evidence of any lands (in no sense could they be called "Crown lands") having been taken away. The allowance continued to the Gond Raja in 1854 was the same as that hitherto paid by the Nagpur State. There is no record of any complaint as to the alleged substitution of a cash allowance for land having ever been made by the late Gond Raja. The quotation, which is correct, is taken from a letter communicating orders from the Secretary to the Government of India to the Commissioner of Nagpur. The paragraph in which that quotation occurs refers to, and is based upon, a paragraph in the Commissioner's letter, in which his opinion is stated that—

> "Generally these allowances should be upheld for the lives of incumbents, and when the allowance has been in the same family for more than one generation that it should be continued to a second life," &c.

It is evident, from the context, that the allowance was not intended to be guaranteed in perpetuity. On the death of the late Gond Raja the allowance was, in accordance with rules for the succession of Nagpur political pensions laid down by the Secretary of State in 1863, reduced from Rs. 1,06,837 9 as. 8 ps. (the equivalent of 125,000 Nagpur rupees) to Rs. 50,000. The present Raja also succeeds to the 48 villages held by his grandfather. The Ranis Moti Knar and Basant Knar have appealed to the Secretary of State against the orders of the Government of India, and their appeal has been rejected.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE gave Notice that, on the Indian Budget, he should call attention to the promise made by the Government of India to the Gond family, and to the way in which, in his opinion, it had been broken.

SAVINGS BANKS—CARDIFF TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANK.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether all depositors in the Cardiff Trustee Savings Bank, not sending in a formal claim to the official liquidator by the 20th of this month, will be excluded from sharing any sums recovered on their behalf from the Trustees and Managers; whether the only communication from the liquidator to the depositors is in the form of an occasional advertisement inserted in the local newspapers; and, whether, considering the lapse of time since the failure, that all the depositors' pass books are in the liquidator's possession, that many of the depositors are illiterate, and that many reside considerable distances from Cardiff, the Government will take steps to ensure that the liquidator shall either take the pass books as a sufficient proof of claim of the amount still due, or that he shall forward to each depositor a circular form of claim for his signature, and its return to the liquidator by the prescribed date?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The hon. Member is under a wrong impression in supposing that the Executive Government has any power to direct the liquidator as to the course he ought to take at any particular stage of the liquidation. The liquidation is conducted under the direction of the High Court, and it is from the Court that the liquidator must take his instructions. On inquiry, however, I learn that, finding that in response to the usual advertisements the claims of only a small proportion of the depositors had been sent in, the liquidator had decided to apply to the Court for directions to send a Circular to each depositor who had not sent in a claim, together with a form of claim to be filled up and returned.

THE BERLIN CONFERENCE—ARTICLE XXXIV.

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What notifications have been addressed to the Signatory Powers of the General Act of the Berlin Conference, as provided by Article XXXIV., since the signing of the Act in February, 1885; what are the territories to which those notifications relate; and, in how many instances possession has been taken, or a protectorate assumed, without objection being raised by any of the Signatory Powers?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government, and several other Powers, have made such notifications. If the hon Member will move for a Return I will see what Papers can be given. We are not aware of objections having been raised by other Powers in any instance.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE VOLUNTEERS—MUSKETRY PROFICIENCY.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT asked the Secretary of State for War, If, having regard to the limited practice and the difficulties as to ranges which impede the musketry proficiency of many Volunteer recruits, those members of the Force who fail to get out of the third class within the 60 rounds allowed by Government may still endeavour to qualify for the capitation grant under the new Regulations either at their own expense or at that of the corps?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) Under existing Regulations a Volunteer has three chances of passing into the second class. My hon. Friend proposes that if he fails to get out of the third class after these three attempts, and after firing 60 rounds of ammunition, he should have, at his own expense or that of his corps, a further opportunity of qualification. Unless carefully safeguarded, it is clear that this concession would give to the richer corps a great advantage over the poorer. But, looking to the difficulties which certain urban Volunteers have to encounter in respect of shooting, it may be desirable to make some concession in their case; but I cannot help thinking that the experience of the first year would be the best means of enabling us to settle this and some similar questions in a satisfactory manner.

POST OFFICE—INTERNATIONAL TELEGRAPHIC CONVENTION.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Postmaster General, If, before the terms of any Convention between Her Majesty's Government and the French Republic are finally agreed upon, every effort will be made to provide for the reduction of the cost of messages to the combined inland rates of both countries after the purchase-money has been recouped, and that, in the meantime, it should not exceed that combined rate of 1*d.* per word by more than ½*d.*, having regard to the large commercial interests affected, and also to the fact that submarine telegraphy over the longer distance between Great Britain and Ireland, or the Channel Islands, involves no advance on the British inland rate, and that the charge between France and Algeria is only 1*d.* per word?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I think I should explain to the hon. Member, with reference to his Question, that while no extra charge is made upon inland messages passing over the cables between Great Britain and Ireland and Great Britain and the Channel Islands, there is no question that the maintenance of those cables involves a considerable yearly loss. The negotiations with the French Government are still proceeding; and I can, at the present time, only say that I hope a substantial reduction in the present charge for messages passing between this country and France will be made.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—SHIPPING INDUSTRY — INCREASE OF LIGHT DUES.

Mr. ROYDEN (Liverpool, W., Toxteth) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the increase on light dues charged by the English Government on and after June 1, which amounts to about 16½ per cent on the rate hitherto charged, has been authorized by an Order in Council; and, why such a tax has been placed upon the British shipping industry at a time when it is so greatly depressed?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): On April 12 I informed a deputation from the Associated Chambers of Commerce that, in view of the practical insolvency of the Mercantile Marine Fund, it would probably be necessary to re-impose for the current year half of that portion of the light dues which was taken off in 1884. The Press gave the fullest publicity to that statement at the time; and I had reason to believe that the shipping interests were satisfied that it was a disagreeable necessity that this should be done, as I received no communications to a contrary effect. Consequently, an Order in Council was issued re-imposing that amount of light dues from June 1.

ARMS ACT (IRELAND)—GUN LICENCES.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Warburton, R.M., refused to grant a gun licence to Mr. William Cotter, of Breenymore, who holds an extensive farm; and, whether a local magistrate recommended the granting of the licence?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the answer to the first part of the Question was in the affirmative. The granting of the licence was recommended by a magistrate.

Mr. GILHOOLY: Will the right hon. Gentleman say why the licence was refused?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That is left to the discretion of the magistrate.

PUBLIC HEALTH—INSANITARY STATE OF THE REGENT'S CANAL.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether his attention has been called to the state of that portion of the Regent's Canal which passes through the north of Regent's Park; whether he is aware that the whole of the sewage of the Zoological Gardens is discharged into the Canal, thus making it an open sewer; whether he knows that an analysis of the water shows it to be saturated with offensive matter; and that representations have been made in vain both to the Directors of the Gardens and to Local Authorities; and, whether, if he has not been informed on these points, he will cause inquiry to be made, and, if necessary, take such precautions as may be needed for the protection of the public frequenting that portion of the Park?

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked, that the House might also be informed whether any action had been taken in this matter after the inquiry promised to him some time ago by the President of the Local Government Board?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): I have no knowledge of the inquiry to which the hon. Member (Mr. Lawson) refers. I had not received any complaint as to the state of the Canal until I saw the hon. Member's (Mr. Picton's) Question on the Paper. The Zoological Society hold their gardens on lease from the Office of Woods, and I have no control over them; but I have been informed, on the authority of the Superintendent of the Zoological Gardens, that the water in the Canal near the outlet from the Gardens has been frequently analyzed by the sanitary officer of the St. Pancras Vestry, and that, owing to the quantity of water flowing from the various tanks and reservoirs in the Gardens into the Canal, the water in the vicinity of the outlet was found to be in better condition than it was in other parts further up the Canal; that the drainage of the Zoological Gardens does go direct into the Regent's Canal; and that solid matter is not allowed to pass into the drains, but goes into cesspools, which are supplied as required.

MR. PICTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman, in the interest of the public, direct an analysis to be made of the water in the Canal as it passes through the Park?

MR. PLUNKET said, he had no objection to do what the hon. Member asked; and if the hon. Gentleman brought forward any statement in contradiction of that which he had just made, he would, of course, consider it.

CUSTOMS—EXAMINATION OF PASSENGERS' LUGGAGE AT LIVERPOOL, &c

MR. WOODALL (Hanley) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he is aware of the serious delay, confusion, and inconvenience caused by the present system of Customs examination at Liverpool and other English ports on the arrival of passengers by the great ocean steamers; whether it is true that at one time the necessary examinations were made in certain cases on board the vessels before passengers were allowed to land; and, whether, in the case of Transatlantic steamers calling at Queenstown whose owners are willing to provide proper facilities, he will consider the expediency of putting Customs' officers on board at that port, so as to ensure that baggage may be deliberately and effectively examined during what remains of the voyage, with the minimum of inconvenience, and with the advantage of avoiding detention on arrival in the Mersey?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): This Question has received the careful consideration of the Commissioners of Customs. Examinations were made on board before the baggage room on the landing stage was provided. The possibility of examining baggage *en route* between Queenstown and Liverpool has been frequently considered; but it was found that the proposal would involve considerable expense and be of doubtful convenience, and it has, therefore, been set aside as not practicable.

WALES — THE TITHE AGITATION — DISTURBANCE AT LLANEFYDD.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, at the tithe distraint sales at Llanefydd on May 17, before any act of violence on the part of the people or of the emergency men and police took place, Mr. Stevens, collecting agent of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, rushed at, assaulted, and held by the throat Mr. William Jones, of Nant Farm; whether Mr. William Jones had, prior to such attack upon him by Mr. Stevens, done anything beyond booing and groaning; whether, immediately on Mr. Stevens laying hold of Mr. William Jones by the throat, and before the people had taken any part in the struggle, an emergency man struck Mr. William Jones across the mouth with a loaded riding whip, while two or three other emergency men belaboured him with their batons and threw him into the ditch; whether at that time the emergency men and police turned round upon a small number of unresisting men in the road, and indiscriminately batoned women, boys, and old men alike; whether the force with which the police struck the people was such that in one case the policeman's baton was split in two; whether the number of the wounded, many rendered insensible and all suffering from scalp wounds, amounted to over 20; and, whether the Riot Act was read before the attack upon the people was made?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Constable of the County of Denbigh that Mr. Stevens did not rush at or hold Mr. Jones by the throat. Mr. Jones, who was a prominent leader of the disturbances, assaulted Mr. Stevens by striking him across the legs and pushing against him violently. The Chief Constable cannot say by whom Mr. Jones was struck. It happened in the general *melée* which followed an attack made by the crowd on the police. I understand that the persons described as a small number of unresisting men in the road were a noisy and angry crowd of some 300 or 400 men, the police numbering 25. One woman, who belaboured a policeman with a hedge stake, had the weapon taken from her. This was the only woman touched; no boys were struck, and one old man of about 60 was slightly struck, but he followed with the mob the next day. It was a fact that one policeman's baton was split. About 20 were injured; but they did not all suffer from scalp wounds, and no one was rendered insensible. The Riot Act was not read, the attack being made by the people and not by the police. From all the statements I have received on this subject I am of opinion that the police, far from exceeding their duty, have behaved with great moderation under very trying and difficult circumstances.

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman had received any statement from anybody but the Police Superintendent.

MR. MATTHEWS said, he had received his information from Mr. Stevens and several other persons whose names had escaped his memory.

POST OFFICE—CONTINENTAL MAILS—THE AUSTRIAN TRAIN SERVICE.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been called to the alterations in the Austrian train service to Calais, by which certain fast trains are withdrawn; whether the delay in the delivery of London letters in Vienna amounts to 18 hours, and the delay in the delivery of Vienna letters in London is even greater, and whether he will remonstrate against the changes in question; and, whether the Austrian Government now charges a new impost of two kreutzers on newspapers from England, and if that charge is warranted by the Postal Union Regulations?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have observed articles in the newspapers on this subject, and have instituted inquiry upon it. The evening mail now leaves Vienna at 5 p.m., instead of 3.25, and reaches London, *viâ* Calais, at 6 a.m. on the next day but one, instead of at 4 a.m. *viâ* Ostend. Letters from Vienna to London have, consequently, the advantage of being posted an hour and a-half later, while they are delivered at the same time. Some disadvantage may, I fear, be caused to English Provincial towns by the later arrival of this mail in England. There has been no alteration in the hours of despatch either of the day or night mail from London to Vienna, though I have reason to believe that the latter is now delayed for several hours at Cologne, and reaches Vienna about 10 hours later than formerly. I shall lose no time in addressing the Austrian Post Office as to the probability of any better communication being arranged. I am not aware that the Austrian Government charges a new impost of two kreutzers on newspapers from England. That Government established some years ago a financial impost of one or two kreutzers on foreign newspapers entering the Empire; but this tax is not a postal charge, and is not levied under Postal Union Regulations, which, of course, do not affect the general taxation of the countries belonging to the Union.

AFRICA (EASTERN COAST)—ITALIAN ACQUISITIONS.

Sir LEWIS PELLY (Hackney, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Can Her Majesty's Government afford information as to whether or not the statements which have recently appeared in the public prints are correct, that the Italians have demanded certain concessions at Kismayo or other points on the East African Coast?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Yes, Sir; it is true.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS) — RICHMOND PARK—SITE FOR A VICARAGE.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether the information as to the position of the site in Richmond Park or Petersham Park, on which it is wished to erect a Church of England Vicarage, has now been received; and, whether, if the request is complied with, similar grants of land in those Parks will be made to other Religious Bodies which may apply for them?

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether any application has been made to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests for the grant of a piece of land in Petersham Park or Richmond Park for the erection of a Vicarage; what answer has been returned to such application, if it has been made; and, whether, if Her Majesty's Government have not refused the application (if any), they will undertake to make no grant of land for any such purpose until an opportunity has been afforded to the House, on the Civil Service Estimates, or otherwise, of discussing the propriety of making a grant of Crown property for the purpose aforesaid?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University), in reply, said, the churchwardens had made an application for a site for a Vicarage as indicated in the Question. He had made inquiries, and he had come to the conclusion that he would not be justified in advising that such a grant should be made.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—GRATUITIES TO MONITORS.

Mr. MARUM (Kilkenny, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the non-payment by the Board of National Education of gratuities for instruction paid to monitors for the year ending June 30, 1887 (especially in reference to the Boys' National School of Stradbally, in the Queen's County) so long over due; and, whether the Commissioners have a considerable time ago promised payment forthwith, and yet the account is still unpaid?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Commissioners of National Education informed him that a change of teachers had taken place, and the payment of portion of the salary due to the incoming teacher in question was overlooked; but it had since been directed to be paid.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—REFUSAL TO GIVE EVIDENCE.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is the statement in *The Daily News* of May 5 correct, to the effect that a secret inquiry under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," was held by Mr. Hamilton, R.M., at Ballyconnell House, Cloughanely, County Donegal, the residence of Mr. Olphert, a local landlord, and that a man who refused to give evidence thereat was sent to Derry Gaol for seven days; and, is it in conformity with the Statute to hold such inquiries outside Court-houses?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Resident Magistrate informs me that there is no ground whatever for the statement in *The Daily News* referred to by the hon. and learned Member in this Question.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he would have any objection to afford an inquiry into this matter? Perhaps he had better read a telegram that he had received as the ground for this Question. It was from Mr. Waugh, Central News correspondent, and stated that a Star Chamber inquiry had been positively held at the house of Mr. Olphert. That was the authority, he presumed, for the statement; and as Mr. Hamilton gave this a point blank contradiction, and as it was alleged a man had been sent to gaol, he would ask the Government either to hold an inquiry into the matter themselves or afford the House an opportunity of doing so.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, as they had the statement of Mr. Hamilton that he had not only held no inquiry at Mr. Olphert's house, but that he had never been inside it, and the testimony on the other side being some newspaper correspondent, he did not see that anything would be gained by holding an inquiry into the matter.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Where was the inquiry held?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: In the proper place, of course.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether an inquiry had been held in any house belonging to Mr. Olphert; and whether several of Mr. Olphert's servants were sent to gaol for contempt of Court on refusing to answer questions?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not see that this had any reference whatever to the Question on the Paper. No inquiry had been held except in the place required by Statute.

POST OFFICE—EXPRESS LETTER DELIVERY IN BELGIUM.

Mr. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is acquainted with the system of express letter delivery existing in Belgium; Whether he can hold out any hope that a similar system will before long be adopted in this country; how far the anticipations, formed when the inland pattern and sample post was restored in the latter part of last year, have as yet been realised; and, whether there is reason to believe that the scale of charges laid down has proved satisfactory?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I am acquainted with the system of express letter delivery existing in Belgium; but the arrangements in force in that country are, in some respects, unsuitable for adoption here. I shall, however, shortly have before me the Report of a Committee which I lately appointed to consider in what way similar ends could be attained in this country; and I hope before long to be able to announce a decision in the matter. At the present rate the inland pattern and sample post packets posted during the first year will exceed 2,000,000; and the anticipations formed will, no doubt, before long be realized. I think the large circulation affords sufficient proof that the scale of charges is generally considered to be satisfactory.

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—SERVICE GUNS—SUPPLY OF AMMUNITION.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the fact that in September, 1886, the list of Service guns consisted of not less than 147 sorts of guns, of which 69 sorts were used in the Navy; whether each of these, except only some five or six, required separate ammunition; whether in a large number of cases, and especially in the case of guns of the modern breech-loading system then coming into use in the Navy, the difference between such guns was small, and the danger arising from mistakes as to the supply of ammunition to guns of so many sorts thereby further increased; whether this great variety of Service guns has been increased or diminished since that date, and to what extent; and, who is the official to whom responsibility would attach, in respect of guns ordered during (say) the last five years, should this variety of guns requiring separate ammunition prove detrimental to the Public Service?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): These numbers may be taken as practically correct, if every variety and mark of the same calibres of ordnance be included. The majority of smooth-bore guns are, however, practically obsolete, and are used merely for drill and saluting purposes. Others are converted as opportunity arises to later patterns, to take in some cases the same ammunition as that of other guns now in the Service. As a rule, each nature, in contradistinction to variety or mark, requires its own charge and projectile; but some charges and some projectiles are common to more than one nature. Some difference of charge arises from the fact that the first guns of a particular calibre may not be so strong as after certain improvements—such as chase hooping, for instance—they become. Every endeavour is made to make all guns of the same nature take the same ammunition; and as opportunity arises guns of early make are strengthened up to the same power as those of later design. The difference between calibres of guns was formerly smaller than with the new breech-loading system; and it is now so great that the risk of danger arising from supply of wrong ammunition is less than formerly. The variety of Service guns has been reduced. Whereas there were 20 different calibres or rifled muzzle-loading guns varying from 2·5 inches to 17·72 inches, there are now only 11 calibres of breech-loading guns varying from 3 inches to 16·25 inches.

MR. HANBURY said, his Question as to who was responsible for the great variety of guns had not been answered.

MR. E. STANHOPE: A number of officials will be responsible.

MR. HANBURY inquired whether the Director of Artillery was responsible?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I am not going to answer the Question in that way.

SIR WILLIAM PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.): Is it the fact that the guns of the *Pembroke* have no ammunition?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No; it is not the case.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—THE LAKE IN BATTERSEA PARK.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, with reference to the promise given on March 22, that measures would be immediately taken to cleanse the lake in Battersea Park, Whether he can now state when the work will be commenced; whether he is aware of the unsatisfactory condition of the drinking fountains in Battersea Park; and, whether the necessary steps to insure a supply of pure drinking water will at once be undertaken?

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): In the absence of the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire (Mr. Tatton Egerton), I have been asked to answer this Question. I have to state that since my hon. Friend the Member for the Knutsford Division stated on March 22 last that measures would be immediately taken to cleanse the lake at Battersea Park, difficulties have occurred which have prevented the work being proceeded with. The summer months have now begun; and as it would not be beneficial to the public health that the lake should be drained and cleansed during the warm weather, it is deemed expedient that the works should not be carried out until the end of the summer. As regards the drinking fountains, I am aware that their condition is at present not satisfactory; and I am happy to be able to inform the hon. Member that a tender has been accepted, and that a contract will shortly be signed for works which will enable a supply of pure drinking water to be provided for the fountains. I may add that the Park has only just been handed over to the Board, being a Park which the Act of last Session placed under their jurisdiction.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887, CLAUSE 24—THE WATERFORD ESTATE.

MR. MULHOLLAND (Londonderry, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the purchasers of the Waterford Estate, in County Derry, have applied to the Board of Works for a reduction in their annual payments, in accordance with the provisions of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," Clause 24; and, what reply, if any, has been made to their application?

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM (Lewisham) (who replied) said, he understood 12 applications for reduction of their annual payments had been received by the Board of Works from purchasers of the Waterford Estate. The matter was at present under their consideration, and no reply had as yet been made to the application.

UPPER BURMAH MINES—MR. BARRINGTON BROWNE'S REPORT.

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether Mr. Barrington Browne's Report on the Upper Burmah Mines has been received; and, whether the Government has come to a decision upon the agreement for working the mines; and, if so, whether the decision will be given at an early date, so as to avoid the loss of the season for getting the machinery to the mines?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): Mr. Barrington Browne made his first Report to the Government of India before he left India. He is now making a more elaborate Report, which will be completed in a few days. Till the further report has been received by the Government of India, no final decision can be arrived at; but no avoidable delay will take place.

DANGEROUS PERFORMANCES — FEMALE AERONAUT AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the performances on Whit Monday at the Crystal Palace of a female aeronaut, who ascended some mile and a-half into the air, hanging to a balloon by her teeth; and, whether he is prepared to take any steps for the suppression of such exhibitions?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No, Sir; I had not seen an account of this performance; but I am advised that the law does not prohibit public performances on account of their danger to an adult performer, and that I have no authority to interfere. The law leaves these matters to the good taste and feeling of the community, which, I hope, will always be sufficient to discourage any unseemly exhibition. I understand that the danger in this case is more apparent than real, as the woman is really suspended from the car.

BOARDS OF GUARDIANS—APPOINTMENT OF REGISTRATION OFFICERS.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If the Local Government Board have, by Circular or otherwise, directed the attention of the Boards of Guardians to the clause of the County Electors Act empowering them to appoint registration officers for country parishes; and, if not, whether they will do so without further delay?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Board, on the 29th of last month, addressed a Circular Letter to Boards of Guardians drawing their attention to the clause in the County Electors Act with regard to the appointment of registration officers.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—SECTION 8—TRANSFER OF POWERS TO BURIAL BOARDS.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the effect of Section 8 of the Local Government Bill will be to transfer to the Local Government Board all the powers now exercised by the Secretary of State in regard to burial matters; and, if so, why certain enactments relating to those powers are not included in the First Schedule to the Act; whether, when the powers and duties of Burial Boards are transferred to District Councils, such Councils will be subject to the Burial Acts, or to "The Public Health (Interments) Act, 1879," or will have the option of proceeding under either Act; and, whether Burial Boards will continue to exist in boroughs and to act under the Laws which now regulate their acts and proceedings?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Clause 8 of the Local Government Bill will not transfer to the Local Government Board any powers exercised by the Secretary of State in regard to burial matters. When the powers and duties of Burial Boards are transferred to District Councils those Councils will, in the exercise of those powers and duties so transferred, be subject to the Burial Acts. The Council, as the Local Authority under the Public Health Act, will have power to act under the Public Health (Interment) Act, 1879. Consequently, the District Council will be able to proceed either under the latter Act or under the Burial Acts, according to the circumstances. Under Clause 47 of the Bill the powers of Burial Boards in boroughs will be transferred to the Town Council as in the case of any other district. This clause does not at present apply to the scheduled boroughs; but it is proposed to amend the Bill so as to extend it to them.

GOLD AND SILVER COMMISSION—THE REPORT.

Mr. WIGGIN (Staffordshire, Handsworth) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he can state when the Report of the Royal Commission on Gold and Silver will be presented to Parliament?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Government have no cognizance of the proceedings of Royal Commissions, and are, therefore, unable to answer questions in regard to the progress made by them; but I have heard unofficially that the Members of this Commission are now engaged in the discussion of their Report, and, I therefore, presume it may be in the hands of the House before many weeks.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—PLEURO-PNEUMONIA.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) asked the noble Viscount the Member for Lewisham, Whether the Agricultural Department is satisfied that the Order in Council prescribing the slaughter of all animals affected with pleuro-pneumonia which had been in contact with animals so affected is being thoroughly carried out by Local Authorities throughout the whole of the United Kingdom; and, if not, what steps the Privy Council propose to take to have the Order universally enforced?

Viscount LEWISHAM (Lewisham) said, some little difficulty arose in carrying out the Pleuro-Pneumonia Slaughter Order in some districts in Great Britain when the Order was first issued, owing to a misunderstanding on the part of some Local Authorities; but, at the present time, the Order may be said to be carried out satisfactorily. The Inspectors of the Agricultural Department have visited nearly every outbreak in the country, with a view to ascertain what action has been taken by the Local Authorities, and to advise them generally upon the mode in which the Order should be carried into effect. In the district of the Metropolitan Board of Works the slaughter has not in all cases been carried out within the time specified in the Order. The Privy Council have, however, urged upon the Board of Works the absolute necessity for taking immediate steps in the matter, and the Board have given instructions for the Order to be carried into effect forthwith. The Agricultural Department have every reason to believe that a similar Order, passed by the Irish Privy Council, is being rigidly enforced under the supervision of officers of the Veterinary Department in Dublin.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND) — IMPRISONMENT OF MR. KILMARTIN.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, considering all the circumstances of the case of Mr. Kilmartin, his delicate state of health, and the fact that the sentence which he is now undergoing is in excess of that originally awarded, the Lord Lieutenant would remit the remainder of Mr. Kilmartin's imprisonment?

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) wished, before the Question was answered, to know whether the hon. and gallant Gentleman had Mr. Kilmartin's permission to ask the Question?

Colonel NOLAN replied that he had not spoken to Mr. Kilmartin on the subject. He put the Question entirely on his own responsibility.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The surgeon of Galway Prison reports that the prisoner referred to is in good health. I do not see anything in the case requiring the Lord Lieutenant to adopt the course suggested. There is ample provision in the Prison Rules for dealing with cases of ill-health when and if they arise.

INDIA—THE MERCHANDIZE MARKS ACTS.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, What action is being taken by the Indian Government with respect to the adoption of the Merchandize Marks Acts; and whether, having regard to the fact that falsely marked goods, which are precluded from shipment in British vessels, are being shipped to India from foreign ports, in foreign bottoms, her Majesty's Government will press upon the Government of India the duty and expediency of prompt action in this matter?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The action taken by the Government of

India has been to consult the Local Governments and Administrations, which is the first step in Indian legislation. A Bill has also been introduced to make the British yard, foot, and inch legal standards in India. The attention of the Government of India will be called to the allegation that falsely marked goods are being shipped to India from foreign ports in foreign bottoms.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPLICATIONS FOR FAIR RENTS—ROSCOMMON.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, at the last Spring Quarter Sessions, the County Court Judge of Roscommon dismissed the applications to have fair rents fixed of the following persons:—Anne and John Murray, tenant, against Arthur Mitchell, landlord; Patrick Brehenry, tenant, against Countess of Kingston, landlord; John Noone, tenant, against Messrs. Knox, landlord; whether the originating notices were served respectively on October 19, 1887, December 2, 1886, and May 30, 1887; and, whether the applications were dismissed with costs against the tenants, the sole ground being that the area on the originating notices was set forth in Irish instead of Statute measure?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me the facts are substantially as stated in the Question. In one case the dismiss was with costs.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Arising out of the answer given to the Question, may I ask the Chief Secretary whether this is a fair sample of the spirit in which tenants will be treated when their interests are handed over to the County Court Judges?

[No reply.]

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED INSURANCE FRAUDS AT BELFAST.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether the Government have yet taken any steps to discover the person who forged the name of Finlay M'Cance, J.P., Belfast, by means of which a policy of assurance was obtained on his life from the Equitable Assurance Company in favour of Mr. James A. Henderson, proprietor of *The Belfast News Letter.*

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University), in reply, said, the strictest investigation was being made into the facts of the case by the Attorney General, who had assumed charge of the prosecution on the part of the Crown, in order that all the persons concerned in the frauds might be made amenable. It would be obviously calculated to defeat the ends of justice if details were now gone into.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—COMMITTAL OF SHANE O'DONNELL—SECRET INQUIRY IN DONEGAL.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Shane O'Donnell, who has been twice committed by Mr. Hamilton, R.M., to Derry Gaol for refusing to answer the same questions put to him at a secret Court of Inquiry in County Donegal, is a poor rate collector and a relieving officer; whether Mr. Hamilton, R.M., threatened in the course of the inquiry that O'Donnell would be deprived of these offices held by him under the Board of Guardians unless he gave evidence to incriminate persons in the district in which he acted as rate collector and relieving officer; whether O'Donnell is landlord of Father Stephens, now also in Derry Gaol, and whether they resided in the same house; whether Mr. Hamilton, R.M., recently summoned three bank managers to produce the books of their respective banks, at a secret Court of Inquiry in County Donegal, with the view to ascertain the names of depositors, and the amounts of their deposits; whether he is aware that bank managers have not any authority to carry out of the bank the books belonging thereto; and, whether Mr. Hamilton had any authority for acting thus in these two cases?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Resident Magistrate replies to the first and third paragraphs in the affirmative; to the second paragraph in the negative. He summoned two bank managers before the preliminary inquiry. The Statute under which the inquiry was conducted appears to fully authorize the Resident Magistrate's action in the matter.

Mr. DILLON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he ever asks for information from anybody except the individual against whom the accusation is brought?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman must be aware, when he asks the Government for information, that all the Government can do is to go to the best source at their command. That they have done; and if the hon. Gentleman is not satisfied with the information I have given, there is no reason for his asking these Questions.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—EVICTION OF JAMES KILMARTIN, BALLINASLOE.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it true that, at an early hour on Friday morning last, Mr. Gilman, District Inspector, Ballinasloe, with a force of 60 police, assisted the sheriff's bailiffs in taking possession of Mr. James Kilmartin's holding, Shralea, Ballinasloe; whether it is a fact that Mrs. Kilmartin had to rise from her sick bed, and go out in the cold drenching rain with her little children, while in the state of health described in the following certificate:—

> "This is to certify that Mrs. Kilmartin, Shralea, has been under my treatment for some weeks, suffering from severe mammary abscess. In addition, she is on the eve of being confined, and in my opinion eviction from her home in her present condition may seriously imperil her life.
>
> (Signed) J. T. de la Hunt,
> L.R.C.S. and P. Ed.
>
> Ballinasloe, 1st June, 1888;"

and, is it a fact that, while this eviction was being carried out, the husband of this woman (Mr. James Kilmartin) was in Galway Gaol, suffering three months' imprisonment under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, for language used at a public meeting; and, if so, will the Government state what they purpose to do with regard to this case?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he was sorry he had not been able to obtain the information which would enable him to give an answer to the Question. He would, therefore, ask the hon. Member to postpone it.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—BALTIMORE AND GARNISH.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government intend acting on the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Public Works with regard to the erection of fishery piers at Baltimore and Garnish, in the County of Cork?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, as the House was aware, he was anxious to state the general policy of the Government with regard to the recommendations of the Commission on Irish Public Works; but he had not yet had an opportunity of doing so. Perhaps the hon. Member would wait until an opportunity arose.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—BANTRY PIER.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the contract for the repairs to the Bantry Pier has been given without inviting tenders; whether the contractor had agreed to effect them for a certain amount; whether he subsequently refused to carry out his arrangement; whether he has re-arranged for a much larger amount; and, whether the Clerk of Works is son to the County Surveyor, on whose recommendation the contract has been given?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.), in reply, said, that the hon. Member must be under some misapprehension as to the position of the works in question, as he (Mr. Jackson) was informed that they had been handed over to the County Authorities several years ago, and the Board of Works had no responsibility for or knowledge of the subject.

ADMIRALTY—COMPARATIVE STRENGTH OF BRITISH AND FOREIGN NAVIES—THE RECENT RETURN.

Admiral MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he will lay upon the Table the "recent Return prepared by competent Naval Authorities," showing the comparative strength of the French, Russian, and English battleships and cruisers in 1890, which was quoted by the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty in his speech at the dinner of the London Chamber of Commerce on March 21?

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Forwood) (Lancashire, Ormskirk) (who replied) said, he did not quote an Official Return, as implied in the Question. The Return, however, which had been moved for by the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Charles Beresford), and which was now in the hands of the printers, would furnish full information as to the vessels of war built and building by the principal European nations.

THE WRECK COMMISSIONERS—COLLISION OF THE "MOTO" AND "SMYRNA."

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the attention of the Board of Trade has been called to the collision between the steamship *Moto* and the ship *Smyrna*, which occurred in the English Channel on April 28 last, and which caused the immediate sinking of the *Smyrna*, and the drowning of 12 of her crew; whether it is the fact that although the weather was foggy the steamer was going at full speed with her sails set; whether, at the trial of an action instituted in the High Court of Justice in respect of the collision, the counsel for the *Moto* admitted that her captain (who was navigating the vessel at the time) was to blame, and the Judge decided that the *Moto* was alone to blame for the collision; whether the Board of Trade, after having intimated their intention to cause an inquiry to be held into the circumstances attending the collision by the Wreck Commissioner, have now stated that they do not propose to have such inquiry held; and, whether, considering the above facts, and that it is only in and by such an inquiry that the certificate of the captain of the *Moto* can be dealt with, it is desirable in the public interest that such an inquiry should be held?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): My attention has been called to the case referred to by the hon. Member. The deposition made by the master states that the *Moto* was going at the speed of eight knots, but does not say whether the sails were set. The Admiralty Division of the High Court of Justice, by which Court the case has been investigated, found the *Moto* alone to blame for the collision, and that Court is the Court of Appeal from the Wreck Inquiry Court. The Board of Trade had given notice that an official inquiry would be held; but that notice was given before they were aware that the case would be taken to the Admiralty Division by the owners of the *Smyrna*. As the case has been taken to the Admiralty Division and settled there, the order for inquiry has been countermanded in accordance with the usual practice in such cases. I am not aware that counsel for the owners admitted that the master was to blame; and the reports do not show that the Courts made any animadversions on his conduct. I am advised that this is not a case in which any further action can be usefully taken by instituting any inquiry before the Wreck Court; nor can the Board of Trade refer the case to a Local Marine Board for investigation, as they have no evidence which leads them to believe that the master has been guilty of incompetency or misconduct within the meaning of the Statute.

IRELAND—NEWTOWNARDS FARMERS' ASSOCIATION—INTERRUPTED MEETING.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the meeting of farmers recently addressed by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) at Newtownards, If he can now state whether the hon. Member was closely followed by a detective in a car from Belfast to Newtownards and back; whether District Inspector Ward called on the hotel proprietress who owned the hall where the meeting was to have been held, and caused her to refuse the hall for the meeting; whether he is aware that Mr. M'Master, P.L.G., who engaged the hall, is the Honorary Secretary of the Newtownards Farmers' Association, which holds its meetings regularly in the same hall; whether several constables were placed at the door of the premises on which the meeting was held, and whether these constables endeavoured to intimidate the people by staring into the face of every man as he left the meeting; and, whether the hon. Member for East Mayo was followed by three policemen wherever he went, on that evening, through the town of Newtownards?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Inspector General of Constabulary informs me the reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The District Inspector did call on the proprietress of the hotel. He did not cause her to refuse the room. I understand Mr. M'Master holds the office stated. I am not aware whether he had actually engaged the room on the occasion in question. Several constables were not placed at the door, but two were close to it when the persons who attended the meeting were leaving. These police did not endeavour to intimidate the people in the manner alleged, or in any other manner. The police, in view of former occurrences, apprehending violence towards the hon. Member if his presence were generally known, considered it advisable to keep him in sight, in order to preserve the peace if necessary.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly inform me for what purpose the police were placed at the door when the people were coming out, because I can say that, from my own knowledge, they did intimidate them?

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary, how he reconciles the answer which he has just read from the police with the reply he gave me this day week to almost an identical Question, when he said that, on the authority of the police, he could state that there was no truth whatever in the statements made?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Will the hon. Gentleman read out this Question, as I do not carry it in my memory? With regard to the Question asked me by the hon. Member for East Mayo, I can only repeat what I have already said—that the police did not intimidate, nor can I see personally how staring in the face of a man leaving a meeting is a method of intimidation.

MR. DILLON: Will the right hon. Gentleman inform me for what purpose these police were placed at the door?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he concluded it was for no special reason. He presumed they wanted to know what was going on, or possibly that there might be a disturbance. If the hon. Gentleman desired it, he would make further inquiries into the matter.

MR. DILLON: I am certainly curious on that point. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to inquire for what purpose these constables were placed at the door of the meeting; and whether it is customary for constables to be put on the door when Loyalists hold meetings?

MR. J. E. ELLIS said, he was perfectly prepared to read out his Question, as he had been invited to do by the Chief Secretary. His Question was—

> "To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, immediately preceding the visit of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) to Newtownards at the end of April, the District Inspector and the Head Constable of Police visited the proprietress of the Ulster Hotel, and urged her not to let the hall upon her premises (in which the farmers of the district usually held their meetings) for any meeting at which the hon. Member was to be present; and, whether, on the meeting of the farmers of the district, addressed by the hon. Member, being held elsewhere, constables were posted at the entrance to the room, and what was the object of this proceeding?"

The reply of the right hon. Gentleman, on the authority of the police, was that there was no truth in the suggestion conveyed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As far as I can understand the Question, there was no truth in it. The Question was, whether the police had gone to the landlady to urge her not to let the room?

MR. DILLON: So they did.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have said, in answer to the Question of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. E. Ellis)—and I repeat it—that there is no truth in that allegation. In answer to the hon. Member for East Mayo, I again say that the police did not go to the landlady with the view to urging her not to take in the hon. Gentleman.

MR. DILLON: But the right hon. Gentleman has passed over the most important factor of the allegation. ["Order!"] It is at the invitation of the right hon. Gentleman himself that his answer was read out. He has passed over the most important part of my Question. I want to know how he disguises the fact that in reply to my hon. Friend last week——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! It is impossible now at this stage to enter into a debate as to whether an answer given now is a different one to an answer given some time ago.

Mr. DILLON: I am extremely unwilling to prolong this more than is necessary. ["Order!"] I am simply now claiming the right which every Member of this House has of making a personal explanation, when the truth of what he stated is assailed. I stated in public that these constables were standing at the door of the room, and did intimidate people; and I say that the Chief Secretary stated in his place in the House that there was not a word of truth in that statement. I wish to know, on a question of personal explanation, from the Chief Secretary, does he adhere to the statement he has made that there is no truth in my assertion?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is not in the nature of a personal explanation. If the hon. Gentleman wishes further to elucidate the facts, it is quite competent for him to give Notice in the ordinary way.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I desire to ask the Chief Secretary, arising out of this Question, is it not usual for the Constabulary in Ireland to attend all public meetings?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir; I should imagine it is a very usual thing. But if either my hon. Friend, or any other hon. Gentleman wishes further information on the point, I shall be very glad to give it.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) would ask the right hon. Gentleman, if he would be good enough to tell the House what took place at the visit between the proprietress of the hotel and the District Inspector and constable?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I know what did not take place; but I cannot be expected to give a full account of the conversation between these persons. The District Inspector positively denies that he urged this woman not to admit the hon. Member.

Mr. M'CARTAN asked the Chief Secretary, whether he was aware that *The Newtownards Chronicle*, on the Saturday after the meeting took place, stated that a District Inspector Ward, accompanied by Head Constable Smith and another constable, did call on the woman and urge her not to admit the hon. Member for East Mayo; and, whether any inquiry has been made of Constable Smith?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is now giving his version of the story. If the hon. Gentleman is desirous of an answer, and puts a Question in the usual way, he will, no doubt, get it.

COAL MINES, &c., REGULATION ACT, SEC. 49—THE STOPES COLLIER, BOLTON.

Mr. LEAKE (Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that at the Stopes Colliery, Little Lever, near Bolton, belonging to Messrs. Fletcher and Sons, the men have never provided timber for propping in the mine, either before or since the passing of the Coal Mines, &c., Regulation Act, but that it has always been, and is, provided by the owners; whether the Statute makes it incumbent that "suitable timber shall be provided at the working places;" whether he is aware that at four adjoining pits belonging to Messrs. Fletcher—namely, at Outwood Colliery and Bradley Fold Colliery, the owners saw the timber in suitable lengths, and deliver it to the men at the working places, according to the provisions of Rule 22, section 49, of the Act, and that at the Stopes Colliery whole trees are delivered by the owners at the pit-brow, and required to be sawn in lengths by the men with hand saws, marked, and sent into the mine; whether the Act renders the owners criminally responsible if suitable timber for propping is not provided at the working places in the mine; whether, on the practice alleged to exist at the Stopes Colliery being reported to him by the Inspector, he can use his influence to suppress it, and to substitute one more consistent with the intention and provisions of the Coal Mines, &c., Regulation Act; and, whether he is aware of any agreement or arrangement between the owners and their workmen at this colliery which should prevent his influence being so used; and, if so, whether he can state what is the nature of the agreement?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): At the Outwood Colliery, near Bolton, I am informed that the props are piled in suitable lengths at the pit-brow, and the colliers make selection from them. I have no information as to the Bradley Fold Colliery. The Act does render the owners criminally responsible if suitable timber for propping is not provided at the working places; but, as I have before stated, the Act is silent as to the persons by whom the timber shall be prepared and selected. That is matter for contract between the parties. The practice at Stopes Colliery is not, therefore, inconsistent with the Act; and there seems to be no ground for the Inspector to interfere.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE AFFRAY AT MITCHELSTOWN IN SEPTEMBER LAST—THE CHIEF SECRETARY'S SPEECH AT BATTERSEA.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is correctly reported in the *Times* of May 17th, 1888, to have said at Battersea on the 16th, in speaking of the persons shot at Mitchelstown—

> "One of them at least unquestionably was killed by a ricochet shot,"

and—

> "I believe that was true of other unfortunate victims in this calamitous struggle;"

what was the name of the person killed by the ricochet shot, and of the other unfortunate victims respectively; and, whether he will lay upon the Table a statement of the evidence or information on which he has asserted the fact and declared the belief above mentioned?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am correctly reported in *The Times*. The name of the person first referred to was Lonergan. The names of the other victims were Shinnick and Casey. The evidence on which I made the statement was contained in the Report of the Departmental Commission which inquired into the conduct of the police. From that Report it appears that it is physically impossible to fire a rifle out of the window from which the shooting took place in the direction of the place where Lonergan was standing; and impossible to do so in the direction of the places where Shinnick and Casey were standing, without either leaning out of the window, or standing back from the window and sideways to it. These positions are both of them awkward and unnatural, and there is no evidence that either one or the other was adopted by the police. I stated, on a previous occasion, that I was prepared to show the Report confidentially to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley). That offer I repeat to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Will the right hon. Gentleman lay the Report on the Table of the House, or such part of it as had reference to the allegations mentioned in the Question?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I could not lay the Report on the Table; but I will consider the propriety of laying before the House that particular part of the Report to which I referred.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: And, possibly, if the right hon. Gentleman lays that particular part before the House, he will be good enough to have it accompanied by a slight tracing, which will give us some explanation of the positions he has alluded to.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR signified his assent.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) inquired from the Speaker, whether it was not in accordance with the Rules of the House that when a Member of the Treasury Bench rose to reply to a Question with reference to a Report, and makes reference to that Report, he was not bound to lay the Report upon the Table?

MR. SPEAKER: There is no obligation of that nature as regards a confidential Report; but as to official or ordinary Reports, if a Minister quotes from them he is bound to lay them on the Table.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman has stated that it is a Departmental Report. I presume it is the Report of the inquiry presided over by Colonel Turner.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: On the question of Order, I may remind the House I have not quoted from the Report.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Did not District Inspector Irwin expressly declare that he had himself seen the constables break the windows in order to fire, and then take deliberate aim?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is quite possible that evidence may have been given; but I do not see how it affects the statement I have just made.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Did not the police themselves swear that they took deliberate aim?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware that they swore that they took particular aim at the people who were killed. [*Cries of* "Yes, they did!"]

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, in reference to his speech, whether, if he did not quote the Report, he did not make it the basis of his answer to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Certainly I made it the basis, and I distinguish that operation from quoting it. I presume that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) is capable of making that distinction himself.

NATIONAL DEFENCE BILL—EMBODIMENT OF VOLUNTEERS FOR GARRISON DUTY — EMBODIMENT OF MILITIA REGIMENTS.

SIR HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, before proceeding to the third reading of the National Defence Bill, he will ascertain, by detailed Returns called for from each Volunteer regiment in the Kingdom, how many men in each regiment would be willing to be permanently embodied for garrison duty for a period exceeding two months; also, in each case, what remuneration would be considered by them as sufficient inducement for their being taken away thus from their ordinary occupations and the support of their families; and, in case it should be found that the average rate of wage earning of the men consenting to be thus embodied ranges between 25*s.* and 30*s.* a-week, whether he will allow it to be definitely ascertained what the total cost per month and year of such embodiment of the Volunteers would be, and from what source the funds for meeting it are proposed to be obtained hereafter; also, whether the right hon. Gentleman will undertake before the third reading stage of the National Defence Bill is reached, which provides for the permanent embodiment of the Volunteers whenever the Militia are embodied, to lay before the House a detailed Return showing on what dates each Militia regiment was embodied on the two separate occasions of the breaking out of the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny; also showing for how many years and months each regiment remained thus embodied, and in the case where a regiment proceeded out of England to the Mediterranean or elsewhere, the period in years and months during which regiment served outside of the United Kingdom?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): As far as my means of ascertaining go, the National Defence Bill has been heartily accepted by the Volunteers as a whole, who recognize that there is no intention by this Bill to alter the purpose for which they were raised, but simply to render their services more available when an invasion of this country appears imminent. Although the National Defence Bill gives the Government for the time being the power to embody the Volunteers whenever the Militia is embodied, neither this nor any other Government would ever resort to such a measure except in a time of the greatest national emergency. As, therefore, there is no intention of embodying the Volunteers for garrison duty like the Militia, I do not see that any special advantage would arise from calling for the Returns asked for by the hon. and gallant Gentleman. Whenever the country was in real danger I am certain that every Volunteer would come forward; and, short of that, no Government would ask them to do so.

SCOTCH UNIVERSITIES — THE MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he will give a Return showing, with respect to the proposed members of the Royal Commission on Scotch Universities, what degrees each Commissioner has taken at any Scotch University, and in what years?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): No, Sir.

MR. HUNTER asked the Lord Advocate, whether the Government had taken pains to ascertain whether the gentlemen who had been appointed Commissioners had any practical experience of the Scottish Universities; and if not, on what mode they had proceeded?

[No reply.]

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—OUTRAGE IN THE REGENT'S PARK.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) asked the First Commissioner of Works, If his attention has been called to the disgraceful scenes which are reported to have lately taken place in Regent's Park; if he will define the nature of the control and supervision of his Department, and state if the roads commonly known as the Inner and Outer Circle are within his jurisdiction, or under the jurisdiction of the police; if there are two separate Commissioners, termed the Paving Commissioners, one having authority over the outer gates by day, and the other by night; and who appoints the gatekeepers at those gates; and, if he will also state by whom those Commissioners are nominated, and by whom are their duties defined, and if they, or his Department, or the police, are responsible for the supervision of the grass land between Gloucester Gate, and the North Gate, where acts of misbehaviour are of frequent occurrence?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): I am advised that the whole of Regent's Park is by statute placed under the management of the Office of Works, and that the park-keepers and the Metropolitan police have within the limits of the park the same rights, duties, and responsibilities. Practically, the enclosed portions of the Park are placed under the control of park-keepers, who are responsible for the public peace within the enclosures; whereas the roads are patrolled by the Metropolitan police, who are responsible for the public peace upon those roads, and also upon the portions of the grass land between Gloucester Gate and the North Gate, which have not been up to the present enclosed. The Commissioners of Works appoint gatekeepers, who are on duty during the daytime at the outer gates; and, by an arrangement with the Paving Commissioners (which has been in operation since 1851), the latter supply night watchmen for duty at night. The Paving Commissioners are, I believe, appointed under the Crown Estate Paving Act, 1851. They have no authority or responsibility as to the preservation of the peace. I have been considering whether by an improved system of lighting the Inner and Outer Circle roads, or by any other means, order can be better preserved upon those roads; and I shall place myself in communication with Sir Charles Warren on the subject.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE COMPENSATION CLAUSES—THE LICENCE DUTIES.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield) asked Mr. Solicitor General, Whether he is correctly reported in *The Hampshire Advertiser*, of May 22, as having said, in answer to a question put to him at a public meeting at Southampton, that—

> "If the ratepayers wished to spend more than the 20 per cent raised on the licences in compensation they could do so; but in that case they would spend other money at their disposal, whether from rates or otherwise"?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CLARKE) (Plymouth): I see nothing in the quotation in the hon. Member's Question to make me doubt that it is an accurate report of the statement I made.

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE SUBWAY TO THE EMBANKMENT.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, With what object is the subway from Palace Yard to the Embankment kept closed to the public; how many constables are kept on duty in or about the subway; and, whether he will give instructions for the subway to be re-opened for the convenience of hon. Members and of the public generally?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, this subway was closed in 1885, with the view to the safety of the House; but he would communicate with the Office of Works, and see whether it could not be re-opened, at any rate for the convenience of Members. There were 10 constables on duty there; and he would consider the further question as to whether it could be opened to the public.

CENTRAL AFRICA—ASSAULT ON BRITISH OFFICER AT NYASSA.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can give the House any information with regard to an attack alleged to have been made on the Rev. W. P. Johnson, of the Universities' Mission, and Mr. Buchanan, Acting British Consul, at Nyassa; who the attacking party were; and, what steps are to be taken for their punishment?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): A Report from Mr. Buchanan states that, having landed, accompanied by Mr. Johnson, to seek an interview with the Chief Makangila, he and his party were roughly treated; one man was drowned, apparently in an attempt to swim off to the steamer. The only reason given by the Natives was that they objected to the exhibition by Mr. Buchanan of the Consular flag. No steps have been taken for punishment of the aggressors, who are far beyond the reach of Her Majesty's Forces.

RECONCILIATION TO THE SEE OF ROME — 13 *ELIZ.*, c. 2 — PETER'S PENCE—25 *HEN.* VIII., c. 21.

Mr. COMMINS (Roscommon, S.) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he is aware that it is provided by 13 *Eliz.* c. 2—

> "That by colour of bulls and writings certain wicked persons very secretly and most seditiously, in such parts of this Realm where the people for want of good instruction are most weak, simple, and ignorant, and thereby farthest from the good understanding of their duties towards God and the Queen, have, by their lewd and subtle practices and persuasions, so far forth wrought, that sundry simple and ignorant have been contented to be reconciled to the usurped authority of the See of Rome.
>
> "That for remedy and redress thereof, and to prevent the great mischiefs and inconveniences that may thereon ensue, if any person shall use or put in use within this Realm any bull, writing, or other instrument gotten from the Bishop of Rome, or from any other person or persons authorized or claiming authority by or from the Bishop of Rome.
>
> "Or shall obtain or get from the said Bishop of Rome, or any of his successors or the See of Rome, any manner of bull, writing, or instrument, written or printed, containing any thing, matter, or cause whatever, or shall publish, or by any means put in use any such bull, writing, or instrument, shall be deemed and adjudged by the authority of this Act to be guilty of high treason, and the offenders therein, their procurers, abettors, and councillors, shall be deemed and adjudged high traitors to the Queen and the Realm;"

whether he is aware that "The Statute Law Revision Act, 1863," repealed all the remaining portions of this Act, but left these untouched, and whether they are and remain a portion of the Revised Statute Law; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have any intention to introduce a Bill for the repeal of these provisions, which are severe upon Her Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects? The hon. Gentleman also asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the 25th *Henry* VIII., c. 21, amongst other things, provides that—

> "Peter pence had been taken out of the realm by the Bishop of Rome, who was to be blamed therein" (amongst other things) "for his using and beguiling the King's subjects, pretending and persuading to them that he had full power to dispense with all human laws, uses, and customs of all realms in all causes which be called spiritual, in great derogation of the King's Imperial Crown and Authority Royal contrary to right and conscience;" and "That no person or persons in this realm, or of any other of His Majesty's dominions, shall from thenceforth pay any Peter pence, or any other impositions, to the use of the said Bishop or the See of Rome, but that all such Peter pence should from thenceforth clearly surcease and never more be taken, perceived, nor paid to any person or persons in any manner of wise;"

and that these provisions of this Statute remain unrepealed by "The Statute Law Revision Act, 1863," which repeals other parts of the Act; and, whether Her Majesty's Government are now prepared to bring in a Bill to repeal these provisions of the Statute of *Henry* VIII.?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): Certain portions of the Act of 13 *Eliz.* c. 2, were repealed by the Act of 1883, as being no longer in force. But the substance of the Act in question was expressly maintained by the Act of 9 & 10 *Vict.*, c. 19; and, therefore, it would not have been right to have repealed the whole Act. There is not, in my opinion, any necessity to introduce a Bill for a repeal, as the Acts do not press upon any portion of Her Majesty's subjects. As regards the 25th *Henry* VIII., c. 21, the same answer may be given—namely, that it is not, in my opinion, desirable to repeal the whole of the Statute.

SAVINGS BANKS ACT, 1887—THE RULES AND REGULATIONS.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the Rules and Regulations under the Savings Bank Act of last Session will be laid upon the Table of this House?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: The criticisms of the various Departments concerned upon the Draft Regulations for the Post Office Savings Banks prepared by the Postmaster General are now being considered by the Post Office Authorities; and on receipt of the Postmaster General's Report the Regulations can be finally settled by the Treasury. The corresponding Regulations for Trustee Savings Banks have been drafted, and will be settled to correspond with the Post Office Savings Bank Regulations when finally approved. When finally settled, the two sets of Regulations will be laid on the Table of the House simultaneously. The Annuity and Insurance and Investment Regulations have already been laid upon the Table.

In answer to a further Question from Mr. Howell,

Mr. JACKSON said, the Regulations would be laid on the Table as soon as the Report was received from the Post Office. There would be no delay in settling the Regulations after the Report was received.

COMMITTEE ON IRISH RAILWAYS.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether a Committee was appointed by the Government of Lord Derby in 1867 to arrive at an estimate as to the value of the Irish railways, preliminary to purchase; whether the proposal was supported by 76 Peers and 90 Irish Members of both Parties; whether said Committee reported unanimously in favour of State purchase; and, what was the reason why the scheme was not carried out?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, the hon. Member had misunderstood the Reference made to the Committee. The terms of that Reference expressly excluded from consideration the question of the purchase of Irish railways by the State, and the Committee, therefore, made no recommendation on the point. He had no information as to the reasons which led the Government in power which came into Office in 1868, after the Report was presented, to proceed no further with the recommendations.

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS (IRELAND) —LAND IMPROVEMENT ADVANCES.

Mr. MARUM (Kilkenny, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the Board of Public Works (Ireland) have recently adopted a Rule suspending payments of instalments of land improvement advances where only one year's rent is due by the occupier, although it is customary to have a running gale upon such holdings, and hitherto there had been no stoppage of payments under such circumstances; and, whether, in view of the agricultural depression and the necessity for affording industrial employment, he will have the old practice reverted to?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): I am informed that the Board of Works has made no recent Rule such as that referred to; but the established practice is when there is no hanging gale to refuse to issue instalments after a year's rent is due, but when there is a hanging gale it is always recognized by the Board, and due allowance made for it.

HARBOURS OF REFUGE—DUNGENESS.

Mr. POMFRET (Kent, Ashford) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering the natural advantages of Dungeness, Her Majesty's Government are now prepared to sanction the formation of a harbour of refuge at Dungeness in lieu of the one that was to have been made at Dover?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Without contesting the statement of the hon. Member as to the natural advantages possessed by Dungeness as a harbour of refuge, I can only say that the Government are not prepared to give any pledge as to the formation of a harbour of refuge there.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—ADMISSION OF DYNAMITARDS TO THIS HOUSE.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to Questions 782 and 789 of the Evidence taken by the Select Committee as to the admission of dynamitards to the House of Commons; whether the order, said by Mr. Monro to have been issued through Mr. Speaker's Secretary to the hon. Member for Bermondsey for the admission of one of the alleged criminals is in existence, and could be laid upon the Table of the House; and, if so, would a Select Committee be granted to inquire into the manner in which this order came to be granted to an alleged dynamitard?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I have read that part of the evidence taken before the Select Committee of this House on the admission of strangers to which the hon. and learned Member calls my attention. The evidence has been fully considered and reported on by the Committee, and it was open to any Member of it to have pursued this particular portion of the evidence further if it was thought expedient to do so. Under these circumstances, I am not in a position to offer the hon. and learned Member another Committee; nor am I in a position to re-open the proceedings of this Select Committee.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: To-morrow I shall ask the noble Viscount (Viscount Ebrington), who presided over the Committee, why it was that the English Member who gave a ticket to a dynamitard was not summoned before the Committee?

Mr. LAFONE (Southwark, Bermondsey): May I, Sir, with the indulgence of the House, make a short personal explanation on this subject? I never gave any order of admission such as has been mentioned in evidence as given by me. The order was not an order of admission to the House at all; and I have never given orders for strangers to inspect the House without accompanying them myself; therefore, I am quite certain that, from first to last, there has been some mistake about this matter. If you will read the evidence you will see that Mr. Monro afterwards referred to the order said to have been issued by me, and remarked that, having since inspected the ticket, he found "it was not signed by Mr. Lafone, but by the Speaker's Secretary," and that it was stated to have been given to a visitor by Mr. Lafone. Mr. Monro might just as well have given the name of any other Member. I can only repeat that I have never given a ticket, and never been the means of admitting anybody to go over the House, without personally accompanying them.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I am sure the House will accept fully the statement of the hon. Gentleman; but I now ask, especially after what the hon. Member has told the House, showing that Mr. Monro was so grossly mistaken, whether the right hon. Gentleman can possibly see now any reason for not granting a Committee of Inquiry to take further evidence in reference to this gross mistake committed by Mr. Monro?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I really do not see that it is necessary that a fresh Committee should be appointed, or that the former Committee should be re-appointed. The former Committee that sat were capable of pursuing the inquiry further if they had thought fit; but they do not appear to have thought it necessary to do so.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the reason why some Members of the Committee were opposed to summoning the hon. Member for Bermondsey was that they wished to cast an unjust stigma on a political opponent?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I cannot say what the motives of the Committee were. I am only prepared to give the Committee full credit for desiring to do their duty to the House and the country.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): Does the right hon. Gentleman recommend the House to take any action in the matter; and when will he give facilities for doing so?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am not prepared to answer that Question without Notice. The hon. Gentleman must be aware that the time of the House is fully occupied; and I could not ask the House to embark on a discussion which is likely to be prolonged. If, however, I received an assurance of a general desire on the part of the House to consider the Report, I would at once afford an opportunity of doing so.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he would ask Mr. Monro can he give any explanation with regard to the point blank contradiction of his testimony by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Lafone); and if he would tell the House what was Mr. Monro's exact position in Scotland Yard?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) said, he was afraid he would have to ask for Notice of that Question, for his memory could not carry the information that would enable him to answer off-hand.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked the right hon. Gentleman, whether the evidence was that the Speaker's Secretary had issued the order, which order was said to have been given by the hon. Member for Bermondsey to one of these suspected parties; and, whether he would refer to Mr. Monro the distinct contradiction of his statement by that hon. Gentleman; and if he would tell the House what was Mr. Monro's exact official position?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, that Mr. Monro was one of the Assistant Commissioners of Police. He presided over the Criminal Investigation Department. If the hon. and learned Gentleman wished for any explanation of Mr. Monro's evidence he must give Notice of the Question.

THE NAVAL AND MILITARY DEPARTMENTS—THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he was now in a position to inform the House of the names of the Gentlemen who were about to serve on the Royal Commission under the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington)?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I think I have already stated the terms of the Reference to the Commission; but perhaps it would be convenient if I stated them again. They are as follows:—

> "To inquire into the civil and professional administration of the Naval and Military Departments, and the relation of those Departments to each other and to the Treasury; and to report what changes in the existing system would tend to the efficiency and economy of the Public Service."

The following are the names of the Gentlemen who will serve on the Commission:—The noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) (Chairman), the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), Lord Revelstoke, Mr. Thomas Henry Ismay (Shipowner, of Liverpool), General Brackenbury, Admiral Sir Frederick William Richards, K.C.B., the hon. Member for the Evesham Division of Worcestershire (Sir Richard Temple), and the First Lord of the Treasury.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

In reply to Mr. Bradlaugh (Northampton),

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, there was no probability of the Lunacy Law Amendment Bill being reached to-morrow. With regard to the Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill, he had ascertained the feeling of the House so far as he could, and it appeared to him to be in favour of referring it to the Grand Committee on Law. The Bill would accordingly be referred to that Committee.

WAR OFFICE—HYPOTHETICAL INVASION OF THIS COUNTRY.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) asked, Whether the First Lord of the Admiralty would lay on the Table the Paper to which Viscount Wolseley referred when he stated that 150,000 tons of shipping would be sufficient to convey 100,000 men across the Channel, and that what the noble and gallant Viscount said the other night, that 480,000 tons would be required, was incorrect?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing), in reply, said, that there was no such Paper—it was a calculation; and the statement he made himself he believed was correct.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: Will the noble Lord lay the Memorandum to which Viscount Wolseley refers on the Table?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he did not understand Viscount Wolseley to say what the hon. Baronet had imputed. Viscount Wolseley said that in *The Soldier's Pocket Book* an estimate had been made of the minimum amount of tonnage required to convey individual soldiers or horses.

Sir WILLIAM PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.) asked, whether, in the noble Lord's estimate, he took account of the guns without the ammunition?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes; the ammunition is included.

Colonel BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince): I should like to ask, whether these 100,000 men are supposed to be brought across the Channel in one trip?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: The calculation which I laid before the House the other day was based upon the assumption that that was the amount of tonnage necessary to bring over an Army of 100,000 men, composed partly of Artillery and Cavalry, with a certain quantity of stores, packed as closely as possible for a short voyage.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked, whether it was true that there was no ammunition, except for experimental purposes?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: No.

NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—RULE 2 (ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE).

TITHE DISTURBANCES IN NORTH WALES—ACTION OF POLICE AND EMERGENCY MEN.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the attack by emergency men and police upon men, women, and young persons attending tithe distraint sales at Llanefydd, Denbighshire, on May 17th, and the action taken consequent thereon by Denbighshire magistrates in issuing a proclamation, and calling in the military to carry out tithe distraint sales in various districts of the county; but the pleasure of the House not having been signified,

Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen:—

Mr. T. E. ELLIS said, he regretted to have to intervene between the House and the detailed discussion of the Local Government Bill. It was a misfortune that so little was known in Parliament or in England of the occurrences which had taken place, or the sufferings of the peasants on the Welsh hills, and there was no Minister for Wales with time and opportunities to watch the proceedings and to hold the balance even between the parties in the tithe struggle. The events to which he wished to refer took place on the 17th of May, the day before the Whitsuntide Recess. As soon as the House re-assembled he gave Notice to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary of a Question, which he intended to put on the following Monday. The Question was put on the Monday; but the reply made by the right hon. Gentleman was so evasive and so unsatisfactory, and so at issue with the facts, that he had been compelled to put a further Question that day. The statements made by the right hon. Gentleman, in answer to the Question, were not only inaccurate and misleading, but some of them absolutely false. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Clergy Defence Association had been constantly distraining for tithe, and selling the distrained stock without intermission since Christmas. They had now reached Llanefydd, a hill district, a short distance from the town of Denbigh. On the occasion of the struggle, to which he wished particularly to refer, a crowd assembled that was estimated by the Chief Constable, according to the Home Secretary, at 300 or 400. They had just visited a homestead called Bryngwyn, and the mass of the crowd numbering 300 or 400 entered a field on one side of the homestead, while Mr. Stevens and the emergency men and police entered into the road on the other side, and the only people present besides Mr. Stevens and the emergency men were some 50 or 60 men, women, and children. He entered into this matter because there was a crucial difference between the statement of the Home Secretary and those of the people of the locality.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) asked what was the date referred to by the hon. Member?

Mr. T. E. ELLIS: The 17th of May. There were not more than from 50 to 60 in the crowd which was attacked by the emergency men and the police. It was a misfortune that the events were not reported in full by the papers that were accessible to hon. Members; but the local papers, some of them in English, and some of them in the vernacular, had published full reports. The first paper he would quote from was *The Wrexham Advertiser*. He believed the account given in this newspaper had been substantiated by various bystanders. The report said—

"The unfortunate row commenced when the majority of the crowd were at the homestead (Bryngwyn). Mr. Stevens and his emergency men were standing outside in the open place, and a young man was hissing, as is not unusual at such events, and being close to Mr. Stevens, who appeared not to like the noise, he caught hold of the man's throat and pushed him away. At that moment an emergency man struck him from behind with his staff, and the young man returned the blow by cutting his face with a stick."

He (Mr. T. E. Ellis) did not mean to justify this use of a stick when a man was not attacked; but when attacked by an emergency man from behind, and surprised by a blow from a staff, this young man, William Jones, certainly did return the blow with a stick.

"Two more emergency men then attacked him; he was thrown down into the hedge with an emergency man upon him, and received four severe wounds upon the head. At this moment the police and emergency men made a raid upon the small number of unresisting men in the road, and used their staffs unmercifully upon women, boys, and old men alike."

He would quote also an account of the attack from another newspaper, *The County Herald*, not published in the same town, and the report in which was supplied by another correspondent. *The County Herald* said—

"After going round the building once or twice, Mr. Stevens, his men, and most of the police went into the road, most of the crowd remaining in one of the fields.

Therefore, the statement that the emergency men were outside is corroborated by two independent witnesses. The writer of *The Herald* report goes on to describe the attack made by the emergency men and the police on the crowd—

"How the row began it is difficult to say, but it is stated that a young man kept booing right in Stevens's ear, and the latter jumped at his throat. The man then attempted to push him, when an emergency man came up and knocked him down with his staff. The police immediately pulled their staves out, whether by command or not we are unable to say, and began bâtoning indiscriminately. Men were knocked down without the slightest provocation. Blood was to be seen streaming on all sides. Men were lying down on the road insensible, or carried away by four or five of their friends. All were suffering from ghastly scalp wounds, and many suffered keenly from the loss of blood The sight of some of the wounded was awful. The blood flowed in such a proportion from the top of their heads till it congealed on their necks, face, and shoulders, presenting a sickening appearance. Such was the force with which the police struck their unoffending victims, that in one case, at least, a policeman's staff was split in two, and the half of it, with the number of the policeman on it, is now in the possession of one of the witnesses of the affray. Another one dropped his staff altogether. Of course, all those bludgeoned did not take their dose quietly, and a policeman and an emergency man were also wounded, but only slightly. One big, burly policeman, evidently with much more strength than brains, was seen to rush at a man who was trying to get away from the scene, and, using all the force he was capable of, to knock him down with his staff. Men who had been struck down once were again struck when on the floor."

The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary said that there was only one man who received a scalp wound; but, knowing too well the nature of the information sent by police authorities in Wales and Ireland to the Government, he (Mr. T. E. Ellis) took the precaution to consult the medical officer, who thus reports—

"In answer to your inquiry concerning the condition of the wounded men whom I had to treat at Llanefydd, on the occasion of the disturbance in connection with the collection of tithe, I beg to say that on my arrival I found 16 or 17 men and boys of varying ages—one old man of 73, another of 60, and youths of 17 and 18. They were suffering from scalp wounds of different degrees of severity. In some cases there were three or four wounds on the same head."

He found in the newspaper the names of more than 20 people who were seriously injured, their ages varying from 17 to 74. The doctor added that—

"Hugh Roberts, of Plas Cwtta, was seriously ill for several days suffering from concussion of the brain."

This man had only just come upon the scene, like several others. They had done nothing whatever, and some of them were not anti-tithers at all, but were in sympathy, if anything, with the authorities, and were only there in order to see what happened. He thought he had been able to show, from the few figures that he had given, that the attack was wanton, brutal, and in some respects that it was incredibly cruel; that old men of 60 and 74 were knocked down by the emergency men and police, and after they were knocked down were bâtoned on the head while upon the ground. It was not, therefore, too much to say that such an attack was incredibly cruel. Assuming that the young man, William Jones, was acting illegally, or had done anything violent in booing and groaning, there were 30 or 40 policemen who were quite capable of taking him into custody. But what happened? This man hooted and groaned at the tithe collector, who rushed at his throat, and immediately after an emergency man hit him with a riding whip. As soon as the attack was made on this youth, the emergency men turned round on the crowd and attacked them indiscriminately, hitting with their bâtons old men, women, and children alike. Now it seemed to him that, in cases of this kind, the police should be very careful not to provoke the crowd and engage them in a conflict. What he complained of, above all, was that these emergency men, who were nothing more than brigands and bandits in semi-military uniform, armed with the regulation police bâton, should have been let loose upon a crowd in this scandalous and indefensible manner. They were told, a short time ago, at the Winter Assizes at Anglesea, by Mr. Justice Wills, that "those who had to enforce the law should do so with the minimum of annoyance and inconvenience." Was it not a grim commentary on that advice that these emergency men should have been sent in semi-military uniform, furnished with police bâtons to use on the heads of the unresisting crowd? It might be said that the people had their own remedy, and that they could summon the emergency men and police before the magistrate. But was that the fact? What the magistrates did in face of this wanton attack was to publish in hot haste a proclamation calling attention to the illegality of men meeting together and using violence. Not content with warning the people of the provisions of an Act of Parliament, they went on to refer to the proceedings at Llanefydd as riotous, disorderly, and illegal. That was nothing more nor less than condemning them at once. Was it to be expected that people would ask for reparation from magistrates who had already prejudged the case, and threatened them with fine and imprisonment? Not only did the magistrates act in that manner, but they directed a troop of Lancers to come in and do the duty of the tithe collector. A private meeting of the magistrates was held at Denbigh, in which it was decided that the military should be called in, in order that they might accompany the tithe collector or emergency men who were engaged in the duty of collecting ordinary debts. Now, he maintained fearlessly that there was no occasion whatever, and no shred of justification, for calling in the military to do the work of tithe collecting, and to summon a detachment of Lancers at the cost of the county of Denbigh. If the Chief Constable of Denbighshire had used proper discretion, and had followed the example of the Chief Constables in Montgomeryshire and Anglesea, there would have been no occasion for calling in the military at a very heavy expense. The use of military for ordinary tithe collecting was utterly subversive of freedom and Constitutional rights. In another district, some miles distant, the military had been ordered to encamp for weeks in the field of the Vicar. His (Mr. Ellis's) opinion in regard to the use of the military for the collection of tithes was not a personal opinion of his own, but was already contained in what had become a State Paper. At the time of the crofters' disturbances in Scotland, this question was brought before the Government of the day. The authorities, as soon as they found themselves in any difficulty, asked for a contingent of Marines and soldiers; but what did the then Home Secretary, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) say in answer to the application? His reply was—

> "The duty of preserving the peace and exercising the law in a county rests upon the county authorities who are by statute authorized to maintain a police for that purpose. The number of the force must necessarily depend upon the state of the county and nature of the service; but recourse should not be had to military aid unless in case of sudden riot and extraordinary emergency, to deal with which police cannot be obtained and soldiers should not be employed upon police duty which is likely to be of a continuous character."

In this case the military were sent not to quell a riot or to meet a case of emergency, but for the work of collecting tithes. In the district of Abergele and Llanfairtalhaiarn, a district several miles further off, the military had not been brought in in order to keep order. He might be told that all these disturbances in North Wales were due to the obstinacy of the farmers and peasants in not quietly paying their tithes. Now, the farmers and peasants throughout the whole of Wales had exercised the Constitutional right given to them in order to declare to the country generally what their views were in regard to the payment of tithes. He did not propose to enter into that question now. It was, however, a notorious fact than an overwhelming majority of the Members for Wales had been sent to the House of Commons in the last three General Elections to ask that the tithe should be used for some national purpose. Hitherto, the House of Commons had paid very little heed to the prayer of these peasants and farmers, or to that of the vast majority of the Welsh people. The Government refused last Session even to grant one night's discussion upon the question, although they knew it was a question which threatened social order in the Principality. Then what course had the farmers and peasants of Wales to take? They had to do the same as the other sufferers did in former times in England. They found themselves compelled to say that they would not pay the charge upon their land and labour, for a purpose repulsive and injurious to them, except under the compulsion of distraint. Although they were condemned by a Police Commissioner from London, the course they took was one which was justified by history, and certainly by Mr. Justice Wills, who presided at the last Winter Assize at Anglesea. What Mr. Justice Wills said on that occasion was—

> "If the people said they were not willing to pay for things which they did not like, and that they submitted to distraints so as to show their protest against the law, they would be perfectly justified in doing so. As long as they did that, nothing would be said against them. That was a kind of protest by which some of the best improvements in the laws, which years and years ago were found to be very oppressive, were brought about. This was a course which had been systematically carried out by the Quakers."

Perhaps the House would consider that to be very high authority for the course these peasants had taken, and he found in the Charge of Mr. Justice Wills that there was another little sentence which was worth repeating to the House, the Home Secretary, and all the authorities in Wales who were acting under him. The learned Judge said—

> "The Welsh people were very awkward to drive, but they could be led anywhere by a little kindness and consideration."

When the Chief Constables and the officers of the law treated them with kindness and consideration it was found that the Welsh people were very easy to lead. There was no people with whom a generous appeal found a more generous response; but when they tried to drive them there were no people who would struggle harder to resist those who were endeavouring to coerce and harass them. He confessed that he deplored exceedingly that there should have been any bad feeling in Wales in regard to this question. But he thought it was an insult to the Welsh people that the military should have been brought down there without cause. It was not only an insult, but a great financial loss to them; but, over and above all, it was intolerable that emergency men and the police should have been let loose to baton an unresisting and unoffending crowd. No doubt, it would be said that they ought to pay their tithes without requiring a process of distraint to be resorted to. If they wanted to face the Welsh question, and to bring it to a solution, they must do what the people of Wales asked them—namely, to devote the money to purposes that would be generally beneficial to the whole people. As long as they refused to do that, and brought forward coddling Tithe Bills, this struggle would go on. There were hundreds—nay thousands—of peasant freeholders in Wales who would pay no tithe except under distraint and compulsion. He gave the Government fair notice of that, and he did not do so without having investigated carefully what the condition of things and the facts were in Wales. Hon. Members on his side of the House had made up their minds once and for all that wrong-doing in Ireland must not go on unrestrained and unredressed, and he pressed them to make the same declaration in regard to wrong-doing in Wales. He appealed with confidence to Members on that side of the House to show to the Welsh people that they were not without sympathy in the struggle that was now going on. He also appealed to the House to listen calmly to an expression of opinion from the Welsh people themselves, and to remember, above all, that the Welsh people would not give up their rights and duties as a people. He asked the House not only to condemn what had taken place in Wales, but to stop the use of the military for the collection of ordinary debts.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Thomas Ellis.*)

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire) said, the state of affairs in Wales and the question raised in this discussion were extremely grave and important; and he was very sorry to see that when his hon. Friend rose to address the House a number of Members, especially on the Ministerial side, took so little interest in a matter concerning the welfare of one of the component parts of the United Kingdom as to walk out of the House. Hon. Members on the opposite side of the House resisted any appeal made to them for Home Rule, on the ground that the Imperial Parliament was both able and willing to discuss and decide properly any question affecting the interest of any portion of the Kingdom, and this was the way in which they chose to show their willingness and their capacity. He trusted that the Conservative Party, who were now charged with the important function of government, would not pursue the policy of ignoring grievances in regard to Wales which had led to such deplorable results in the case of Ireland. He could not but believe that if the standpoint occupied by the Welsh people was properly understood for a moment by the people of England, they would not hesitate to apply their minds to the solution of this and similar questions; and if the grievances which were complained of were once properly understood they would be speedily removed. He did not propose to enter into the historical aspect of the question; but it was impossible to consider the tithe disturbances in Wales without regard to the nature and object of the grievances which brought the people together. They had in Wales the collection of debts due to particular persons and applied for a special purpose, that special purpose being one with which the vast majority of the Welsh people had no sympathy whatever—enforced by the continuous presence of the military, which was in itself calculated to wound the feelings of a people who had been, if possible, too patient under a long course of neglect on the part of their rulers in England. The principle of military aid was that when a sudden emergency arose, with which the Civil Authorities were unable to cope, they should have the assistance of the discipline of regular soldiers to enforce that obedience to the law which the Civil Authorities were incapable of enforcing. In this case neither of these conditions existed—the civil power was not overmatched — and matters had gone on for a considerable time, and they would continue to go on until an equitable and proper solution was arrived at in the way that was desired by the great mass of the Welsh people. The tithes against which the Welsh people protested were applied to the purpose, not of religion in general, but of a particular form of religion with which the people of Wales generally were entirely out of sympathy, and for which proceedings like those at Llanefydd were scarcely likely to awaken any affection or regard. It was difficult to see what course it was possible for the Welsh people to take? Lord Salisbury admitted the other day, when on a visit to Wales, that Wales was pre-eminently a nation, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had said that when a nationality had a grievance it should express its sense of it in no uncertain terms. The Welsh people had done so. How could they express their sense of their grievance more forcibly than they had done? They had returned a large majority of Members to Parliament pledged to settle the Tithe Question and that of the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. They had exhibited their distaste and their grief at the methods adopted to enforce a particular form of religion by the presence of military and armed policemen; and if the account given by the Welsh newspaper authorities was only true in part, the authorities, in their attempt to enforce the collection of the tithe, took a course which was most calculated to provoke the people. Overborne, beaten, and harried by the police and the military, what refuge had they? If they came to that House the Ministerialists walked out, and evinced no interest in the subject, returning only to record their votes against the Representatives sent to the House by the Welsh people. Then, to what Constitutional source were they to apply for a remedy for this state of things? It was said that they had a remedy in the judicial tribunals in their own neighbourhoods—that they had the magistracy in their own country. [An hon. Member: Hear, hear!] His hon. and gallant Friend said "Hear, hear!" It only showed how little he knew of the constitution of the Welsh magistracy. He was himself so honourable and gallant a man that he could not understand how the magisterial system worked in Wales. The magistrates themselves were mainly selected from one class of the people, from the upholders of one form of religion, and it was not in accordance with the ordinary forces of human nature that they should expect any amount of proper sympathy from them with the grievances of the people. But the magistrates seemed to have prejudged the case; if they had contented themselves with an exposition of the law, whether that exposition had been right or wrong, there would have been no occasion to trouble the House with it. But, instead of doing so, they prejudged the question by issuing a proclamation authoritatively. The proclamation said that the Justices of the Peace of the Division assembled in Petty Sessions—he did not know whether it was a hole-and-corner assembly or not—had been informed that serious disturbances had recently taken place. Who was it that informed them? Had they the same information as his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who had to rely for his information upon the Chief Constable, who was himself one of the accused party, or upon Mr. Stevens who was also accused? The magistrates said that they had been informed of the recent disturbances which had taken place in the Division in regard to the collection of tithes. They desired to point out that two or more persons assembling together and conducting themselves in a turbulent and violent manner, and showing an apparent tendency to enforce their demands by violence, and making a great noise—as many hon. Members opposite often did—or acting in any way calculated to inspire the people with terror, or to intimidate any person from the performance of his duty, committed an offence which rendered them liable to imprisonment with hard labour. As he had said, if the magistrates had contented themselves with an exposition of the law, it would not have been necessary to raise that question in that House. They might have shown their knowledge, or their ignorance, and the House of Commons would have passed it over in contemptuous silence; but they went on to show their real purpose, and here it was that he ventured to differ from the Home Secretary as to the construction which the right hon. Gentleman placed on the proclamation the other day. The magistrates in the proclamation proceeded to say—

> "The Justices further desire to point out that such tumultuous and riotous proceedings as had recently taken place in Llanefydd were unlawful, no matter what might be the cause or object of them."

From whom did the magistrates obtain their information? Presumably, from the same sources which supplied the right hon. Gentleman with material for answering the Question put to him in that House. Whom did the Justices mean to describe as authors of the tumultuous and riotous proceedings? No hon. Member would believe that the police were included by them among those who were alleged to have been engaged in unlawful doings; but the fact was clear that the police were the cause of those riotous and tumultuous proceedings. That the magistrates intended, however, to point out the police and bring them under their censure he did not for a moment believe, and if not the proclamation is a condemnation by them of the people beforehand; no legal inquiry having been held or evidence on both sides produced and taken. The Justices in their proclamation declared that the law must be respected, and the peace preserved, and they gave notice that all persons who disturbed the peace of a district by taking part in any unlawful assemblies would be proceeded against according to law. That, however, would depend on what the assembly was. In this case, the police were the culprits, if there were a tithe of truth in the reports of the newspapers which had been quoted by his hon. Friend. Unfortunately police information was, as a rule, one-sided, and whether intentionally or not was often untrue, and dangerous to be relied upon; and thus it had become necessary, in order to preserve peace and order in Wales, that attention should be called to the subject. His fellow-countrymen were essentially a peaceful and quiet people. If hon. Members knew how just the complaints of the Welsh people were; how constantly they had been neglected; if Englishmen, instead of declining to trouble themselves with the affairs of a small nationality like Wales, knew, as he knew, that there was no more patient law-abiding or religious people than the Welsh—he did not suppose that they were altogether without faults—they would pay more attention to their grievances. He did not claim that the Welsh were exempt from faults any more than other nationalities; but he did say that a better people, under a system which had ignored them for years, than the Welsh people it would be impossible to find. The Welsh people were not anxious to get rid of the mere payment of the money which was demanded of them for tithe; what they desired was that it should be paid and devoted to national and not to sectarian or Party purposes. He had as strong a desire as any man for the preservation of peace and order; but he thought the authorities ought to be most careful in enforcing the law not to display an array of arms, or call in unnecessary forces, which were only calculated to provoke a spirit of retaliation. It was to the attempt to enforce the claims of a particular form of religion by "Apostolic blows and knocks" that the disorders were to be chiefly to be referred. All who knew the Welsh people knew that they were only too ready to yield to any kind appeal that was properly made to them. The root of the evil consisted in this—that they had a disinclination to see their scanty supplies taken away from them for the support of a system which they did not believe in, and with regard to which they were altogether out of sympathy. Therefore, he deplored the refusal of the Government last Session to give the Welsh Representatives even one evening for the discussion of this great grievance; and he joined with his hon. Friend the Member for Merionethshire in pressing on the Government that, however unimportant and however patient they might deem his fellow-countrymen, it was absolutely necessary to bring their minds fully to bear on what the Welsh people alleged to be their grievances. If they would only once do that, the English people would soon be convinced that those grievances were no sham or fancy grievances, and that they prevented them from fulfilling what, if they had fair play, was their destiny in the future. He, therefore, took this opportunity of earnestly appealing to the Government and to the House to bestow some attention upon Wales. It was scarcely an exaggeration to say that Englishmen knew much more of the internal condition of Japan than they did of the internal condition of Wales. If they refused to enlarge their knowledge and apply themselves to the subject, there was no alternative but to give to the Welsh the management of their own affairs. There were some who ought to know more, both in reference to Wales and Welsh literature, and yet a highly respected Member of that House had recently declared that Welsh literature was nothing but a few fragments of ancient poetry. If that ignorance prevailed in regard to Welsh literature, what was likely to be the state of facts with regard to the condition of the country and the habits and feelings of the people?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I am bound to remind the hon. Member that by the Rules of the House the discussion must be kept closely to the definite point which has been raised, and that is the attack by emergency men and police upon men, women, and young persons attending tithe distraint sales in Denbighshire on the 17th of May.

Mr. BOWEN ROWLANDS said, he would certainly comply with the injunction laid upon him by the Chair. He was just winding up the few observations he intended to make by expressing a hope that this opportunity would serve to impress on the minds of hon. Members of that House and the Government the necessity of making itself better acquainted with the wants and necessities of Wales. If they did so, he was satisfied there would be no further necessity for onslaughts to be made on the people by the police, nor for Motions for the Adjournment to be made in that

House to secure the attention of the Government to the grievances of Wales.

COLONEL CORNWALLIS WEST (Denbigh, W.) said, when he came down to the House that afternoon he had no information that there was to be an attack made upon the magistrates and police of the county which he had the honour to represent. He had not, under the circumstances, prepared any defence, and would, therefore, only state, in reply, that which was within his own knowledge. The action of the magistrates had been strictly legal, and the proclamation was issued with the sole desire of preventing future trouble, and to warn the population of the risk and danger they incurred by acting as they had repeatedly done. It was not a fact that the military had been called in before the police were made aware that they were unable to cope with the difficulty. He knew, as a matter of fact, that the police attended in small numbers by order of the Chief Constable, who himself came with only two men to see whether it was possible to deal with the matter quietly, and show the people that he had some consideration for them; but his attempt was not successful. He was followed by a howling crowd of 500 or 600 people. The same thing occurred again, and a meeting of the Justices followed, at which it was decided that there should be superior force present in order that the law should be carried out. What otherwise could the magistrates have done under the circumstances? There was a law which they were compelled to carry out, and they had done no more than their duty compelled them to do. The feeling of the people had been excited to such an extent as to call together large crowds, and it was not reasonable to suggest that the police were to allow themselves to be beaten off the field. He contended it was perfectly justifiable for those who were responsible for the peace to see that the law was carried out, however disagreeable it might be to those to whom it applied. He believed there might be difference of opinion with regard to the payment of the tithe, but the objection here was not alone to the portion of the tithe for Church purposes; he regretted to say that in his district there was an objection to that which went to support the schools in the locality. The people had been led by the Radical Press to believe that the payment of the tithe, in any shape, was objectionable, and that they were right in refusing to pay it. It had been to him the cause of the greatest possible sorrow to see what had been going on; and, believing that the agitation had been got up by men who urged the crowds to attend, he felt that the sooner a stop was put to the system the sooner would the peace of the country be restored. So far as the magistrates of the county and the Chief Constable were concerned, he believed they were actuated by the most humane motives, and, moreover, that the calling in of the soldiery had been the cause of preventing much that would have otherwise occurred, inasmuch as the soldiers at the present moment were on the best terms with the people of the district.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) said, that for 17 years before his hon. and gallant Friend was returned for his Division he had represented the County of Denbigh; and, as one of the oldest Welsh Members of the House, he begged to tender his thanks to the hon. Member for Merionethshire (Mr. T. E. Ellis) for introducing this subject. In his opinion a gross outrage had been committed. The correspondent of *The Wrexham Advertiser* said that he passed several men upon the road who were being assisted home—

> "They wore large bandages about their heads, and their collars, coats, and vests were covered with blood. Most of the men had been struck from behind, but William Jones, Baren Farm, had been struck on the temple and had a black eye. His face was a mass of red, while his clothes were covered with blood. On going into the small farm-house a scene almost indescribable met one's view. Several young men and youths patiently sat awaiting the doctor's attention; while one poor fellow was sitting undergoing the operation of having a large wound on his head stitched by Dr. Pritchard. The floor was more like that of a slaughter-house; blood mingled with hair formed a carpet. Large patches of blood were plainly to be seen on the road and on the grass alongside the road, while marks of a scuffle were visible against the hedge. The strange part of it is that the affair occurred in a very open place shaped like a triangle."

His hon. Friend had mentioned the case against Major Leadbetter, about whom he wished to say no more than that, like many military men, he was more remarkable for zeal than discretion. When he heard the opinion of the magistrates quoted against him, he was inclined to adopt a passage in Shakespeare's *Henry the Fourth,* and say with Master Dumbledon he should want some better assurance for Falstaff than Bardolph. He liked not the security. The magistrates seemed to him to have entirely lost their heads, and to have done an absolutely unconstitutional act. They sent forward a troop of Lancers, with ammunition enough to blow up the whole town of Denbigh, for the purpose of collecting a civil debt. Happily, the consequences were not as bad as they might have been; but, although it appeared that the troops had behaved exceedingly well, and, as he understood, had fraternized with the people, and had been regaled by the young women with new buttermilk and old Welsh songs, still great harm might have been done by having 50 or 60 armed men in a place where strong feelings prevailed, and it was obvious that bloodshed might have resulted. Looking at the circumstances, he asked what it was that had turned these peaceable, loyal, and law-abiding people, that he had known as such for 50 years, into an unruly mob? His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for West Denbigh (Colonel Cornwallis West) answered that it was the agitation of the Radical newspapers. It was very difficult for him or anyone else to deal seriously with that sort of answer. The fact was, the articles in the Welsh newspapers were the outcome, and not the cause, of the disturbances. If there had not been a deep-rooted feeling that the people were unjustly treated it was not likely that those articles would appear in the papers, or, if they had appeared, they would not have been read. The Church in Wales was losing ground in the rural districts——

Mr. SPEAKER: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that he is not in Order in referring to the position of the Church in Wales on the question of tithe. The Question before the House relates to the conduct of the police towards men, women, and children at a certain place in Denbighshire on a particular day.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN said, he respectfully pointed out that if there had been no tithes there would have been no distraints, and if there had been no distraints there would have been no disturbance. At the very place the tithe was paid by Nonconformists in the parish Nonconformity held the field. [*Cries of* "Order!"] He was as anxious as anyone in the House to reduce this discussion to proper limits, and he asked the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) to look carefully into the matter, and see whether there was no way in which he could prevent these occurrences. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to have a second Ireland in Wales, the action of which he (Mr. Osborne Morgan) complained was the one most likely to bring about such a consummation.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) said, he certainly did not propose to follow the hon Gentleman (Mr. T. E. Ellis) and the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Osborne Morgan) in their remarks about the application of tithes in Wales, the Disestablishment of the Church, and the various reasons which produced the excitement that, unhappily, prevailed in the Principality. He had viewed the progress of that movement with the greatest distress and anxiety, and no one could have regretted it more deeply than he did. This was not the time for him to enter into a discussion of that general question; but hon. Gentlemen opposite should not forget what fell from their own Leader, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and should not lose sight of the fact that, whether the tithe was devoted to one purpose or another, the people of Wales were not acting in the wisest way in encouraging persons to refuse payment of tithes, and in throwing away what might some day become a valuable national property. And now to come to the disturbances in this particular Welsh parish. Of course, he should not follow the hon. Gentleman the Mover of the Adjournment in all the details he gave. He had no notice of the hon. Member's intention to bring this subject forward, and had only been able to gather hastily such papers as came readily to hand. But he did ask the hon. Member whether he seriously represented these riots as having originated in a sort of attack made by emergency men and by agents of the Commissioners rushing about Wales and assaulting persons gratuitously and without reason? [Mr. T. E. ELLIS: Yes.] He (Mr. Matthews) could only say that the information at his disposal was of an entirely opposite complexion. He was informed by the Chief Constable, whose integrity nobody doubted or denied, that this organized attack upon the police followed at least two abortive attempts to collect these very tithes. On the 16th of May the representative of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners went in order to attempt to levy these tithes with two policemen. He did not say they were attacked, but they were so molested by a large crowd that they gave up the attempt to gather the tithes. They renewed the attempt next day with a force of 10 policemen. Again the crowd was noisy and threatening, and interposed such obstacles that the men had to desist and go back without distraining. This driving back of the officers of the law was not by mere passive resistance, but by the action of a crowd evidently brought for the purpose. Undoubtedly they interposed physical obstacles of considerable weight to any carrying out of the distress. ["No, no!"] He was speaking from the information before him, and he preferred the reports of a Chief Constable even to that of an anonymous correspondent of a newspaper. The crowd were more violent than on the previous occasion, and he repeated that they began the attack on the emergency men, and then the police interfered. He thought the "carpet of blood and hair" must be the result of Welsh fancy, and could not be quite taken as an accurate representation. Doubtless, many of the crowd were handled in a way one regretted to hear. The next point was the proclamation by the Justices. A Justice—whose name he was unable to give, as he had not the paper before him—had written to say that his was the hand which penned the proclamation, and he said they believed the crowd were really not aware they were doing an illegal thing when they assembled in crowds and conducted themselves as these people had done, and that the object of the proclamation was to point that out clearly to persons who were, when their feelings were less excited, both peaceable and law-abiding. That proclamation was no condemnation of any individual, or pre-judgment of the case of any person who might afterwards be brought before the magistrate; but merely stated that conduct of that sort was riotous and disorderly, and brought persons within the Criminal Law, without saying that A., B., or C. had been guilty of that conduct. It was in consequence of that further disturbance on May 18 that the magistrates came to the conclusion that the civil force at their command was insufficient, and that they ought to call in the military. He (Mr. Matthews) disliked the employment of the military in such cases as much as anyone, and was deeply grieved when it was necessary; but the Local Authorities were the best judges of the necessity; they acted not only with knowledge of the locality, but with the best possible information from the heads of the police. They had deliberately come to the conclusion that the police force was no longer able to keep the peace. If the magistrates even wrongly came to the conclusion that the police force at their command was not sufficient, it was their duty, as it was their right, to demand the assistance of the military, and it would be impossible for the military authorities to refuse. Hon. Members seemed to think that it was the act of the Central Government, but the Central Government had nothing to do with it. It was no part of his duty to defend the magistrates, but it would not be seemly if he were to allow even the suggestion that the magistrates of the country were supporting those men in violent attacks upon a peaceable population. That was a travesty of the facts and the order in which they occurred. Those persons disliked the application of the law; they were bent upon resisting it, and had done so for two days, and on the third occasion it passed into violence, blows were struck upon both sides, and the magistrates upon that demanded the assistance of the military, which the military authorities had no right to refuse. If he could do anything to restore peace in Wales, he should be very happy to do it. He hoped those people would take the admirable advice of the hon. Member who had moved the adjournment—that they should make their resistance a passive resistance, one which respected public order and the law of the land so long as it existed, and he felt quite sure the sympathies of that House would be extended to them much more in the wider struggle in which they would shortly be engaged.

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) said, he must remind the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) that the necessity for the Motion for Adjournment arose almost entirely from the gross inaccuracy of the information supplied to the right hon. Gentleman, and on which he necessarily based his replies to Welsh Members. He did not mean this as an attack upon the right hon. Gentleman himself, because he was obliged to frame his answers from the official information which he received from his subordinates in Wales; but, as a matter of fact, his information in relation to the public disturbances there was almost always inaccurate. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to carry back his mind to the former disturbances which occurred in Mochdre in the same county last year. The Questions which hon. Members then addressed to him were replied to upon the information, no doubt, supplied by the same individuals as in the present case, and it was to the effect that a large body of villagers, numbering 500, had made a wanton and unprovoked attack upon the police. Hon. Members knew at the time that that was inaccurate, and accordingly a Motion, similar to the present, was made for the adjournment of the House, and thereupon the right hon. Gentleman granted an investigation. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to compare the information he had then received from Wales with the facts proved at the inquiry. The Commissioner, in the inquiry referred to, stated in his Report that the disturbance was caused by a misunderstanding on the part of the police, who mistook the pressure of the crowd for an attack upon them. It was because the people trod on the heels of the police in coming down a narrow and steep lane that the latter turned round and attacked the people, and that had been represented as an attack upon the police by a crowd of 500 people. If the right hon. Gentleman would look into this matter, he would find that the information given to him was as remote from the truth now as it was in the last case. It would be scarcely denied that the young man who was first embroiled in the disturbance was alone on the particular spot. The order of the procession was as follows:—Stephens was going on first, and William Jones was going by his side, then followed about seven or eight emergency men, then about 20 or 30 policemen, and these were followed by about 40 or 50 people. The rest of the crowd were taking a short cut across a field, and between Mr. Jones and the people in the road there intervened a number of emergency men and about 30 policemen, so that Jones was entirely cut off from the people. And yet it was intended to be conveyed that this young man made a most wanton attack upon Mr. Stevens, knowing that he was guarded by a number of armed emergency men and about 30 policemen, while he (Jones) was entirely unsupported. The statement bore upon its face the stamp of improbability. The policemen were all armed with bâtons, and what was the statement of the reporters, who obtained the most accurate information in their power, which they would naturally do, because it was to the interest of the newspapers to gain the most reliable information upon the subject? They said that Jones was hissing and booing, and that thereupon Stephens laid hold of him and tried to push him into a fence. That was the beginning of the struggle. Jones did not strike, but simply resisted being rushed to the fence, when he was struck by an emergency man, who rushed forward, raised his whip handle, and struck the young man on the head; Jones then struck back, and thereupon three or four emergency men felled him to the ground with their batons. The police then faced round and made an indiscriminate attack upon the people who had taken no part in the affair, and did not know that any row had occurred; they made an attack on men, women, and children in the crowd, some of whom were casual wayfarers on the roadside, who, seeing a mass of people, wanted to know what was the matter. Amongst the men who were attacked and wounded was a farmer, who did not support the movement, having himself paid his title in full, a fact which he mentioned to show how indiscriminate was the attack made by the police. There was the greatest indignation in the country at the conduct of the police, owing solely to the fact that they had made a wanton attack on innocent and defenceless people. If an attack were made upon the police, and they simply injured their assailants in defending themselves, not a word of complaint against them would be heard from those Benches or in the country. The conscience of the country would not support any complaint in such a case. He defied anyone to say that this action on the part of the police was done for the purpose of defending themselves from assault. The fact was that—whether it was that the police lost their temper or not he could not say—they had invariably been the first to attack and strike the first blow. There were considerable suspicions in the neighbourhood that the attack was premeditated, because the number of police had been greatly increased, although there had been no previous violence on the part of the people. The right hon. Gentleman had said the force had been increased because there had previously been two abortive attempts to distrain; but neither the hon. and gallant Member for West Denbighshire (Colonel Cornwallis West), nor the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department had alleged that such attempts were abortive owing to as much as a single act of violence, and there had been no violence on the previous occasions. He (Mr. Bryn Roberts) ventured to say that the right hon. Gentleman would not declare that it was illegal on such an occasion for the people to express their disapproval of the course taken by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and certainly no such expression of disapproval could justify an attack upon them by the police. It was practically admitted by the magistrates themselves that the previous attempts to levy were abortive, solely because Mr. Stevens did not like to be hissed and would not carry on his work under such circumstances. It would be well for the right hon. Gentleman in future to employ some independent person to report to him the real facts of the case, and he would then find that these disturbances would cease, because the emergency men and the police, knowing that then the real facts would be truly reported to head-quarters, would cease to make these wanton attacks upon the people.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and *agreed to.*

Question put accordingly, "That this House do now adjourn."

The House *divided:*—Ayes 146; Noes 217: Majority 71.—(Div. List, No. 129.)

MOTION.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (MORNING SITTINGS).—RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That whenever the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill shall be appointed for Tuesday or Friday the House shall meet at Two of the clock."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he presumed it was the wish of the House that the Bill should be proceeded with rapidly, and that there would be, he hoped, no objection to the right hon. Gentleman's proposal; but if the House gave up Tuesday and Friday mornings to the consideration of the Bill, he thought that on Mondays and Thursdays no Business should be put in the front of the Paper except this Bill and matters of Supply and Ways and Means.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he thoroughly entered into and sympathized with the spirit of the right hon. Gentleman's observations. The Government felt that in asking the House for Tuesday and Friday mornings they were asking a great deal; but they did so for the sake of a measure in which the House took a very considerable interest, and which they were bound, therefore, to further as much as possible, not only on the two days he now asked for, but also on Mondays and Thursdays. The Government intended, therefore, that the principal Business on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays should be the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill in Committee, unless it were interrupted by Supply or any urgent measure, such, for instance, as the measure of his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to the Wine Duties. There were also other small matters which might, from time to time, have to be placed on the Paper. It might be necessary, for instance, to take the Report stage of a Bill, in order to send it to the House of Lords, or a Money Resolution such as that which stood first on the Orders that Day with reference to the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill. Unless that Resolution were passed, the Grand Committee could not deal with the clauses. There were necessarily matters of that kind which might have to be interposed between the meeting of the House and the commencement of the principal Business of the evening. He only mentioned those matters in order that there might be no suggestion of a want of faith on the part of the Government.

In answer to Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby),

MR. W. H. SMITH further said, that whenever it was found necessary to take other Business before the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill it would be so stated on the previous evening.

In answer to Mr. STANSFELD (Halifax),

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that on Tuesdays and Fridays no Opposed Business of any kind would be taken, except the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked if the Government would promise to do their best to keep a House on Tuesday and Friday evenings?

MR. W. H. SMITH, in reply, said, he had no objection to give that pledge.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, that as the rest of the Session was to be mainly devoted to the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, he should like to ask, whether the Government proposed to introduce and press home the measures relating to Scotland which they had promised?

MR. W. H. SMITH: Certainly. It is the desire of the Government to make progress with and pass several Scottish measures in the course of the Session, and I hope the hon. and learned Gentleman and those with whom he sits will assist the Government in passing the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill rapidly through the Committee, in order that we may be able to pass those other measures which we regard as of great importance, and which we consider ought to be passed this Session,

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked if that applied also to Irish Bills?

MR. W. H. SMITH: Certainly. Scotland is not to have a monopoly.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—[BILL 181.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

COMMITTEE. [FIRST NIGHT.]

Order for Committee read.

MR. SPEAKER: Before the House proceeds to the consideration of this Bill, there are several Instructions on the Paper standing in the names of hon. Gentlemen to which it is my duty to refer. The first Resolution stands in the name of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Saffron Walden Division of Essex (Mr. Gardner), and refers to the mode of election and constitution of Boards of Guardians. That question was settled by a Division upon the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) for an Instruction to the Committee on the Local Government (Electors) Bill, which was in these terms—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert provisions in the Bill with a view to assimilate the qualifications of electors of guardians of the poor, including the abolition of plural voting to the conditions prescribed in the Bill with regard to electors of county authorities."

So that the Motion made with regard to the constitution of Boards of Guardians was clearly dealt with on that occasion. The second Instruction stands in the name of the hon. Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Wallace), and it deals with the question of the administration of justice. That question, in my view, it would be irregular to attach to a Bill of this nature, otherwise a very reprehensible practice would be followed or instituted of attaching to a Bill a subject which is in no way relevant to it; it would amount to what is called a tack to a Bill, a practice which would lead to considerable inconvenience, and which has been severely reprehended in former times. The same objection applies even in a stronger degree to a Resolution standing in the name of the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn (Mr. Anderson), because the hon. and learned Gentleman proposes not to give extra powers to the proposed Councils, but he proposes to create a distinct series of Bodies whose jurisdiction would not be coterminous with counties, and which would extend over matters, as in the case of fisheries, of even International importance. Passing over, for the moment, the fourth Instruction, the last three Instructions are unnecessary, as it is competent for hon. Gentlemen to move what they propose in Committee without the necessity of a previous Instruction. I have, therefore, lastly, to allude to the Motion standing in the name of the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk (Mr. F. S. Stevenson), which is in Order, and I now call upon that hon. Gentleman.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) said, it was not his intention to detain the House for many minutes on the subject of the Instruction standing in his name, partly because the necessity for dealing with this matter was largely pointed out in the course of the discussion on the Motion for Second Reading, and also because he ventured to think, and hope, that before the close of the discussion on the Instruction he had placed upon the Paper, it might be possible for the Local Government Board to make some proposal in the direction he wished to go. He was not aware what course the Government would take; but he ventured to point out that assenting to this Instruction did not commit them, or others who might support it, to any particular line of action. What it did commit them to was the principle that, in any measure of Local Government reform there should be included a provision for dealing with the reform of Local Vestries. The Vestry was an institution most endeared to the people; it was most connected with them by every tie that was historical, and in it they felt the deepest interest. He thought enough had been said on the second reading to show that there existed in many quarters of the House the feeling that no measure of Local Government would be complete unless it contained a provision of this character, and during the period that had elapsed since that debate a similar feeling had been found to exist. The rural districts laboured under a considerable disadvantage as compared with municipal boroughs. When the latter had a grievance a great agitation came into force; Members received letters from Town Clerks and deputations waited upon them; but in the case of rural parishes the inhabitants were scattered apart, and had no means of taking such steps and bringing their grievance before the House of Commons and the country such as were possessed by the municipal boroughs, and it was therefore necessary for them to wait until the time of a General Election, when the feeling of the local population found expression at the polling booth. In the case of a measure of such magnitude as that, he thought that the House and the Government would be very ill-advised if they were to wait until the next General Election to hear the opinion of the rural districts on this subject, and if they did not forestall what was now the opinion in the country at large. He had had the opportunity of coming face to face with the opinion in the rural districts, which was that the Bill, as it now stood, was not such as to meet the wants and requirements of the great bulk of the inhabitants of the rural districts. They were particularly interested in the magistrates, so far as their judicial functions were concerned, and in the Boards of Guardians. But while the Bill failed to deal with either, it also failed to deal with that in which they were still more concerned. Although parishes differed widely in size, some being very small and others very scattered, yet the parish formed the historical unit around which certain associations grouped themselves. To the inhabitants, the management of charity lands, allotment lands, were all matters of interest and were closely connected with parochial affairs, the administration of which at the present time was little more than a farce. The Vestries met at an hour when the bulk of the inhabitants were unable to attend; they met at 10 o'clock or 11 o'clock in the morning, and this fact prevented the people from recording their opinions on local matters. Again, they were interested in having the power to elect their own chairman. At present, the incumbent of the parish took the chair, *ex officio*, and it was impossible, in those circumstances, for the inhabitants to have the same freedom of expression of opinion which they would otherwise possess; and when it was decided that a poll should take place there came into operation, under Sturges Bourne's Act, the system of plural voting, which was of such a nature as to prevent the free expression of the wishes of the inhabitants. They were told that all this was to be remedied by the Local Government Bill, inasmuch as under it the inhabitants of the parish would have a direct voice in the election of representatives on the County Councils; but there was no sufficient reason for thinking that the inhabitants of the rural districts would find from the County Councils that amount of consideration which would remove from them the apathy and indifference which they now felt in Local Government. In the first place, the County Council would meet in the county town, which, in many instances, would be very remote indeed from other parts of the county, and it would be difficult for anyone, except those who had leisure and wealth, to engage in the transaction of county business. Again, the inhabitants of the parish would not have any strong interest in the action of the County Council, because the elections would be so frequently fought on the drink question, and if the Compensation Clauses remained in the Bill those who were sent to the Council would not be the persons who sympathized most with the wants and wishes of the inhabitants. These were some of the reasons why they would not take interest in the County Councils, and it was on their account that they wanted to send men who would really represent them. Then, with regard to the District Councils, they were told that the powers of the Sanitary Bodies, including such matters as that of allotments, were to be transferred to them. He ventured to think that it was impossible for the interests of the inhabitants of the different parishes of a district to be adequately represented by an area so wide as the existing sanitary area. He ventured to point out that the reason why the Allotments Act had been in many parts inoperative was that its application had been entrusted to so wide an area as that in which it was now proposed to establish the District Council. He was also of opinion that the question of water supply ought not to be dealt with by District Councils, but by the parish. Since the debate on the second reading he had received letters from various parts of the country, in which special stress was laid on the power which ought to be vested in the parishes to maintain their own water supply. It was pointed out that in many places it was impossible to obtain an adequate water supply, the cause being that the sanitary area was too wide to allow the wishes of the inhabitants to be carried out. In the case of a parish of 500 inhabitants, it appeared that the only means of getting water was to sink a well, which could only be done by voluntary effort at the present time, the Vestry being unable to take any action in the matter. It appeared to him that such a condition of things ought to find a remedy in the present Bill. He contended that if the parish was left out the title of Local Government Bill would be a misnomer, and he believed that the Government had not altogether realized the task they had entered upon by that omission. The Government were, in his opinion, taking a step in a wrong direction in removing from the Vestries powers which were capable of considerable development, and he pointed out that if they took steps of that kind in a centralizing direction, they would be unable to retrace them, and the powers taken away from the parish vestry could never be restored. Therefore, they ought to make an earnest endeavour to restore to the parish what the Bill proposed to take away from it. Their object should be to develop local life and interest. He could not conceive why, with all the interests and associations clustered around the parish, they should be unable to do what was done so successfully in France and America and other countries. They were told that some parishes were too small to be dealt with as being capable of self-Government; but as far as that went, out of about 15,000 parishes in England and Wales there were only between 1,200 and 1,300 in which there were less than 100 inhabitants, and in those cases there would be no serious difficulty in extending the process now carried out under the Divided Parishes Act. While England and Wales together had about 15,000 parishes there were in France about 36,000 communes. The average size of the latter was considerably less than the average size of an English parish, and the commune had its own Mayor and Municipal Council. If the system existed in France under the circumstances described, it ought to be much easier to carry out that system in England. Again, he had the example of certain American States before him, and would take New York as typically representative. He found that a village in that State of 300 inhabitants had certain powers vested in its representative authority, and he remarked that they were wider than any Member of the House would propose to confer upon an English parish. From the extremely long list of powers he would read a few items. They had power to compel the removal and abatement of public nuisances, to regulate hawking and peddling and parish grounds, to establish bye-laws, to regulate museums, and to protect trees, to regulate the water supply, drainage, and other matters. These were powers which, as he had said, no one would propose to give to the authorities of an English parish. The wide scope of those powers showed, however, how easy it would be to vest in the English parish the powers asked for. He did not wish to press at that moment any particular Amendment upon the attention of the House, because the object of the Instruction was to enable consequential Amendments to be made in the Bill in connection with parish Vestries, but he thought there were some principles which ought to be adhered to in any Amendment which might be introduced in Committee to deal with this matter. To Clause 47 he had placed an Amendment on the Paper in which certain of those principles were embodied, as the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) would find on examination in a more perfect form. In the first place, it provided that the powers proposed to be transferred to the District Council should remain with the parish, if the Vestry should choose, and on the condition that the Vestry should be reorganized on a new basis—namely, that it should meet at a reasonable hour, that the members should vote by ballot, elect their own chairman and other parish officers, that they should have the right of delegating to them certain functions, and that the matters placed in their hands should be such as were distinctly and specifically the affairs of the parish itself. Such matters as those specified in Clause 47 were also to be retained in the hands of the existing Vestries. His Amendment also proposed that the allotments question should be in the hands of the parishes instead of the District Councils. In addition to this the parish was to act as trustee of charity lands, and other powers might hereafter be conferred upon it. He pointed out, however, that the carrying of this Instruction did not necessitate that those who voted for it should vote for the Amendment he had mentioned with regard to Clause 47. There were other Amendments of which he had given notice also relating to the parish, and there was one that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) had placed on the Paper which he should most cordially support. But if this Instruction were lost it would be impossible for hon. Members to introduce any Amendment dealing with parish government, and he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to give a favourable consideration to the Instruction in order that a most vital and essential part of Local Government might not be destroyed, but that, on the contrary, everything possible should be done to develop that local life and energy which he was afraid the Bill in its present form did so much to take away. He hoped the Government would not shelter themselves under the futile plea that the introduction of an Instruction of this kind would over-burden the Bill. That would be simply for the Government to shelter itself behind a plea so often put forward by crafty politicians for the purpose of disguising their craftiness. He trusted, therefore, that the Government would support the Instruction, by doing which they would make it possible for hon. Members on both sides of the House to bring forward on the Committee stage proposals dealing with the reform of parochial government. If the Government were not prepared to do this the district clauses ought to be opposed, on the ground that they would take away from the parish powers which could not be restored, and because, so far from meeting the wishes, feelings, and wants of the various parishes, they would, on the contrary, be taking the life-blood from them, and doing more than had been done perhaps during the last two centuries to remove that sense of independence and self-reliance which, in the past, had so largely helped to make our rural population what they were at present, in spite of an injurious Poor Law and a still more injurious land system. For these reasons he hoped the Government would not meet the Instruction with an emphatic "No," but that they would declare their willingness to accept its principle in order that the reform of parish government, so essential at the present time, might be effected.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) said, he would not detain the House more than a few moments in seconding the Instruction which had been moved by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Eye (Mr. F. S. Stevenson). He could not help thinking the course the Government had taken in dealing, or rather in not dealing with the question of parish Vestries was a very unexpected one as regarded the rural population in villages in England and Wales. He thought it was generally understood in the debate that took place last Session on the Allotments Bill——

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. COBB said, he was saying that the course the Government had taken, in excluding altogether any notice of Vestries was a very unexpected one to rural populations in England and Wales. Those of them who had taken part in the discussion last Session had reason to believe what was said by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie)—namely, that the question of Boards of Guardians and Vestries would be dealt with in the present Bill. Now, he (Mr. Cobb) looked upon what the right hon. Gentleman had said as a distinct pledge, and he would very shortly quote what the right hon. Gentleman had said in answer to a question put by him (Mr. Cobb) and his Friends. On the 19th August last the right hon. Gentleman used these words—

> "The hon. Gentleman is quite mistaken in supposing that the present Government imagine that they will deal adequately with the question of local government, if they confine their attention to the reform of local county government or the setting up of a County Authority. If the hon. Member saw the Bill now in print he would find that we propose not only to deal with County Authorities, but with all authorities within the county."—(3 *Hansard*, [319] 1,183.)

He (Mr. Cobb) did not know whether when the right hon. Gentleman spoke of all the authorities within the county, in his own mind, he included Vestries; but he (Mr. Cobb) could tell the right hon. Gentleman this—and he had some knowledge on the subject, as he had had an opportunity of seeing and conversing with a great many of those who had hoped to derive some benefit from the Bill—he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that those people and the country people generally believed that the right hon. Gentleman had meant that. On the 5th of September, in reply to an hon. Member, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board used these words—

> "I have already said more than once that it is the intention of the Government on the earliest possible day to introduce a Bill dealing with Local Government, not only providing Local Government for counties, but also dealing with Boards of Guardians and other Local Authorities, which, I hope, will be placed on a more popular basis."—(3 *Hansard*, [320] 1,302.)

That, also, they (on the Opposition side of the House) took, and he knew that the labourers and artizans in rural districts also took it on their part to mean that the Vestries and Boards of Guardians would be dealt with. Hon. Members expected, and those people expected, a thoroughly popular measure. They had expected a measure which would not only reform existing institutions, but would also provide new institutions founded upon a popular basis. Now, he would ask the House whether there was any body more important in a rural district than the Vestry? The Vestry had been looked upon, for reasons which he would point out presently, as they had hoped it would be looked upon in the future, as really a Village Parliament. They had hoped, and they had reason to hope, that the parish would be adopted as the unit of Local Government, and he was sure, when he had told the House the reasons they had for so doing, hon. Members would admit that they were reasonable in their expectation. Everyone remembered the scheme which was introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1871, called the Rating and Local Government Bill. In introducing that Bill, the right hon. Gentleman had said that the unit of local administration would be the parish, and one of the objects of the Bill, and as he (Mr. Cobb) understood the right hon. Gentleman, the main object of the Bill, the incipient object, if he might say so, was that the Vestry should annually elect parochial boards and manage their own affairs. He was not going to follow the hon. Member for Eye through his speech. The hon. Member had passed over somewhat lightly the reforms of the Vestries which they had hoped to find in this Bill; but he would, with the permission of the House, point out some reforms to which the agricultural population of the country looked as applying to their institutions. They were very simple, so simple that he could not imagine how the Government had failed to deal with them. He could not imagine how the Government could vote against this Instruction; he could not imagine what object they had in doing so, as these simple alterations which were proposed were necessary in order to do justice to the agricultural population in the counties. What were the main reforms asked for? First of all, there was a reform which he was sure everyone in the House would admit to be absolutely necessary. Surely, it was right, in the case of the meeting of a Vestry, as in the case of a meeting of Parliament or of any other legislative assembly whatever, that the meeting should take place at an hour when those interested in its proceedings were able to attend. But how was it in the case of parish Vestries? Did not hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House know, as he knew, that parish Vestries were very often designedly called to meet at such a time that those who were interested in its work were not able to be present? The meetings were called for 10, half-past 10, and 11 o'clock, and so on, hours at which, as hon. Members knew, labourers and artizans and small shopkeepers could not possibly attend, and the result was that the Vestry meeting very often consisted solely of the vicar and the parish clerk. Now, the vicar was instrumental in calling the meeting. He (Mr. Cobb) had had some experience of vicars calling these meetings, and he had taken some trouble to investigate several cases where meetings were called, not in the evening, but in the morning, at hours when it was impossible for the parishioners to attend. It so happened that in his own constituency he had come across many cases of the kind, one of them of such a remarkable nature that, with the permission of the House, he would state it. In his own constituency in Warwickshire there was a village called Kineton. Well, the villagers there, the artizans and small shopkeepers, and agricultural labourers, sent a very proper and respectful requisition to the vicar, asking him to call the Vestry at a time when they might be able to attend and express their views on parochial affairs; and he would read the letter which the Rev. Mr. Miller, the Vicar of Kineton, sent in reply to this requisition. It was a long time ago, and he (Mr. Cobb) had had the letter he was about to read in his possession for some time; but that was the first opportunity he had of using it. The letter was dated the 24th of March, 1886, and was in these terms:—

> "Mr. G. Jarvis and others.
>
> It appears to be customary to choose one of the twelve hours of the day for a Vestry meeting—if otherwise, many might reasonably complain. Permit me to advise you—to 'be content with such things as ye have,' to 'love God with all your heart, your neighbour as yourself, and to do your duty in that state of life unto which it has pleased God to call you.'
>
> Yours faithfully,
> F. R. MILLER."

Now, one would have thought that this gentleman, looking at the position he occupied in the Church, would have been able to quote accurately the Church Catechism: The Church Catechism was, at all events, liberal in this respect—that it gave some hope to everyone who read it, that there might at some time or other be a change in their state of life; but this vicar told the people that they must be content with such things as they had. He misquoted the Church Catechism, and said they were to do their duty in that state of life to which it had pleased God to call them, though the House knew very well that the Church Catechism mercifully contemplated some possible change in that position by holding out a hope that it might please God to call them ultimately to something better—some amelioration in their present condition. As a matter of business, there surely could be no objection to accepting that Instruction. What possible objection could there be to introducing clauses in the Bill, obliging the Vestry meetings to be held at such times as to enable the parishioners to attend? Secondly, as was well known under the present law, the Vicar had the right to take the chair at every Vestry meeting. Why should that be? Why, in the world, should Vestries not have the right of selecting their own chairmen? If the Vicar was the best man to take the chair, they might be quite certain that he would be the person chosen; but, if he was not the best person, why on earth should he have the right to take it? Vicars were not all accustomed to live in their parishes, and, for local as well as other reasons, might not always be the best men to take the chair, although he admitted that in many parishes probably they would be the best men. He was not giving altogether his own opinion upon that subject, for, if the House would allow him, he would quote a passage from what he thought the best book upon Vestries which had been written. It was called a *Treatise on Vestries*, and was written by Mr. Justice Wills. Here was a passage bearing upon the Chairmanship of Vestries, which occurred on page 51 of that book—

> "The proceedings of Vestries are liable probably to more irregularity and informality than those of any other class of public meetings, inasmuch as they are not only frequently distinguished by great heat and animosity between the contending parties, but are commonly conducted by chairmen whose bias is strong and almost uniformly in one direction, and whose habits and occupation render them unlikely to be familiar with the usual practices of men of the world in respect to the conduct of public meetings and the transaction of business thereat."

Then, the third point of reform, those who advocated this Instruction maintained was a very simple one, especially if this Bill was to be passed. It was thought in connection with the Vestries that the principle should be recognized of one man one vote, and that that vote should be given by ballot. He did not wish to go over the same ground traversed during the second reading of the Bill, and he did not wish to deal with the evils of plural voting. The Government were thoroughly alive to those evils, or they would not have adopted in this Bill in the election of the County Council, the principle of one man one vote. Well, he asked, if County Councils were to be elected on that principle, why should not Vestries and Boards of Guardians be so elected? They were giving the villager the right of voting by ballot; they were giving him a vote which would count for as much as that of any other man, whatever amount of property he might possess, at County Council elections. But these County Councils were of very little importance to the villager as compared with the Boards of Guardians and Vestries in which he was interested. Then there was a fourth point on which reform was required, and that was the right of adjournment of Vestries. One was accustomed in public meetings—in that House, as also, he supposed, in every assembly that was conducted on proper principles—to decide the question of adjournment for themselves. It was generally held that those who belonged to an assembly should decide whether or not an adjournment should take place. He admitted that there was some difficulty from a legal point of view with regard to Vestries in this matter; but he believed that, according to the latest decisions, it had been held that the only person who had the right to adjourn a Vestry meeting was the Chairman, who was the incumbent of the parish. What a very small thing then it would be to introduce into this Bill a clause bringing about these reforms in connection with parish Vestries —particularly upon this point, saying that Vestries should be adjourned by resolution. Probably, the most important thing which the parishioner claimed for parish Vestries was that they should have the right of electing their own parish officers by ballot, as he had explained, on the principle of one man one vote. The election of parish officers was a very important thing indeed. Here, again, he would assure the House that he was not going over the whole second reading ground with regard to churchwardens and overseers, except to this extent—namely, to point out that it was a most important thing for the people in a village to have the right of electing their own churchwardens and their own officials—for this reason, that in a great number of parishes the parochial charities were vested in the incumbent, overseers and churchwardens, and if the people had the right to appoint overseers and churchwardens, they would have a majority on the Committee that carried out the distribution of these charities, and thus they would have what was intended for their own benefit in their own hands, instead of in the hands of those, who, he was sorry to say, now largely applied those charities, not for the benefit of the poor, but for the benefit of the Established Church. He did not know whether he was right in saying so, but it had struck him in reading the debates an the Allotment Bill of last Session, that the Government and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) had not sufficiently appreciated the importance of this question of Vestries. He knew that it seemed a very small matter to many hon. Gentlemen in the House, and he must say that it seemed small also to some of those who were now pleading for parish reform, before they had to mix with the people in the counties as he had had to do, and before they were aware of how vitally important it was to the people in the parishes that they should have the management of their own affairs. He could assure the Government that this question of parish Vestries was no small matter. He believed that that question, and the question of Boards of Guardians, which the House would have to consider very fully when they came to the Amendments on the Bill, were far more important and far more thought of by the people in the villages than any question of County Councils or District Councils. Those questions, in his opinion, the people in the villages cared very little for. Now, he hoped very much that the Government would allow this Instruction to pass. If they did not, he was speaking for himself, he hoped his hon. Friend who had moved the Resolution would go to a Division upon it. He should like to know why hon. Members should not have, at all events, an opportunity of bringing forward any Amendment they might like to propose in Committee. Why should the Government deprive them of an opportunity of having their proposals debated. He could tell the Government that the Bill, as it now stood, would not satisfy the villages; he did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board knew that, but he was quite sure that the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) did. That hon. Member knew it probably better than he (Mr. Cobb) did, having mixed more with the people than he had. The hon. Member knew that the villagers of the country thought more of their Vestries and Boards of Guardians than they would think of any County Council or District Council that might be established. It was true, and he admitted it, that the Government had been liberal in the matter of County Councils, and he, for one, accepted what they offered gratefully. It was true that the Government gave the people of the villages a vote for members of the County Councils—that was to say, for a very small fraction of a member of a County Council for every village—but it must be borne in mind that County Councils would be inaccessible to the ordinary villager. The County Councils would be far distant, and almost as difficult to get into as that House—and every Member of that House knew how far away he was from every villager, and how little a villager could expect to get anything from that House. But he thought the main reason why he should urge the Government to accept this Instruction was this—that the villagers of the country had certainly been led to expect that parish Vestries would be dealt with in the Bill. He had already quoted what the President of the Local Government Board had told them in dealing with the Allotments Act last Session. But the expectations of the villagers had been founded not only upon what the right hon. Gentleman had said, but upon other speeches made to them by politicians, and especially by one who was now supposed to have great influence on the counsels of the Government. He (Mr. Cobb) remembered very well, in September, 1885, travelling a very long distance to attend a meeting—and a very good meeting it was, he enjoyed it very much—to hear a speech made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain). This was what the right hon. Gentleman said in Glasgow on that day; and he quoted it because it expressed in far better language than he (Mr. Cobb) could hope to use, what his (Mr. Cobb's) views were now, and what he hoped the right hon. Gentleman's views still were. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I want to build up a system of Local Government from below from small beginnings. I would like to see no parish, no village, without some kind of Local Authority. I do not want to crush out the germs of local life, however small and insignificant they may appear to be. I want to foster them, and to promote the political education of the people."

Then, again, a few weeks afterwards, on the 14th of October, at a meeting at Trowbridge, at which he (Mr. Cobb) was not present, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "But what is meant by Local Government? If you want to know what the Liberals mean, let me ask you to read the admirable and exhaustive speech which was delivered last night at Halifax by my Friend, Sir Charles Dilke. You will find our proposals complete in every detail. I will only say briefly of them in a sentence that they comprise the idea of a thoroughly popular Local Government in every village, in every Union, in every county, which should be given the largest powers and widest discretion, by which the local affairs of the people should be conducted without supervision or interference."

He only hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham adhered to these views that day. He could only hope that one of the benefits, at all events, that the rural labourers would reap from the present action of the right hon. Gentleman in connection with the Rural Labourers' League would be the promotion of the opinions then expressed by the right hon. Gentleman; although he (Mr. Cobb) very much feared, from the names of the Vice Presidents of that Institution, that it would not turn out to be so so. He felt that he had detained the House too long. He presumed that the answer which would be made by the President of the Local Government Board, when he got up to address the House, would be that there was no time to put everything into this Bill. Well, of course, they all, as sensible men, recognized that. Of course, the Bill could not deal with everything; but he (Mr. Cobb) had a suggestion to make to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. He had pointed out, as far as possible, the nature of the changes they desired. Those changes could be effected very easily indeed. He (Mr. Cobb) had a Bill before the House which probably the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had not read. If the right hon. Gentleman had read it, he would probably have found that some of its clauses might very well be introduced into this Bill. They would be very simple, and, he thought, could be accepted by all sections of the House. But he had a suggestion to make to the right hon. Gentleman even as to the short time it would take to get this measure, and that was that he should drop some parts of his own Bill, which, it was obvious, would give rise to very great discussion, and which he thought it was equally obvious the Government would never pass. He alluded to the Lincensing Clauses of the Bill. If the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) were present, he (Mr. Cobb) would have made bold to have suggested to him that he would save some of the time of the House by dropping one of the measures that the Government laid before the House—namely, that for giving a salary to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had already wasted a considerable time on that measure, and if the right hon. Gentleman would now give it up, there would, no doubt, be plenty of time to pass the few clauses he (Mr. Cobb) recommended. He invited the attention of hon. Members on the other side of the House to his proposal. There were, he knew, a great many hon. Members on the other side who represented agricultural constituencies. He defied those hon. Gentlemen to tell him that this question which he was dealing with was not one of interest to agricultural constituents, and he defied them to tell him that when they voted against the Resolution, as they would be doing that night, at the behest of the Government, they would not be voting against that portion of their constituents who were the rural labourers and artizans. He could tell the Government that if they made this small concession—and it was a very small one indeed, though large to the people who lived in the country districts—if they would really reform the Boards of Guardians and Vestries, they would confer the greatest blessing that had been conferred on the people of the villages for many years; for those people would feel, what they had never had occasion to feel before—and what he (Mr. Cobb) felt they could not feel then—namely, that they had power to manage their own affairs.

Mr. JAMES ELLIS (Leicestershire, Bosworth) said, he wished to say a few words on the Resolution before the House from a practical point of view. He had, during a great part of his life, taken part in the management of the parishes immediately around his place, and he had extensive experience of the great utility and value of the work——

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry to have to interrupt the hon. Member, but I have not yet put the question.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert provisions for the reform of parish vestries."—(*Mr. Francis Stevenson.*)

Mr. JAMES ELLIS said, he was saying he had had great experience in regard to the operations of Vestries. In the parish in which he lived at one time the Vestry meeting was held in the morning, and the vestry of the church being so small, it was found inconvenient to hold it there. There were three public-houses in the village, and the meeting was held at each of these in succession. When he went down to the first Vestry meeting at the first public-house the clergyman took the chair, and he (Mr. Ellis) moved that the meeting be removed to the village school room. That resolution was carried, and from that time to the present the Vestry had been held in the village school room at half-past 7 in the evening, which was the time proposed by the hon. Gentleman who had introduced this Resolution to the House. From the time the Vestry meeting was held in the evening almost every householder in the parish in which he lived had regularly attended it, and taken part in its debates, and the result of that had been that a village life had grown up. The state of things was entirely different to that which had obtained before these evening meetings were held. The same practice had extended to several of the large villages round that with which he was more intimately connected. The Vestry meetings there were now held in the evening, and were attended by a great part of the inhabitants of the villages, and he was only sorry that these Vestries had not greater powers than they at present possessed. Some villages were too small to have efficient Vestries, and he believed that if the Government had consolidated the villages so that they would have had no Vestries at all except for districts of a population of 500 or 600, and if greater powers had been given to the Vestries, they would have had a better Local Government Bill, even if no District Councils had been proposed at all. He believed they might have gone directly from the consolidated Vestries to the County Councils, and that by doing that they would have had a much better Bill than that proposed by the Government. His opinion was this—and he knew, from his experience of Boards of Guardians, that many men who were intelligent and fit to take part in village debates, and would be perfectly fit to go and represent villages on Boards of Guardians, were unable to do so, because they had no conveyances, and the place of meeting was often six or seven miles from their homes. That would also be the case with regard to County and District Councils. The man who took part in and would do the work of the village Vestries, would not take the same active part which it was desired that they should in the management of county affairs. He had not found the difficulties connected with the position of the clergymen of the parishes which the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Rugby Division of Warwickshire (Mr. Cobb) had found. In his own parish, he (Mr. Ellis) always took the chair himself, as the clergyman was averse to taking it. The meeting was held on Saturday evening now, so as to enable him to attend to take the chair; but in other villages he believed that the clergyman mostly took the chair, and, no doubt, in nine cases out of 10 they were the best men to do so. No doubt, it would be found, if the needed parish reforms were brought about, that the clergymen in the parishes would be alive to the responsibilities of their position, and would be prepared to act justly by those they came in contact with. He was amazed that any gentleman holding the position of a clergymen of the Church of England should have written such a letter as that which the hon.

Member (Mr. Cobb) had read. He (Mr. Ellis) complained that the centralization system of the Local Government Board had been snatching one right after another from the parishes. He remembered some years ago thinking that it would be a good thing to take the young people round and beat the bounds of their parish. There were difficult points to remember in connection with the bounds of an English parish, and few people could tell where the bounds were. The English parish was not a straight square, like an American division, but went in and out, here by a brook, there by a lane, and it was important that the young men of the parish should know where the bounds were. Well, when they had beaten the bounds, what did the Local Government Board do? Why, they struck out the two guineas expenses which had been incurred, and the people of the parish had to collect the money themselves. It was not so much that fact as the interference of the Local Government Board that he complained of. Then there was another matter in which the Local Government Board had interfered with the parish. They used to kill sparrows in the parish. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members might laugh at the killing of sparrows, and think it a very foolish thing; but, so far as he was concerned, he thought it a very wise thing; at any rate, they used to do it in the parish of which he was speaking, and when a charge was made in respect of the operation the Local Government Board struck it out, although the money, of course, would come out of their own pockets. This charge also had to be met by a popular subscription. He thought the Government, in their Bill, should make the villages big enough, and then give them the right to manage their own affairs. With regard to education, he thought that the parishes, when made sufficiently large, should have the management of that. He was not prejudiced against the Church schools, having been a manager of several national schools and chairman of a large Board. He had no feeling against the national schools, but he must say the time was coming—and must come—when the education of the people in the parish must be managed by the people of that parish. The reason that the parishes had not the management of education was that some areas were extremely small, and there were a large number of extra-parochial districts where no burden for education was borne. Well, if the Government had sent out someone with powers to construct parishes, say, of 500 inhabitants or upwards, and then give those parishes as much power as they could, they would have done much better for the parishes than by constructing an elaborate scheme of county government. Another thing they wanted in rural parishes very much, and that was the right, as there was in towns, to establish free libraries. It might be a small library; but they wanted a library. They wanted also the right of constructing play grounds for the people In his own parish, in consequence of the Inclosure Laws, the parish common was taken away about 1800, and the people could only play now on the side of the road. In his opinion, the parish Vestry ought to have the power of acquiring some field, which they could devote to the recreation of the people. The Vestry, too, ought to be able to provide a room in which the people could meet in the winter time. These were larger questions than some people imagined, because they affected the condition of the labouring class. The absence of amusements, of libraries, and of other means of instruction, tended to drive men more and more into the large towns. Day by day and year by year they were intensifying an evil which they all lamented. It was time they looked this matter fairly in the face—to give power to the County or District Councils would not attain the object in view; they must make the parishes large enough, and then give them power to act. A good example of parish government was afforded across the water; our kinsmen in America were wiser than they were. Some people might think that American politics were corrupt. Perhaps they were, but the village and town assembly had always been clean. He did not allude to large places like New York, but to little villages far back, not only in New England, but away West. The village life there was pure; and it was from such village life that great Presidents of America had arisen—men like President Lincoln. He begged the House not to pass this measure, forgetting that the one thing they ought to care for in this country was the welfare of the parishes.

Mr. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey) said, he very gladly joined in the request made on the Opposition side of the House that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would give his earnest consideration to this matter. He felt that the House could hardly realize, and he was quite sure that the country at large did not realize, that by this Bill the parishes of England would practically cease to exist. It would be found that under Clauses 46 and 47 parishes were entirely superseded in all their remaining powers by the Rural District Councils. The Rural District Council was the successor to the Rural Sanitary Authority. Of a Rural Sanitary Authority he had had a good many years' experience; and he had no hesitation in saying it was the worst possible Authority for all local purposes. They were, in fact, no more than mere outposts and delegates of the Local Government Board. Local administration, in its spirit and essence, should proceed from knowledge of the facts and local conditions which men possessed themselves of, consciously or unconsciously, during the routine of their daily life. Hon. Members would find from the Return made in 1881, which was presented to the House not long ago, that the Unions of the country averaged from 120 to 180 square miles in extent; and, whatever government that might be, it certainly could not be described as Local Government. It could not be asserted that the men who met together, sent from the different parishes which made up those Unions, really had that intimate and direct knowledge of local needs which constituted the valuable qualification for local administration. He knew that in his own experience it certainly was not so. Sitting with many other Guardians, he found that they concerned themselves with the affairs of their own immediate parish alone. In needs beyond their own parish they had no knowledge or interest, and they could not be even induced to stay to take part in the work of considering and deciding upon matters which were presented to the Authority on the part of parishes with which they felt they had no concern. At one time the whole farce of this local administration was felt to be so great that the Chairman of the Authority he spoke of declined to preside over its meetings. If they abolished the parishes, the agricultural labourer would really lose all chance for the real expression of his wants. Who were available for Guardians in the country districts? It had always been found that the clergy and the tenant farmers practically constituted the great bulk of the Boards of Guardians; and he put it to the House whether upon such a question as allotments the country clergy and tenant farmers could really be in hearty sympathy with the wants and the wishes of the agricultural labourers? It was upon such matters as allotments that the agricultural labourer must be allowed to speak for himself. He had no other chance whatever of speaking for himself but in the meeting of the inhabitants in open Vestry assembled. In a parish in his own constituency there was during last Easter, on the part of the inhabitants as a body, the greatest anxiety to procure allotments; 400 or 500 people flocked to the Easter Vestry Meeting in their anxiety to devise means for the obtaining of allotments. There was no hostility whatever on the part of anybody, either rich or poor. They were all agreed that allotments should be procured; but when the people came to the Vestry what they practically found was that the Vestry, as an instrument for the purpose they had expected to employ it, was useless. It was pointed out that they must proceed under the Bill of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings); but what was said was that the opportunity afforded by that Bill was too remote—that the machinery provided by it was so complicated, that the men could not use it for themselves; and the people went away under circumstances of the greatest irritation. Everyone felt for them, and it was not unnatural that the irritation found expression in some violence of language. It was really felt by everyone that the labourers had a real grievance, and that they were deprived of what was naturally and historically the most valuable and convenient mode by which inhabitants might make known and provide for their wants, with which they must certainly be better acquainted than anyone else. He earnestly hoped the House would consider that the debt of the nation to the parish in the training which it afforded was very great, and that the Government would not, as it were, indirectly and stealthily give a deathblow to the ancient parishes of England.

Mr. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, he desired to say but a few words upon this subject, and he should not have intervened in the debate at all were it not for the fact that he represented an agricultural district where this difficulty was very seriously and painfully felt. It was thought by some persons who were best acquainted with this subject in the division which he represented that this Bill would do more harm than good, unless it were very seriously altered on the lines of the Resolution now under consideration. Practically, under the name of extending Local Government, they were giving to Local Government a deathblow. Bad as the arrangements at present were, they were, at all events, local arrangements; there was a mingling of different areas and different jurisdictions, but this was to some extent advantageous locally. There was no definite arrangement made by the Bill by which they could be sure that the area they were going to establish would be the whole area of a county or a Parliamentary Division. If the division he represented was to be a County District, the extent of the district would be something like 436 square miles. If, on the other hand, they dealt with sanitary districts alone, his district would be something like 130 or 140 square miles in extent. It might be that it was wished to keep the entire representation in the hands of the wealthy, whose time was at their own disposal, and who had means of transit of their own—and he regretted to say that the means of transit were not very abundant in the division he represented—but to contend in the face of people living at the extreme limits of districts or areas of the size he had specified, that this was Local Government, was simply playing with words. He would not go into the details which had been referred to a great deal by speaker after speaker; he would not enter into the various grievances which necessarily arose; but he did wish to criticize as earnestly as he could the mischief of having extended areas instead of working on the unit of the parish and taking that area as the one from which they were to operate. He could not help thinking that the Government were rendering it absolutely impossible to have anything like Local Representative Government, because it would not be within the power of very many men who had not great wealth to attend, as they ought to attend, the various meetings connected with the administration of local affairs. He thoroughly believed that by their present proposal the Government, in the words of one of his constituents, would do more harm than good to the great principle of Local Government, and, therefore, he should give his hearty support to the Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. F. S. Stevenson).

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Long) (Wilts, Devizes) said, he thought that the remarks of the last few speakers would certainly lead one to believe that the opinion of those hon. Gentlemen and their Friends had undergone a considerable change since the introduction of the Bill. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, he thought a reference to the speeches delivered by those hon. Gentlemen and their Friends on the introduction of the measure would certainly not lead anyone to conclude that this Bill would tend to the destruction of local self-government. It had been said that night that this Bill, instead of giving new life to local self-government, would lead to its total destruction. That was very different from the statements which had been made by nearly all the speakers from the Opposition side with the exception of the ex-Under Secretary for the Home Department when the measure was introduced, and which were to the effect that there was a general consensus of opinion that this Bill went a great way in extending local self-government. Hon. Members opposite might congratulate themselves upon the fact that their commendable efforts with regard to this measure had been supported by a speech from an hon. Member below the Gangway on the Government side of the House. It might be a matter of great gratification to hon. Members opposite that a measure that had been introduced into that House by the Government had been condemned by an hon. Member on their own side of the House. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] The conclusion which the hon. Member for the Hornsey Division of Middlesex (Mr. Stephens) had drawn, that because the Allotments Act did not give the Vestries the power of granting allotments, that Act was therefore a failure, was inaccurate. If the labourers desired to obtain allotments, the Act provided efficient machinery to enable them to get them. The hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk (Mr. F. S. Stevenson), who had moved this Instruction, had said that in no single instance had the compulsory powers of the Act been put into force. The hon. Member was mistaken in that matter, because he (Mr. Long) had reason to believe that at that moment a Rural Sanitary Authority were contemplating putting the powers in force.

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON said, that he had referred to the answer which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) had given a few weeks ago, which was to the effect that in no single instance in either England or Wales had the compulsory powers of the Act been put into force.

Mr. LONG said, he thought the hon. Member had overlooked the fact that what was the case some few weeks ago might not be the case now. However that might be, he (Mr. Long) had heard hon. Members opposite express a desire that land for the purposes of allotments should be acquired by voluntary sale rather than by the exercise of compulsory powers of purchase. This subject, however, was scarcely germane to the question before the House. He ventured to repeat the remark he had made upon the second reading of the Bill—namely, that there was no doubt a great deal to be said in favour of a reform of the smaller area of local self-government, but he understood that the object of the Instruction now moved to be that those powers of local self-government proposed under the Bill should be conferred on the parishes of the country. Now, if they conferred powers of local self-government on an authority or a district before they had put that district into a proper condition to receive those powers, they would find it much harder afterwards to amend their boundaries and create a district which should be satisfactory to receive such powers. The Government believed that it was far better to get their local areas adjusted first of all through the medium of the County Council proposed by this Bill, and then later to confer upon those local districts in the shape of parishes the extended powers of local self-government, than to begin by conferring powers and creating authorities and having afterwards to alter and adjust their boundaries and destroy the authorities which they would thus have commenced by setting up. He quite admitted that there was no question which demanded more anxious and careful attention or from which greater local benefit would be derived than that which related to the re-adjustment of the parish boundaries. At present those boundaries were most irregular and most inconvenient, and in many cases their re-adjustment would be of the greatest advantage, especially to the labourers within their areas, who ought to be encouraged to take an active part in local administration. In this respect he did not think that any very strong case had been made out for strengthening the procedure which was proposed by the Bill. It had been remarked that the Bill might be called a County Councils Bill or a District Councils Bill, but that it had no right to be called a Local Government Bill because it was not based upon the parishes. That point, however, had been sufficiently discussed upon the second reading of the Bill, and he did not think that hon. Members opposite had thrown any new light upon it by their remarks that night. Her Majesty's Government had put this Bill before the House and the country as one which they had carefully and anxiously considered, and which they honestly believed would establish a better system of local self-government in our counties and districts. By that measure they must abide, not only because if they were to alter their minds in the direction indicated by hon. Members opposite, time would prevent them from carrying the Bill, but because, more than all, they believed that they were proceeding in the right direction by following the lines laid down in this measure. He earnestly hoped that in view of the great mass of Amendments that had been placed upon the Paper, the House would proceed to the consideration of the measure in Committee as rapidly as possible.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, that the hon. Gentleman who had just resumed his seat (Mr. Long) complained, in his opening remarks, that a different view was taken of the Bill that night from that which was taken on the occasion of the second reading of the Bill. That was very likely the case, in many instances; but he (Mr. Broadhurst) thought that the hon. Gentleman would admit that a considerable part of his (Mr. Broadhurst's) speech upon the second reading of the measure was devoted to the complaint that the Government had overlooked the mainspring of county life by not beginning with the parish. He, therefore, at any rate, was not open to the charge which the hon. Gentleman had made against some of the hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition Benches. It was, after all, not unnatural that hon. Gentlemen overlooked some of the main points of the Bill on the occasion of the second reading, for the best of all reasons—namely, that the House was so possessed by the Radical nature of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) in introducing the Bill, that they could not turn their attention to the contents of the Bill itself. The right hon. Gentleman's speech was a great Radical speech, introducing a highly flavoured Tory measure. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) had discovered that since the second reading many hon. Gentlemen had read the Bill, and ascertained its true nature, and he now complained of their making speeches on the merits and demerits of the Bill rather than on the great merits of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie). The speech of the Secretary of the Local Government Board had disclosed this fact, that the Government in regard to this Bill had proceeded on entirely novel lines in matters of reform; and that instead of following out the good old Tory doctrine of rather improving that which already existed, they had devoted their time to creating new institutions. If the Conservative Government had carried out their favourite doctrine in this case, they would have been maintaining their ancient principles, and, what would have been almost equally novel, they would have been carrying out a good and sound system of reform. It would have been a great deal better for the Government to have proceeded to reform the Vestries. Even if it were necessary to proceed in parts, it would have been better to have proceeded by reforming the Vestries instead of creating these great, unwieldly, unmanageable Councils, which the counties and villages would have no sufficient control over, and have very little voice, as it were, in their compostion. If they had commenced with the Vestries themselves, they would have laid a great foundation for County Reform, and they would have solidified and enlarged a sure and certain foundation for a great and effective system of Local Government Reform. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Long) and his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), who were in charge of the Bill, and the Government themselves evidently lacked knowledge of the principles of construction. They ignored the elementary principles of construction, for they began with a great superstructure, and altogether neglected the fundamental principle, that the foundation was to carry the weight of the whole system. The reform of the Vestries should be the mainspring, and must be the mainspring, of any effective and comprehensive system of Local Government Reform. It was discovered now that the Government had commenced at the wrong end, that they had proceeded upon wrong lines, that they were adopting entirely wrong principles; and the Government would do well, even at the eleventh hour, if they were to admit their mistake, admit their want of knowledge of the way to proceed upon the question of Local Government, and ask leave to withdraw the Bill until they had made themselves acquainted with village life and with what really constituted a system of Local Government. His hon. Friend (Mr. Long) knew something of village life, he was aware; but he did not think the hon. Gentleman would claim the same extensive knowledge for all his Friends to the right and to the left of him—he did not think the hon. Gentleman would make that large claim upon the imagination of the House. If they admitted the principle that they could not deal with all the parts of Local Government in one Session, let the Government ask leave to withdraw the Bill and introduce a measure to reform the Vestries, and thereby construct a foundation upon which next Session the House would give them every opportunity and every encouragement to build a sound and proper superstructure of Local Government. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board was amazed at the originality of the Mover of the Resolution (Mr. F. S. Stevenson), and seemed to say in his speech—"Why this is a different sort of speech from what you made on the occasion of the second reading, and, therefore, I have nothing to say to it; I have no answer to it." No; there could be no answer to the speech of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. F. S. Stevenson); there was nothing to be said to justify the position which the Government assumed upon the occasion. The speech of his hon. Friend the Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk, the speech of his hon. Friend (Mr. Cobb) who, seconded the Resolution, and the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for the Bosworth Division of Leicestershire (Mr. James Ellis), were speeches of hon. Members who thoroughly knew the subject upon which they were speaking, and who were acquainted with the village life which they were bringing under the notice of the House of Commons that night. If the Government were unable to meet the arguments advanced in debate by his hon. Friends, why did they get up and, in the person of the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long), say they could not accept this Instruction. There was nothing more reasonable in the world than that the Government should accept this Instruction. The Instruction embodied, as he had already said, a sound Conservative principle. It embodied the principle of improving that which already existed when it was capable of improvement. But Conservative principles seemed to have changed sides; now they heard revolutionary and Radical principles advocated by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, while his hon. Friends endeavoured, to the best of their ability, to plead to the Government to return to their ancient professions, and improve the existing institutions of the country, although small they might be, in the shape of the parish Vestries, and to proceed upon that basis for reform of Local Government. It was a very remarkable speech of his hon. Friend (Mr. James Ellis). He told the House, in language plain and simple and unmistakable, of the enormous increase in village life which has followed upon the voluntary reforms of Vestries, small though they were in the case of the villages in his neighbourhood. What Member of the House was there who could not welcome with delight the statement made by his hon. Friend, and desire that the state of affairs to which he alluded should be perpetuated in every parish in the United Kingdom? The establishment of these great County Councils would not meet the pressing wants that had been explained to the House that night by his hon. Friends. By the establishment of these Bodies, the questions of the parish library and the parish playground would not be met. When would they be able to deal with the improvement, or rather the creation, of some elementary system of sanitation. This was a matter of great importance, as many villages had no sanitary arrangements at all, and one of the chief evils existing in villages was the want of a proper water supply. They would find in villages within 20 miles of that House whole rows of cottages wholly dependent for their water supply upon ponds, at which the sheep of the common and the cattle which travelled along the roads drank, and in which they often walked. [*Laughter.*] He saw that some hon. Gentlemen opposite made merry at his statement. If he were connected with some of the great estates of this country, which he was sure some hon. Gentlemen were connected with, he would be ashamed to hear a statement made in that House, that the inhabitants of many villages, even within 20 or 30 miles of the Metropolis itself, had to depend upon roadside water for their domestic purposes. A system of Local Government was needed that would place in the hands of villagers power to alter that evil condition of things. This Bill, he feared, would do nothing of the kind. It was a Bill which, unless the Instruction moved by his hon. Friend was acted upon, would be, as he had once before said, so far as Local Government was concerned, a great sham, and there would be no representation for the labourers and the villagers. They were creating great Bodies, great Councils, and Local Councils, which would be monopolized by the squire, by the great farmer, and the parson, but in which the labourer and the village mechanic would have no part or parcel. He was very glad to notice, he hoped he noticed correctly, that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Long) was not very emphatic in his refusal to accept the Instruction proposed by his hon. Friend. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) had yet to give a final decision on this question, and he (Mr. Broadhurst) hoped the Government would reconsider the not very emphatic words of the hon. Gentleman, and that they would even at that hour express their willingness to consider in Committee, if they refused to accept the Instruction that night, some Amendments drawn upon the principle aimed at in the Resolution of his hon. Friend.

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester) said, he generally agreed with the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Broadhurst), but he confessed he did not at all agree with the hon. Gentleman's expression of hope that the Government would withdraw this Bill. He (Mr. Winterbotham) had not said a word about this Bill in the House as yet; but he hoped the Government would persevere with it, for there was in it that which he thought was good. He was sorry that at the beginning of the Committee stage the Government should have met them with a *non possumus*, after the able and admirable speech which was delivered by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Stephens). That speech proved conclusively to the minds of many of them that the hon. Gentleman had studied village life, and that he knew the feelings of villagers upon this question. It had been well said that the villagers of England cared little for County Councils. For the most part they believed, and he thought they believed rightly, that the Quarter Sessions, which had hitherto conducted their affairs, had conducted them ably, honestly, and economically, and they did not look for any great help and furtherance of the objects they had dearly at heart from the change from Quarter Sessions to a great central authority. What the villagers of England wanted were, the administration of their Poor Law; the administration of their charities, and the control of their education. He entreated the Government not to receive this Instruction in the way in which it had been received by the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long). The hon. Gentleman could not have read it; he spoke of it as an Instruction to the Committee to give to the parish Vestries powers of government. There were no such words in the Instruction. He (Mr. Winterbotham) begged the House to take notice of what the Instruction said. The words were—

> "That it should be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert provisions for the reform of parish Vestries."

There was nothing there about giving any powers of government to parish Vestries. A Bill was introduced by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1871. He wished the Government had had the courage to adopt an admirable provision in that Bill, in Part 2, Section 7, a provision for the election of a parish board every year with a chairman. That was all this Instruction asked them to do. They talked about not having time to do it. He asserted that, if they would so far accept the wishes of agricultural constituencies in this country, and if they would give the Vestries some *locus standi* before the District Council and County Council, they would save a great deal of time, for it would give an inducement to forward other parts of the Bill through Committee. But the Government, through the Secretary to the Local Government Board, met them with a *non possumus*. The hon. Gentleman described the able speech which was delivered by the hon. Member behind him (Mr. Stephens) by misrepresenting entirely what that hon. Member said. He said the hon. Member spoke of the destruction of local self-government. The hon. Member said nothing of the sort; what he spoke of was the destruction of village life in England.

Mr. LONG said, that what he stated was that in all the speeches delivered that night the Bill was described as one tending to destroy local self-government in the country.

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM said, he would appeal to hon. Members who heard the speech of the hon. Member (Mr. Stephens) whether he did not correctly represent the tendency of the speech delivered by the hon. Gentleman when he said it went to show that the Bill destroyed village life in England; the hon. Member did not say one word about the destruction of self-government. The Secretary to the Local Government Board spoke of the condensation of the Bill, instead of its criticism. He (Mr. Winterbotham) was one of those who pointed out to the President of the Local Government Board last Session, when the Allotments Bill was under discussion, that the Guardians were not the people who would successfully carry out the Act, and he also pointed out how differently they on the Opposition side of the House would regard the powers placed in the hands of the Guardians if they had reform of parish life, and especially reform as regarded the election of parish officials. He had not the exact words of the right hon. Gentleman's reply by him. He remembered that the President of the Local Government Board, in answer to him, said—and he thought he could give the very words—

> "If the hon. Member, and those who act with him, will have patience until I introduce the Local Government Bill, they will see that I am prepared to reform the election of Guardians."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, he begged the hon. Gentleman's pardon. He never used those words. What he did say was something to the effect that if he waited until the Local Government Bill was brought in, he would see that the Sanitary Authority, which was the Board of Guardians, would be differently constituted.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM said, that the words printed in *Hansard* would be found to be rather different to what the right hon. Gentleman had just said. At all events, the Members of the Opposition did look forward with hope to the Local Government Bill as likely to provide a reform in the election of the parish officials. Let them have a reformed Vestry, and give that Vestry some *locus standi* before the District Council. That was all the Instruction asked for. It was not very much to ask. Members of the Government must know how very keenly villagers clung to their village life and to their parish authorities. In what way was reform desired? First of all, they wished that the Vestry meeting should be held at a time when people could attend. They wanted that the Vestry should meet once a year and elect a Chairman. If the parson was a fit man, he would be elected; if he was not desired, he ought not to be thrust upon the people. Then, again, they thought it unfair that the efforts of those who gave up a day's work to vote at a Vestry election should be rendered nugatory by the action of men who might have six votes apiece. They asked for no powers of government. They asked the Government to reform the Vestries, and then give them power to consult the District Council on any matters in which the parish might take an interest. He hoped hon. Members would realize the spirit in which the proposal had been made. He hoped they would enter on the discussion apart from Party politics. He wished to make the Bill as perfect as possible. This part of it deeply interested the agricultural labourers. He appealed most earnestly to hon. Members opposite who represented agricultural constituencies to vote with the Opposition to-night, and thus acknowledge that the wish and desire of the agricultural labourers throughout England, that their parish life should be maintained, ought to be observed.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.) said, that one thing which puzzled him was that hon. Gentlemen opposite always stopped short of the very point on which information was wanted. What would they give these reformed parish Vestries to do? He had listened carefully to the speeches of hon. Gentlemen, but had been unable to ascertain what work they would give the Vestries. He had asked questions upon the subject of gentlemen outside the House, but had been unable to get a satisfactory reply. Only that day he had a long conversation with a gentleman once a Member of the House. That gentleman said—"You are all wrong; you are beginning at the wrong end; you are not beginning with parish Vestries." He asked his friend to tell him what parish Vestries were to do when they were reformed? The gentleman stopped short there, as hon.

Members had done. One or two proposals were made the other night, but whether they were seriously made he could not say. He would refer to them in a minute. First of all, let him refer to some remarks made by an hon. Gentleman (Mr. Broadhurst) speaking from the Front Opposition Bench. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the reformed parish Vestries ought to deal with allotments, and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Hornsey (Mr. Stephens) said that the labourers in his parish were annoyed, because, having met together to take action under the Allotments Act, they found themselves unable to do anything in their parish Vestry. Now, under the Allotments Act, the movement for the acquisition of allotments in a parish must emanate with the parish Vestry. He (Mr. Llewellyn) had had some experience in respect to the acquisition of allotments. Since the Allotments Act was passed, and in every parish with which he was connected and in which steps had been taken, the people had been called together and then and there stated what their requirements were. The next step, as they all knew, was to go to the Rural Sanitary Authority, and then followed what, he was glad to say, was the general experience of parishes—allotments were procured without the enforcement of the Compulsory Clauses. The hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) considered that all duties with regard to water supply and sanitary matters ought to be left to the parishes. He (Mr. Llewellyn) maintained that the parishes had power in such matters now. He was bound to say they had not got the motive power; that rested, in the first place, with the Sanitary Authority. But, as hon. Gentlemen knew perfectly well, under the Sanitary Act of 1875 the Sanitary Authority had power to delegate to parochial committees the powers of the Act for the carrying out of the works of their own parish, and it was quite right it should be so. It was left to those who had to find the money to say how it should be spent. It was said also that the management of the schoolroom should be left in the charge of the parish. Where schoolrooms belonged to the parish, there was no reason why they should not be in the management of the parish authorities; but in the majority of cases parish schoolrooms were private property, and in such cases the parishes could have no right to interfere in the management of the schools. When one hon. Gentleman rose the other night, he (Mr. Llewellyn) thought they were about to hear something of the real work of the parish Vestries. Without a smile, the hon. Gentleman proposed that the parish authorities should have the charge of the parish pig club, the parish cow club, and the parish cricket club. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman was serious; but his proposal was recorded in *Hansard.* There were anomalies in regard to the parish Vestries; but did hon. Gentlemen think that these Vestries should be reformed and officers appointed to take the management of the parish pig club, the parish cow club, and the parish cricket club? It was also said that where parishes were small they might be grouped. But if they once joined two parishes together they destroyed the unit. They would have two churchwardens, two overseers, and two assistant overseers, and they would at once destroy the unit they proposed to create. And, in addition to that, they would multiply authorities. They would have the parish authorities, or a group of parish authorities; they would have the District Council, and possibly they would have some other authority. Surely that was not the object of local reform in the present day. He would not detain the House longer, because he felt he had no right to do so. But he earnestly begged hon. Gentlemen who possessed experience of parish life to bring that experience to bear in the debate, and not allow ideas to be put into their heads by others. If an hon. Gentleman's experience was simply restricted to the parish Vestry, he begged he would not try to bring the proposed Councils to the level of such Vestries.

Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham) said, he would like to say one or two words with reference to what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken. The hon. Gentleman had asked those who advocated the retention of parish Vestries what duties the Vestries were to perform? The supporters of this Instruction simply asked why they should not reform and put on a satisfactory footing a body which existed and which met every year. What was it to do? Why should it not consult, as town's meetings in other countries did, with great advantage to the people? Why should it not, when it chose, consult on all matters concerning its welfare which might be raised? The Vestry was to have power to meet in open assembly, and consider anything which concerned its welfare. One of the best clauses in the Bill which the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) introduced in 1871 was the clause which provided that the Chairman of the Vestry should be compelled to summon a meeting whenever five ratepayers asked that any matter which concerned the parish should be considered. That was practically what was asked now. Allow him to point out that, even under the present Bill, they would not be able to do without the parish assembly. The Bill said that the District Council should take under their charge Acts like the Free Libraries' Act. How were they going to carry out the Free Libraries' Act through the District Council? Take the case of a District Council composed of the representatives of about 20 parishes, of which the population ranged from 200 or 300 to 3,000. Suppose that in a large parish of 2,000 or 3,000 a benevolent man gave a library on condition that the parishioners were willing to support it. Did hon. Members mean to tell him that the District Council would impose a rate on that parish without consulting the people? If the District Council did so, the Free Libraries' Act would be carried into force in country districts in a manner very different to that in which it was carried out in towns. The District Council would be compelled, unless it went against the spirit in which the Free Libraries' Act was passed, to come to the people and say—"Do you want a free library established in your midst?" District Councils might try as much as they liked, but they would not succeed in carrying out the Free Libraries' Act without consulting the parishes, and if they had to consult the parishes they would have to consult reformed Vestries. The same remarks applied to other Acts. If recreations or playgrounds were wanted the parishes would have to support their establishment. Parishes were to a great extent, and must remain, the centres of local life in these matters. They must be consulted, and, therefore, it was as well they should exist not under the antiquated system which dated back 100 years or so, but under a system based on modern ideas. He had tried to give, very briefly, some answer to the question—what were the Vestries to do? He would ask what was the reason, when they must have the Vestry, for not reforming it. If the Government would introduce in the Bill three or four simple clauses, making the existing Vestry a responsible body, they would meet with no opposition, but they would certainly grease the wheels of the Bill. He said, frankly, that if the Government refused to meet them on that point, they must not be surprised—he said it in no Party spirit—if some cry was raised, not merely in agricultural villages, but in many of the large mining villages which were well fitted for self-government, that it was somewhat unfair that in the matter of, at least, deliberative powers the Government would not meet them. Hon. Members would, perhaps, be asking shortly—"Will you make any provision for working-men Representatives to go to the County or District Council?" If the Government refused to provide some reasonable means by which working men now on Local Boards and School Boards could find their way to County and District Councils, it might fairly be said they were hardly meeting the villages in a reasonable way. For his part, he thought it was a great pity that in this comparatively simple matter the Government had not tried to lay what he might call a democratic foundation, without injuring the principle of the Bill. Had they done so, they would have made their Bill popular, without damaging it; but, what was most important of all, they would have provided a real educational agency throughout the mining and agricultural districts. He sincerely regretted that that political training in our villages was not to be provided. It was a great misfortune that thus one really valuable educational opportunity would be lost.

MR. RITCHIE said, the hon. Gentleman had very frankly told the Government that if they did not accede to the Instruction he and his Friends would make that question one for agitating throughout the length and breadth of the country.

MR. A. H. D. ACLAND said, he had expressly stated that what he said was in no Party spirit, but that the Government must not be surprised if a cry was raised by the agricultural and mining villages that they were unfairly dealt with.

MR. RITCHIE said, the House would judge of the spirit in which the hon. Gentleman met the Government. It seemed to him that the hon. Gentleman's observations amounted very much to a threat that they would agitate the country against the Government. So far as he (Mr. Ritchie) was concerned, he was not astonished at the course the hon. Gentleman thought it best to pursue. They had already seen the remarkable change in the reception which that Bill had had at the hands of hon. Gentlemen opposite. The hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) said the reason why there was such a material difference in the way in which it was regarded now and at the time when he had had the honour to introduce it was that his speech was a democratic speech, but that the Bill was a Tory measure. But he thought the bulk of hon. Members on both sides of the House would assent to his claim that there was not a single observation he had made in that speech which was not fully justified by the text of the Bill. Hon. Gentlemen opposite at first imagined that the Bill was of so broad a character that it would not be received with favour on this side of the House, and, therefore, they praised it; but when they found that hon. Gentlemen on his side were willing to accept it as a fair attempt to settle the question of Local Government upon large and liberal lines they changed their views as to the merits of the scheme. Some hon. Gentlemen to-night had treated this question as one of vast importance, so much so that if the proposal now made were not accepted they would rather see the whole Bill withdrawn. Others had said that on no account would they desire to see the Bill withdrawn. Some spoke of the powers given as of a small, others as of a large, character. So they differed from one another. He would beg of hon. Gentlemen, when making such a proposal, to agree as to its scope. Some had practically confined their recommendations to changes in the mode of appointing the chairman, in the hour of meeting, and in the mode of appointing the overseers. But such changes would hardly warrant the moving of this Instruction. Others had desired to effect changes of a large character. He was afraid to think of the great number of questions which some thought ought to be entrusted to the parish Vestries. The House had been told that the water supply, drainage, the administration of the Poor Law, and education ought to be in the hands of the Vestry. He would point out that if such changes were contemplated they must necessarily lead, not only in that House, but throughout the country, to a very large amount of discussion and of opposition, for it must be borne in mind that the aim and object of the legislation of the right hon. Gentleman's (Mr. W. E. Gladstone's) Government in 1872 was to take away from the parish Vestries those powers which it was now contended ought to be conferred upon them. The Sanitary Commission, before the legislation of the right hon. Gentleman, reported that the Vestry failed to discharge some of the duties which the hon. Gentleman would confer upon them, and that was the reason why the right hon. Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) brought forward his legislation of 1872, which had proved of such advantage to the country. Therefore, the step which the hon. Gentleman would take now was a retrograde step. The Government were told that if their Bill passed, the parishes would have no opportunity of discussing questions which concerned them. But the Government made no change in that respect. It was as open to the Vestry to meet after the passing of the Bill as it was now. The hon. Member for the Bosworth Division of Leicester (Mr. James Ellis) had told the House that neither as to the appointment of a chairman, the hour of meeting, nor several other matters which had been alluded to, was any difficulty felt in his own or in the surrounding parishes. The Vestry met in the evening, and when there was a desire to appoint a chairman other than the vicar there had never been any difficulty. It was impossible to deal with the large matters which hon. Gentlemen had in view unless you reformed the area of the parishes. The hon. Gentleman said that there ought to be no parish with a population less than 500 or 600. But it was well known that there was a large number with a smaller population; and, therefore, it was impossible to deal with the great mass of the questions raised on the other side of the House until you reformed the area of the parishes. That was the answer of the Government to the proposal. The County Council would be a very proper body to inquire into the question of the revision of the areas of parishes, and the Government looked forward to the County Council as a great engine of reform in parochial and other matters. The Government were bound to look at the Instruction in the light of the Amendments placed on the Paper by the hon. Gentleman and the right hon. Member for Halifax. Both desired to set up in the parish the Vestry as the executive. The Vestry was to be the only Body by which the Acts with regard to sanitary matters, baths and washhouses, and so on, were to be carried out. That, as he had said, was a distinctly retrograde step. While the Vestry was a useful medium for expressing the wishes of the inhabitants of the parish, it was altogether unsuited for the purposes which hon. Gentlemen had in view. The hon. Gentleman who moved the Instruction said that' if carried, it would not necessarily imply that all the Amendments put down on the subject should be adopted; and he added that if it were accepted other Amendments might be put on the Paper. But the hon. Gentleman must be aware that they were now getting towards the middle of June, and that there were already on the Paper Amendments almost unparalleled in number, while the matters to be discussed within the four corners of the Bill were almost more than the House could properly get through. What chance, then, was there of being able to deal satisfactorily with the large and very important question of the parish Vestries, in addition to all other questions? The Government believed there was considerable room for improvement in many matters connected with the parishes, and he begged the House to believe that they would be very glad if they were able at some future time to deal with many of the points which had been raised that night.

MR. STANSFELD (Halifax) said, that he must enter his protest against the language of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. The Government had been fairly treated from the first with regard to the Bill. It was a very complicated measure, and therefore it must meet with very great discussion and difference of opinion. As far as he could judge, there had not been any disposition on that (the Opposition) side to treat the Government unfairly. One question he would raise to-night was this—what were the means by which the Government might hope that the Opposition would continue to act in that way? It was by meeting them in a different spirit from that which the right hon. Gentleman had shown to-night. The right hon. Gentleman had suggested that a threat had been addressed to the Government, when all that had been done was to give them a friendly warning. The right hon. Gentleman imputed motives and designs. That, surely, was not good policy on the part of a Member of a Government introducing a measure of this importance and complexity. To impute to the Opposition a design to defeat the measure was, in the circumstances, likely to engender a suspicion that the Government would themselves regard its defeat with equanimity. If the acceptance of this Instruction were necessarily to be followed by proposals to confer very extensive powers upon the Vestries it might be objected with reason that the progress of the Bill would be retarded. But he believed that the Party with whom he was connected would be quite content if the moderate Amendments which he had placed upon the Paper were accepted. The statements made by the right hon. Gentleman last Autumn had certainly raised expectations that the Vestries would be dealt with by the Bill. On August 19 the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The hon. Member is quite mistaken in supposing that the present Government imagine they will deal adequately with the question of Local Government if they confine their attention to the reform of Local County Government or to setting up of a County Authority. If the hon. Member saw the Bill now in print he would find that we propose not only to deal with County Authorities, but with all authorities within the County."—(3 *Hansard*, [319] 1183.)

Was not a Vestry an authority within a county? Then, on September 5, the right hon. Gentleman said—

"I have already said more than once that it is the intention of the Government, on the earliest possible day, to introduce a Bill not only dealing with Local Government, not only providing Local Government for counties, but also dealing with Boards of Guardians and other Local Authorities, which, I hope, will be placed on a more popular basis."—(3 *Hansard*, [320] 1302.)

Mr. RITCHIE said that the Bill carried out the promise of that speech. It proposed to set up a properly constituted Sanitary Authority.

Mr. STANSFELD said, that the impression produced by the right hon. Gentleman's words was that he proposed to deal with Boards of Guardians, and to establish them on a more popular basis. But the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman would do nothing for the parish and nothing for the Vestry. On the contrary, the 47th section of the measure would deprive the Vestries of rights which they now possessed. Ought he not, therefore, to compensate them by endeavouring to infuse a little new life into their constitution? There was practically nothing in the Amendment which he had put on the Paper which was not perfectly consistent with what the right hon. Gentleman himself had said on the second reading of the Bill, or with what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain). He (Mr. Stansfeld) was aware that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had referred to remarks which he had made on a previous occasion, but it had been from an imperfect report; because when he came to study the speech of the right hon. Gentleman he found that the right hon. Gentleman and he himself were in the most perfect accord. The right hon. Gentleman had thought that it was advisable, without going into any great scheme, to do something to infuse life into local matters, and to train the people in the management of public affairs. For his own part, he did not think that anyone would say that that would not be a measure advisable in itself. Supposing the Government insisted on taking from the parish those functions which, in his opinion, it might be advisable to leave to them, why should they not do something to reform and popularize it, and to infuse local life into the parish? Why should they determine to do nothing? That was really the question. Why was it absolutely necessary, if they were taking away something, to do nothing in return? The argument of the right hon. Gentleman was that because he did not know what Amendments might be proposed he, therefore, could not accept this Instruction. He asked whether the tone the right hon. Gentleman had adopted in complaining of the Amendments was a tone in which he ought to address the House? That was not the tone, temper, or method by which the right hon. Gentleman was likely to conciliate persons who, though sitting on the other side of the House, had no desire to defeat his Bill. He believed that hon. Members on that side of the House would be satisfied with a very moderate discussion if this Instruction were accepted, with the few and moderate proposals he had made, and he felt certain that the right hon. Gentleman would not lose but would gain time. He had never, in a considerable experience of that House, known a policy such as that pursued by the right hon. Gentleman to be successful; it was better to treat the House with confidence, instead of assuming an ill purpose in everything that was proposed on that side of the House, and to give as well as take. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that he was to take everything and give nothing. That was a mistake; the right hon. Gentleman had gained nothing by it, and would gain nothing. In these circumstances, he believed that if the right hon. Gentleman would make this concession on the strength of the assurances which he (Mr. Stansfeld) had given the right hon. Gentleman he would increase the progress of the Bill.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) had referred to a speech which he (Mr. J. Chamberlain) had made on the second reading of the Bill, and especially to the remarks he had made with reference to the organization of the parish. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he believed, from reading that report, that they were practically in accord upon the point at issue. For his own part, he thought that that was a perfectly accurate statement. As far as he understood the proposals of his right hon. Friend, he would be prepared to support them, and he did not think that there would be much difference in the House on the matter. As far as he understood the opinions of the Government, as expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), they were favourable to some further organization of the parish; and he did not think that the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax would provoke much discussion or opposition. As he understood these proposals, all that the right hon. Gentleman asked was that the powers now possessed by the Vestries should remain in their hands; but that, having regard to the popular organization which was now about to be given to the District Councils and the County Councils, something in the shape of a little more popular organization should be given to the Vestries. He thought, also, that hon. Members on both sides of the House, and especially those who had lived in the country, and could speak with authority with reference to parochial matters, would agree that it was most important, in introducing this great change, that attention should be paid to the beginnings of Local Government, and the smallest interest should be considered. The great mass of the new voters to whom they were intending to introduce the privileges and responsibilities of Local Government should have something in the nature of an education in connection with what he might call their domestic interests. If the ratepayers in the parishes had some work to do, they would become, in consequence, very much better electors of County Councils and District Councils, and be much better able to deal with the important work which they had to consider in connection with the larger institutions. What was the difficulty? Why could not this very moderate organization be given to the parish? What seemed to be the opinion of the Government was that they had undertaken a somewhat large business, and that they had got almost as much on their hands as they were able to manage—at all events, without something like a definite assurance on that side of the House that their difficulties should not be increased and complicated by further indefinite proposals; and when he looked at the Amendments on the Paper, especially those of the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. F. S. Stevenson), he did not wonder at the reluctance of the Government to consent to Instructions which might open to them a perfect sea of trouble. If the hon. Member for Eye was to move all the Amendments, although he (Mr. Chamberlain) should give the matter his most cordial and serious consideration at the proper time, he would also be prepared to agree with the Government that at this period of the Session, and with the work undertaken, they were not justified in opening the gates to all this new controversial matter. Now, however, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax had, in his (Mr. J. Chamberlain's) opinion, put a new face on the matter; and he thought that it would be worth the while of the Government to consider what had been said by the right hon. Gentleman. As he understood the right hon. Gentleman, he had, as far as possible, on behalf of hon. Members behind him—and certainly speaking for the ordinary Opposition—given a pledge that the discussion would be confined to the very moderate proposal which stood in his own name. He (Mr. J. Chamberlain) did not know how far the right hon. Gentleman had entered into previous consultation with those who worked with him, or how far he was able to speak absolutely in their name; but, if an honourable assurance was given, he thought that the Government might consider these questions, which they themselves admitted it would be very desirable to add to the Bill, and which they considered as necessary to complete the measure, if there was to be nothing in the nature of controversial discussion.

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON said, he wished to explain that what he had said was that if this Instruction were given, he should be willing to support the Amendments to the 47th clause to be moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax, instead of moving his own.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN said, that that statement rather strengthened the argument of the right hon. Member for Halifax. If other hon. Members on that side of the House were inclined to deal with the subject in the same spirit, and to accept concessions from the

Government on this point with the understanding that they would not introduce unnecessarily controversial matter, and that the discussion should be confined to the Amendments of the right hon. Member for Halifax, as far as he (Mr. J. Chamberlain) could see, the Government might improve their Bill without delaying the measure or undertaking any serious responsibility.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he was sure there was a general agreement in the House as respected the desire to improve the parochial organization, and hon. Members opposite would do him the justice to remember that he was himself one of the original patentees of the idea that village life should be enlarged by improved organization. Therefore, he was in sympathy with the object which had been advocated to as great a degree as any single Member on the other side of the House. He was also sure it was the feeling of the Government that they would not have completed the work to which they had set their hands, until they had not only made small adjustments in parochial life, but had dealt as broadly and thoroughly with that portion of the question as they had attempted to deal with other portions of it. The great difficulty was that they had not only to deal, if they accepted this Instruction, with the particular Amendments that would follow from it, but also with the question of grouping the parishes. The question of boundaries and grouping must precede the re-arrangement of the parish. The Government had, therefore, thought that that was too large a matter to deal with in the present Bill, and that they could not deal with it satisfactorily until they had organized a system of grouping. In his own Bill he proposed the parish as the unit of organization, and one of the strongest arguments used against his proposal was the great diversity in the sizes of parishes, and the differences of organization that were required. That was one of the reasons why his own plan failed to commend itself to public attention. He rejoiced to think that there was now a public feeling in favour of re-organizing the parish; but it must first be seen how they would stand when grouped, and that would be too great a task to undertake by the present Bill. They did not wish to accept the Instruction; but it would be admitted that that was a work which ought to receive considerable discussion, and they entirely recognized the friendly feeling that had been expressed with regard to any compromise. They did not desire to meet the House with any *non possumus*; but it would be the desire of the Government to conduct the measure through Committee without any infusion of Party spirit, and they would most gratefully accept any assistance that might be given, from whatever part of the House it might come; but they could not accept the proposed Instruction on account of the difficulties he had stated.

MR. STANSFELD said, he would point out that the objection in regard to the question of boundaries would not be involved in his proposals, for the reason that they were applicable to parishes as they are.

MR. RITCHIE, in explanation, said, that the speech of his which had been quoted as implying a promise to deal with Boards of Guardians had special reference to dealing with allotments, as to which he said the Guardians were to be superseded by a more popularly elected authority.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, that the speeches just made produced the belief that there was a limited good which it was in their power to attain, and he could not but believe there must be on the part of the Government a desire to concur in any measure to attain that good, unless it could be shown that there were insuperable difficulties. His right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer had pointed out what was, no doubt, a practical difficulty in the way of dealing with the question—namely, that there must be a grouping of parishes before the House could proceed to deal with the important questions that would be raised in regard to the powers and action of the Vestries. Now, although the interpolation with respect to the grouping of parishes was a very necessary matter, admitted to be necessary before the larger question connected with the improvement of the Vestries could be proceeded with, yet it was no necessary condition at all with respect to such limited and moderate proposals as those which were now made from the Opposition side of the House and by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Stansfeld). He hoped the Government would be disposed to consider that view of the case. As far as his hon. Friend the Mover of the Instruction (Mr. F. S. Stevenson) was concerned, he had in the frankest manner put aside all idea of bringing forward large questions under cover of this Instruction, because he had bound himself to act in a manner which would make it impossible that that difficulty should occur. It might be there were other Members who were not prepared of a sudden to pledge themselves in the same definite manner; but yet the Government might rely upon it that those who were now promoting the Instruction avowedly with a limited and practical view, and certainly not with the intention of raising unnecessary debate, and thereby retarding the progress of this hopeful and valuable Bill, would do the best they could, if occasion arose, of preventing any difficulty that might arise if the Instruction should be granted—that was to say, the Opposition Leaders would use any influence legitimately in their power upon hon. Members, to whose confidence they might in any degree have access, for the purpose of restraining such Members from making proposals to which the objection just stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer would apply—namely, that they could not be entertained until the important matter of the grouping of parishes had been dealt with. That was a state of facts and expectations which might encourage the Government to accede to the Instruction.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, he desired to acknowledge the very considerate manner in which the right hon. Gentleman had approached the consideration of this question, and he was quite prepared to admit that if the Government had an unlimited amount of time at their disposal this question might be most hopefully considered by the House. But the Government felt that they had entered upon a task of very great magnitude, and did not think that the time would permit for the consideration of the question which its great importance demanded. The Government recognized fully the desirability, even the necessity, for doing much for the improvement of the parish Vestry, and of giving to village life the strength and power that it once possessed; but they had undertaken as much work as they could possibly carry to a successful issue. Under these circumstances, and at this period of the Session, the Government must ask the House to postpone the consideration of that portion of the Local Government Bill until another Session, when they would be disposed to give it the most full and favourable consideration.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) said, as the only other Member who had given Notice of an Amendment in regard to the point, he should be happy to withdraw his Amendment, and follow that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), if the Government would accept the Instruction now before the House.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 183; Noes 229: Majority 46.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asquith, H. H.
Austin, J.
Ballantine, W. H. W.
Barbour, W. B.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biggar, J. G.
Bolton, J. C.
Bradlaugh, C.
Broadhurst, H.
Brown, A. H.
Burt, T.
Buxton, S. C.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, C.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carew, J. L.
Causton, R. K.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Channing, F. A.
Childers, right hon. H. C. E.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Collings, J.
Commins, A.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Corbett, A. C.
Cossham, H.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Craig, J.
Craven, J.
Crawford, D.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crossley, E.
Davies, W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dodds, J.
Duff, R. W.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esmonde, Sir T. H. G.
Esslemont, P.
Evershed, S.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Forster, Sir C.
Foster, Sir B. W.
Fowler, right hon. H. H.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gane, J. L.
Gardner, H.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, right hon. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Grey, Sir E.
Grove, Sir T. F.
Gully, W. C.
Gurdon, R. T.
Haldane, R. B.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.

Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Healy, T. M.
Hooper, J.
Hunter, W. A.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
Joicey, J.
Jordan, J.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kenny, C. S.
Kenrick, W.
Kilbride, D.
Labouchere, H.
Lalor, R.
Lane, W. J.
Lawson, Sir W.
Leake, R.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Lewis, T. P.
Lockwood, F.
Lyell, L.
Macdonald, W. A.
Mac Innes, M.
Mac Neill, J. G. S.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Arthur, W. A.
M'Cartan, M.
M'Donald, P.
M'Lagan, P.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Mahony, P.
Maitland, W. F.
Marum, E. M.
Montagu, S.
Neville, R.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, J.
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Hea, P.
O'Keeffe, F. A.
O'Kelly, J.
Parnell, C. S.
Philipps, J. W.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Pinkerton, J.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Provand, A. D.
Pugh, D.
Quilter, W. C.
Quinn, T.
Randell, D.
Redmond, J. E.
Reid, R. T.
Rendel, S.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Robertson, E.
Robinson, T.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Schwann, C. E.
Sexton, T.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sheehy, D.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stansfeld, right hon. J.
Stephens, H. C.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Thomas, D. A.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Tuite, J.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waddy, S. D.
Wallace, R.
Wardle, H.
Warmington, C. M.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Whitbread, S.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williamson, J.
Williamson, S.
Wilson, I.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.

TELLERS.

Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Morley, A.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Aird, J.
Allsopp, hon. G.
Allsopp, hon. P.
Ambrose, W.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Barry, A. H. S.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Bazley-White, J.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Beckett, E. W.
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Biddulph, M.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Bolitho, T. B.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Brooks, Sir W. C.
Bruce, Lord H.
Campbell, J. A.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Compton, F.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Darling, C. J.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dixon, G.
Donkin, R. S.
Dugdale, J. S.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. J. F.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Elton, C. I.
Ewart, Sir W.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Farquharson, H. R.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Fielden, T.
Finch, G. H.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. H. W.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fulton, J. F.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Gedge, S.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Goldsworthy, Major General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Granby, Marquess of
Gray, C. W.
Grimston, Viscount
Gunter, Colonel R.
Hall, A. W.
Hall, C.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, F.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hill, A. S.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Holloway, G.
Hornby, W. H.
Howard, J.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, hon. E.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
Jardine, Sir R.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lambert, C.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lea, T.
Lees, E.
Legh, T. W.
Lennox, Lord W. C. Gordon-
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, hon. W.
Macdonald, rt. hon. J. H. A.
Mackintosh, C. F.

Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
Madden, D. H.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mallock, R.
Maple, J. B.
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Adml. R. C.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
More, R. J.
Morrison, W.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Murdoch, C. T.
Noble, W.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Parker, hon. F.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Plunkett, hon. J. W.
Powell, F. S.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Richardson, T.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, rt. hn. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Round, J.
Russell, Sir G.
Russell, T. W.
Selwyn, Captain C. W.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Smith, right hon. W. H.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stewart, M. J.
Swetenham, E.
Talbot, J. G.
Tapling, T. K
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Townsend, F.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Villiers, rt. hon. C. P.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
West, Colonel W. C.
Weymouth, Viscount
Wharton, J. L.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wilson, Sir S.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.
Yerburgh, R. A.

TELLERS.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

PART I.

County Councils.

Clause 1 (Establishment of County Councils).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Gurdon.*)

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked, what Business the Government proposed to go on with in the remaining minutes at their disposal? There were a great number of Bills in which the House was interested. If the Government proposed to go on with the North Sea Fisheries Bill, or any non-contentious Business, he imagined there would be no opposition; but it was very undesirable to embark on any contentious Business at such a time.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, no contentious Business would be proposed.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY FOR INJURIES TO WORKMEN BILL.—[Bill 145.]

(*Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Forwood.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) desired to know when it was proposed to refer this Bill to the Standing Committee on Law?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, Notice of the Motion would be put down that night.

Committee *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

NORTH SEA FISHERIES BILL.

(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Baron Henry de Worms.*)

[BILL 278.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.) said, he hoped the House would now agree to the second reading of the Bill. It was simply to give effect to the provisions of the North Sea Fisheries Convention, entered into last year between Great Britain and other Powers interested in the fisheries. It prevented the supply of liquor to fishermen in the North Sea and provided for the supply of provisions and other necessaries to fishermen by vessels licensed for the purpose. To this and the infliction of penalties for offences against the Fisheries Act the Bill was solely confined.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) asked, was there any provision in the Bill for providing compensation to those persons who were to be prevented from continuing the sale of liquor?

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, it was extremely unlikely that any such claim would be advanced.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

COUNTY COURTS CONSOLIDATION AND AMENDMENT BILL [*Lords*].

(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

[BILL 263.] CONSIDERATION.

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he hoped that the Bill would not be really taken until the House was in possession of the Return as to Inferior Courts which had been the subject of several Questions.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he would take care that should be so.

Consideration *deferred* till *Thursday* next.

OFFICIAL SECRETS BILL.—[BILL 256.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Lord George Hamilton.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, this was a measure to give increased powers against the offence of disclosing confidential matter by officials. He believed there was no objection to the Bill in principle, and any Amendment thought desirable could be discussed in Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he could not agree that the Bill had in it nothing of an unusual character. It seemed to him to be one of a very unusual character, because it appeared to create certain new offences to be brought under the cognizance of the Courts. This amounted to a fundamental alteration in the Criminal Code of the country, and he thought the House was entitled to ask for some more lengthy explanation as to the scope, general purpose, and powers of the Bill. [An hon. MEMBER: Have you read it?] Yes; he had read it with great care; such care that he had no need to hold a copy for reference. Yet he did not mean to trouble the House with a *résumé* of its contents, or indulge in criticisms more pertinent to the Committee stage; still his knowledge of the Bill induced him to object, as he emphatically did, to its second reading being taken at such a time without discussion. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury said no contentious Business would be taken, and probably he thought this was included in that category. If so, he had "reckoned without his host"——

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

MR. SPEAKER: Five minutes is a very short time to devote to a second reading discussion, and, moreover, Business is now interrupted by 12 o'clock.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed *To-morrow.*

NATIONAL DEBT (SUPPLEMENTAL) BILL.—[BILL 264.]

(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Jackson.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [17th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, this was Business of a pressing nature, for no annuities could be granted until the arrangements in the Bill were settled. These were rendered necessary by the financial arrangements in regard to the National Debt which the House had sanctioned, and he believed the Bill contained nothing of a controversial character. He did not know that any explanation was required from him.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

COUNTY COURTS CONSOLIDATION AND AMENDMENT [SALARY].

COMMITTEE.

MATTER—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parlia-

ment, of a salary to any Registrar of a County Court, who may be required to give his whole time to the public service, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to consolidate and amend the County Court Acts."

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) objected.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he hoped this merely formal Resolution would be agreed to. Unless it were passed, salaries that might become payable under this Consolidation Bill could not be paid, nor could the provision be made in the Bill.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he wished to know substantially what it meant, for he had never heard of it before. Of course, he was aware that it was a formal Resolution. He noticed that a salary was to be given to Registrars giving their whole time to the Public Service; but he had supposed they could be required to do that already. Did the Bill make any alteration in the status of County Court Registrars?

MR. JACKSON said, no; there was no alteration of status.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

NATIONAL DEFENCE [REMUNERATION, &c.]

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 4th June.*]

MATTER—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of remuneration to Railway Companies for receiving and forwarding traffic under the authority of a Secretary of State or the Admiralty, and of compensation to any person suffering loss for anything done under such authority, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to make better provision respecting National Defence."—(*Mr. Secretary Stanhope.*)

MR. PICTON (Leicester) objected.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, this was merely the usual formal Resolution, and he hoped the objection would not be insisted upon.

MR. PICTON said, he attached such importance to this matter that he could not withdraw his objection.

Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress; Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY FOR INJURIES TO WORKMEN [REMUNERATION].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such officers, surveyors, and other persons as may be appointed to carry into effect the provisions of any Act of the present Session to consolidate and amend the Law relating to the Liability of Employers for Injuries to their Workmen.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

MOTION.

—o—

ULSTER CANAL AND TYRONE NAVIGATION BILL [*Lords*].

Ordered, That the Parties appearing before the Select Committee on the Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill [*Lords*] have leave to print the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee, day by day, from the Committee Clerk's Copy, if they think fit.—(*Mr. Stansfeld.*)

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 8th June, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Habitual Drunkards Act (1879) Amendment (No. 2) * (138).

Second Reading—*Referred to Select Committee*—Pharmacy Act (Ireland), 1875, Amendment (112).

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS—*Second Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) (Ballymoney, &c.) * (97); Elementary Education (Birmingham) * (101); Elementary Education (London) * (102); Local Government * (113); Local Government (No. 2) * (114); Local Government (Poor Law) * (115); Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 2) * (116); Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 3) * (117).

Committee—*Report*—Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough, &c.) * (104); Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse) * (105).

Third Reading—Local Government (Ireland) (Dublin Markets) * (85), and *passed.*

PHARMACY ACT (IRELAND), 1875, AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 112.)

(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he had received an intimation that the Government would not oppose the second reading, provided the Bill were referred to a Select Committee, and he was most anxious that it should be so referred. The Bill was similar in its objects to one which he recently carried through that House for Great Britain. The main object was to protect the public against the uncontrolled and indiscriminate sale of poisons. The condition of things in Ireland was worse than it had been in Great Britain; the sale of poisons was practically uncontrolled, because defects in legislation rendered it almost impossible to secure convictions for illegal sale. By the Act of 1791 the Apothecaries Hall was constituted, and the making up of medical prescriptions was confined to members of that Body. It did not, however, restrict the sale of poisons which were not so made up; and that sale was restricted only by the provisions of an Act relating to arsenic. By the Act of 1870, strict provisions were made for regulating the sale of poisons, but no attempt was made to confine the sale to particular persons. A schedule of poisons was affixed to the Act, and the sale of them, except as provided by the Act, was a matter subjecting the vendor to severe penalties. But it had been found practically impossible to enforce the Act through the College of Physicians acting under the Privy Council, on whom the responsibility of enforcing it devolved. The Irish Pharmaceutical Society was constituted by the Pharmacy Act of 1875, which provided that all qualified persons should have their names inscribed on a register of chemists and druggists, and the 31st clause protected the rights of all existing dealers in poisons; but there was no provision for registering the names of those who had been formerly engaged in the indiscriminate sale, and it was impossible to identify those who had secured the right to continue in the trade. To remedy this defect was one of the objects of the Bill. Complaints had been made of the lax enforcement of the law by the Pharmaceutical Society, which had not money to carry on prosecutions. It had been suggested that some of those who had taken advantage of the lax state of things should be allowed to continue their trade if they passed a modified examination, and should have their names inscribed on the register A similar provision was made for the protection of assistants. There were also provisions for removing uncertainty as to the proprietorship of establishments where the sale of poisons was carried on, and requiring that they should in all cases be under the personal management of qualified persons.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN) said, that the subject of the Bill was not only one of great importance, but also one of great complexity. It was extremely difficult to unravel the various differences which had arisen between the several Bodies who produced poisons in Ireland. The Government of Ireland were anxious that the Bill should not pass without further examination, but they had no prejudice against it. They were determined to ask the House to read the Bill a second time, on the understanding that it should be referred to a Select Committee. To that course his noble Friend had assented, and he now begged to recommend their Lordships to adopt it.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *referred* to a Select Committee.

ROYAL PARKS AND PLEASURE GARDENS—THE ROEHAMPTON GATE OF RICHMOND PARK.—QUESTION.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE asked, Whether it was not the case that the owner of the road from Barnes Common to the Roehampton Gate of Richmond Park had offered to make a present of that road to the public; and whether Her Majesty's Ministers did not consider that the offer should be accepted, and thus a much nearer entrance be afforded from London to Richmond Park?

LORD HENNIKER said, that he could not add anything to the answer which was given by the First Commissioner of Works on this subject on the 19th of March in the House of Commons. Perhaps he might be allowed to read part of that answer. The First Commissioner said—

"No Vote has ever been taken in Parliament for the purchase of Clarence Lanes. In 1869 the Treasury authorized negotiations for their purchase at the price of £2,000; but the negotiations came to nothing, as the then proprietor held out for a larger sum. In 1874 the matter again came up; and the Office of Works asked the Treasury whether they were still willing to propose that Parliament should contribute £2,000 towards freeing the roads, as there was a movement among residents in the neighbourhood to raise by subscription the balance of the sum demanded by the proprietor (£2,500); but that suggestion was not adopted."—(3 *Hansard*, [323] 1636-7.)

It was true that the road had been offered as a gift to the Office of Works. That Department had refused the offer, because the Treasury would not undertake the expense of maintaining the road. The cost of maintaining it would be about £100 a-year, but £200 would be required to put the road in order. It would not be possible to save that amount out of the sum allowed by Parliament for the maintenance of the roads in Richmond Park, particularly as this year the Estimate for the maintenance of the Park had been considerably cut down. The Government were not, as he had said, willing to undertake the maintenance of these roads; but if the roads were otherwise made available, they were prepared to maintain and keep a gatekeeper to look after the road and see that it was properly protected.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—SENTENCE ON MR. CONDON, M.P.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD COLERIDGE asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether there was any objection to lay upon the Table of the House copies of the summons and of the indictment or information on which Mr. Thomas Condon, M.P., was recently sentenced to one month's imprisonment, together with any copies which might exist of the passage or passages in his speech which were the subject of the indictment, or information of any evidence which was given upon his trial, and of the judgment; also whether Her Majesty's Government were aware, or could inform the House, whether the judgment was founded on any previous decision of any competent Court? His attention was drawn to the proceedings in this case as they were reported in the newspapers, but he would not state what impression the newspaper reports produced on his mind, because he knew by experience that newspaper reports of legal cases were very often necessarily, and very often when they need not be, inaccurate. The case was an important one, and he had taken care to put the Question in such a form that it should not interfere with any proceedings that might be pending. Whether it was intended to draw attention to it in the other House he knew not. He simply asked for information, because he knew perfectly well that if he said anything on the case in the present state of his information he would invite at the hands of the Government the very proper answer that he had interfered in a matter about which his information was perfectly unreliable. He did not think that he would be justified—and he did not intend doing so—in expressing any opinion on the case whatever. He would only say, as regards the last portion of his Question, that he took it for granted that the proceedings—though it did not appear on the Paper, because he had taken it for granted—were taken under the Crimes Act, and he supposed under Section 2 of that Act. He did not know whether that was so or not, but he took the liberty of assuming it; and what he meant by the last portion of his Question was, he wished to know whether the noble and learned Lord opposite (the Lord Chancellor of Ireland), or any other noble Lord, could inform him whether there had been any previous decision on that section or not?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord ASHBOURNE) said, he had considered the Question placed upon the Paper by the noble and learned Lord with all the care and attention which was due to one holding so high a position as the noble and learned Lord in the House and in the Legal Profession. He gathered from the few observations which the noble and learned Lord had made that his attention was called to this case by some statement in the newspapers, and that his desire was to obtain information, the giving of which would not interfere with the course of justice. If the noble and learned Lord had lived in Ireland, or had been in the habit of reading Irish newspapers even at irregular periods, he would have been tolerably familiar with every aspect of this case, and he would know that all the points upon which he desired information, and that every matter having the slightest connection with this case had been mentioned at length and fully reported in the Press. He said frankly that all the information which he had to give on the subject was only what any person could have made himself acquainted with through the ordinary channels of information. On the 2nd of April, 1888, a meeting was held at Mitchelstown at which Mr. Condon took an active part and made a speech; and it was in reference to a portion of that speech, which was held to amount to an incitement to persons to commit a breach of the law, that the sentence of one month's imprisonment was inflicted. As their Lordships would recollect, a police constable named Leahy was very seriously and dangerously maimed and wounded in the riot at Mitchelstown last autumn, where this meeting had been held, on the 2nd of April, and the Grand Jury of the county of Cork at the last Spring Assizes, under the Grand Jury Act passed in the reign of William IV., awarded to Constable Leahy for those injuries that he had sustained the sum of £1,000. In accordance with the ordinary requirements of the law that was fiated in the usual way by the Judge of Assize afterwards at the Spring Assizes at Cork. On the 2nd of April that meeting was held, and the Attorney General for Ireland, whose business it was to consider those matters, arrived, not unreasonably, at the conclusion that the meeting was an unlawful meeting, that it was held to support the Plan of Campaign, and also to induce the ratepayers not to pay the tax for the compensation awarded to Constable Leahy by the Grand Jury and upheld at the Spring Assizes. At the meeting held on April 2, Mr. Condon made a speech in which he said—

"You have heard from Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Healy that a tax of £1,000 is being levied off the barony for his unconstitutional conduct in being the first to lead the baton party that broke through your meeting on the 9th of September last. I hope the men of the barony of Condons and Clongibbons will do in the future as they have done in the past—namely, organize themselves to make the collection of that tax as difficult and expensive for these landlords and for the taxgatherers. All this may be illegal. I do not know whether it is or not, and, furthermore, do not care. It is quite possible that you will have policemen out in a day or two, but I will ask you to feed yourselves and your families before you part with this money for Constable Leahy. It is one of the most infamous acts that was ever perpetrated by a Grand Jury. It was not out of love for Leahy, but it was poor revenge for the triumph that you had over them and their class on the Kingston property; not that one shilling will come out of their own pockets. If you contrast their action in the Grand Jury room in Cork with their action in the country you can see the motive that actuates the Grand Jury of the County of Cork in levying this infamous tax. I hope that you will send back a message to the Grand Jury of Cork that by the time this tax is collected it will cost them ten times more than the original tax levied. I have not the slightest doubt but that you will make the collection of this tax impossible, and that before a few months they will have reason to remember it. This is no time to be mealy-mouthed in speaking on these subjects."

The Attorney General for Ireland and the Executive Government could not, consistently with their duty, allow those words to pass unnoticed. They had to discharge their duty; and they directed that Mr. Condon should be prosecuted for those words and for his action at that meeting. The charges preferred against Mr. Condon were four in number—namely—

"That the defendant did take part in a criminal conspiracy to induce certain persons not to fulfil their legal obligations, to wit, to pay a certain tax, to wit, county cess or grand jury cess, in respect of a certain presentment of the Grand Jury of the County of Cork, made at last Spring Assizes for said county, whereby a sum of £1,000 was presented to be raised off the barony of Condons and Clongibbons, in said county, in pursuance of Section 106, 6 and 7 *Will.* IV., c. 116, for the maiming of one Constable James Leahy at Mitchelstown, in said barony. 2. That defendant did at same time and place incite certain persons to unlawfully take part in a criminal conspiracy to induce certain other persons not to fulfil their legal obligations, to wit, to pay a certain tax, to wit, county cess or grand jury cess, in respect of said presentment hereinbefore mentioned. 3. And also that defendant did at same time and place aforesaid take part in an unlawful assembly. 4. And also that defendant at same time and place aforesaid being a district, to wit, within the barony of Condons and Clongibbons, in said County of Cork, and specified by an Order of the Lord Lieutenant in Council dated the 17th of September, 1887, made in pursuance of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, by which Order the association named and described as the Irish National League in said district was suppressed, and which order was, after a special Proclamation in pursuance of the said Act, made by the Lord Lieutenant by and with the advice of the Privy Council, did knowingly take part in a meeting of the said association."

The case came on at Mitchelstown before the tribunal constituted under the recent

Act and presided over by Mr. Irwin, a gentleman of character, experience, and knowledge. Mr. Deasy, a Member of Parliament, and also a member of the Bar, represented Mr. Condon, and he asked that the hearing of the charge against his client for taking part in a criminal conspiracy to induce certain persons not to fulfil their legal obligations in regard to payment of the tax for providing the compensation awarded to Constable Leahy should be adjourned until after the decision of the Queen's Bench Division in Ireland had been given upon the legality of the presentment of the Grand Jury of the County of Cork, that presentment having been removed upon *certiorari* to the Court of Queen's Bench in Dublin. The counsel for the Crown, Mr. Ronan, who represented the Attorney General, a lawyer of great experience and ability, in order to prevent all possibility of complaint that the defendant was unfairly treated, assented to the proposed adjournment until the Court of Queen's Bench had given its judgment on the legality of the presentment. The Queen's Bench Division afterwards gave judgment, upholding the legality of the presentment, and the liability of the ratepayers to pay the rate out of which Constable Leahy was to receive compensation was clear and manifest. The case against Mr. Condon then came on at Mitchelstown before Mr. Irwin and his colleague. The defence made by counsel for the defendant appeared to be that the words which Mr. Condon had spoken at the meeting only suggested and recommended that the people should not pay the tax until they knew what the action of the Court of Queen's Bench would be, and whether it would affirm the presentment, or set it aside as being illegal. The case was heard fully, and Mr. Irwin gave judgment against Mr. Condon. In passing sentence, Mr. Irwin was reported by *The Freeman's Journal* of May 22 to have said—

"There were two charges against the defendant, the evidence with regard to which they already heard, and they had only to pronounce judgment. The first was that the defendant did at Mitchelstown on the 2nd of April last take part in a criminal conspiracy to induce certain other persons, being ratepayers and cesspayers in the barony of Condons and Clongibbons, not to fulfil their legal obligations to pay a certain tax assessed at last Spring Assizes by the Grand Jury, when a sum of £1,000 was awarded to Constable Leahy to be levied off the barony of Condons and Clongibbons. In that charge they would make no rule. The next charge was one of inciting certain persons to take part in a criminal conspiracy to induce the ratepayers of the barony not to fulfil their legal obligations. Now, it appeared from the evidence which was laid before them that at the last Assizes of Cork, all the necessary preliminaries having been gone through, the presiding Judge, Mr. Justice Gibson, fiated the presentment to Constable Leahy for the most serious injuries he received while in the execution of his duties in Mitchelstown in September last. Now, that fiat or decree of the Judge imposed upon the ratepayers of that barony of Condons and Clongibbons the strict legal obligation of paying that tax. No doubt it was open to the ratepayers to seek relief from that tax by appealing, if they thought fit, to some Superior Court. There would be nothing wrong and certainly nothing criminal in that. But they had searched and searched in Mr. Condon's speech on that occasion for any remark or expression that would go to show that he had in his mind the idea of inducing the ratepayers to appeal to a Court of Law. If they had found any such expression in his speech they should have dismissed the charge. Mr. Condon told the people to organize themselves to make the collection of that tax difficult and as expensive as possible to the landlord and taxgatherer. Again, he said he had not the slightest doubt that they would make the collection of the tax impossible, and before a few months they would have reason to remember it. There was not one word in his speech about the Court of Queen's Bench or any other Court. They then came to consider what was the real and obvious meaning and construction to be put upon these words. Evidently they were uttered to encourage and induce the ratepayers to enter into combination so as materially to induce one and another not to fulfil their legal obligations in respect to this tax. Resistance to the payment of public taxes was perhaps the very next thing to rebellion. They had considered the matter very carefully, and they thought that they would be discharging a public duty in sentencing the defendant to one calendar month's imprisonment without hard labour."

That was the case to which the noble and learned Lord opposite had called attention, and about which he had asked for information. He had endeavoured to confine his observations to the circumstances which had led to that sentence, to the charge upon which it passed, to the speech upon which that charge rested, and to the judgment which the Court had pronounced in the case. He apprehended that the noble and learned Lord had not suggested that the charge on which Mr. Condon was convicted was not a clear and manifest offence, and he thought there was no possibility of question in reference to that matter. It was an offence so obvious and so patent that the laws of no country could exist if words recommending that taxes and rates should not be paid were allowed to pass without notice, and if such language was not to be punishable the laws of no country would be able to keep civil society together. The advice of Mr. Condon had, unfortunately, been taken, and efforts were being made to make the collection of that tax, as Mr. Condon had advised, as difficult as possible. He would not refer to that matter further than to say that if noble Lords looked at the Irish Press they would at once see that the advice was being acted on. Placards had been posted within the last few days actually quoting portions of the speech just read, showing the danger of using such language and the necessity of bringing those persons who employed it to the test of legal examination before properly constituted tribunals like those which existed in the present case. He thought that every fact he had stated had appeared in the public Press. The facts were well known, but as the noble and learned Lord had put the Question on the Paper, he thought it only right and becoming to give this information, at more length, perhaps, than some of their Lordships might think right or necessary, and give all the information which the noble and learned Lord appeared to desire. He did not think, however, that it would be expedient to lay Papers on the Table. He had not much experience of that House, but he did not believe it was in accordance with precedent that he should do so; he believed it might be a precedent which would lead to very mischievous results, because to lay such Papers on the Table would be making their Lordships' House and the other House of Parliament a sort of irregular Court of Appeal in a matter which would be decided by debate, and not according to the canons which regulated and controlled the actions of Courts which had to consider such cases on appeal. If, however, there was any point in reference to which the noble and learned Lord desired any further information, he would endeavour to supplement what he had already stated. He had endeavoured to avoid the language of prejudice and comment in stating the facts as fully and as clearly as he could, and he trusted that he had given all the information which could reasonably be desired.

LORD HERSCHELL said, he thought that the noble and learned Lord had given ample reasons for not laying Papers on the Table, because he had laid before their Lordships all the information bearing on the case. He took exception, however, to the closing observations of the noble and learned Lord. He could not at all admit that in all such cases as this it would be improper to have Papers produced. Their Lordships had to bear in mind that the cases in which such Papers were asked for were cases in which the Government had created a special tribunal to try them under certain conditions. He therefore could not imagine that in all the circumstances it would be improper that tribunals so constituted should be subject to review by their Lordships' House or by the other House of Parliament, if they were deemed to have exceeded their legal functions. He merely rose to make that remark by way of protest.

LORD ASHBOURNE said, he did not say that it would never be proper to present Papers in such cases. "Never" was a very big word. It would certainly not be expedient on the present occasion to produce the Papers. The noble and learned Lord who asked the Question did not question the legality of the action of the tribunal in this case. At the hearing before the Resident Magistrates, they were not asked to state a case, and it was not sought to be questioned that the charges disclosed a legal offence.

LORD DENMAN said, that the Motion of the noble and learned Lord appeared to him very like "maintenance." It had always been the endeavour of the noble and learned Lord's last Predecessor but two, when at the Bar and on the Bench, to make an appeal to law rare, and to put a speedy end to litigation; and under the exceptional state of the law in Ireland, he thought it unbecoming of any Judge to ask for that which might hinder reconciliation and keep up discord, and he was sure that his noble and learned and lamented Predecessor would rather have cut off his right hand than sign such a Notice as that on the Minutes of this House.

AUSTRALIAN COLONIES — ADMISSION OF CHINESE IMMIGRANTS.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, I rise to move for—

> "Copies or extracts of correspondence between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Governors of the Australasian Colonies on the subject of the admission of Chinese immigrants to such Colonies."

There is no question affecting the Australian Colonies which is of more serious import than this, and I think the Colonial Secretary will agree with me in thinking that the importance of it is not confined to Australia, but that it is very important as regards this country, our Treaty obligations, and our relations with a powerful State. In Australia there has been from time to time very considerable difference of opinion and of action with regard to it. The question is not a new one; it has arisen at different times. The Australian Continent has been alarmed at the sudden invasion of large numbers of Chinese, and legislation has been adopted in different Colonies with the view of meeting the evil. It is to be observed that on almost every occasion on which that legislation has been introduced the number of Chinese immigrants has sensibly fallen off. Now, in the present case there has been a diversity of action. In New South Wales a Bill was passed by the Assembly in very hot haste, but which has been since delayed in the Council. Certain Chinese immigrants who arrived in ships were also refused the right to land. That was a decision taken by the Executive Government, but it has since been over-ruled by the Judges. In New Zealand, on the other hand, the Government have adopted the very questionable course, as it seems to me, of declaring the Chinese ports whence the immigrants have sailed to be infected, placing the ships arriving from them in quarantine. Lastly, Victoria and South Australia have desired to meet this difficulty by means of an Intercolonial Conference. The genesis of the agitation in Australia is briefly this:—A despatch was sent by the Chinese Minister here in London to my noble Friend the Prime Minister requesting that greater facilities should be given for the admission of Chinese to our Colonies. Meanwhile the Chinese themselves appearing in great numbers in the Northern districts, created alarm and agitation. That agitation, I am sorry to say, has spread far and wide. It is a matter of public feeling which can no longer brook delay. Now, there are two sides to this important question. There is the Chinese view of the question and also the Australian view. Let me give your Lordships a summary of what those views are. The Chinese Government might complain, and perhaps with some justice, of the precipitancy which has characterized the action of the authorities in New South Wales. I think the result of that has undoubtedly been bad, and much evil has been inflicted on trade on account of persons leaving China with the full conviction that they would be allowed to land in Australia having been sent back. It must not be forgotten that Chinese subjects can come from any of our Colonies, such as Singapore, as British subjects, provided only that the certificates of naturalization they bring with them are right. On this point great complaint has constantly been raised. It is said that those papers of naturalization have often been forged, and that the difficulty of detecting one Chinaman from another is so great that practically no exclusion exists. Your Lordships must not forget what the general relations of this country with China are. I am quite aware that the general tradition of the Chinese Government has never been to force emigrants upon any other country. On the contrary, the tradition has been to keep them at home; but whether or not that tradition holds good now it is impossible to say. About 25 or 30 years ago we compelled the Chinese, at the mouth of the Canton, to receive our traders; and, of course, there does seem to be an inconsistency that they are refused leave to land on British soil. I do not know how far the Treaties which we have with China affect this question; but I am not sure that the Treaty of Pekin does not contain clauses which would be rather awkward to construe in reference to the present case. On the other hand, the Australian Colonies have a very strong case. During many years, whenever their grievance has become great, they have passed prohibitory laws and have issued warnings to Chinese labourers; and they might claim with perfect truth that, on the whole, their treatment of Chinese immigrants has been good. Compared with their treatment in Cuba, in America, and in other parts of the world, the treatment of the Chinese in Australia has been of a mild and satisfactory character. The real difficulty of the question is to be found in the fact of the excessive population of China. They are not merely alien in blood, but their habits are different from those of the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of Australia, and they live in quarters by themselves which they frequently make notorious. If ever a large swarm of these people found their way to Australia I can well understand the consternation and dismay which would be created. Almost without exception, every Australian statesman is of one mind on the subject, not to allow the unrestricted immigration of these aliens. To a large extent I sympathize with them, because, although I am disposed to uphold Treaty rights to the utmost, nothing will ever induce me to run the risk of peopling the Australian Colonies with Mongols instead of with Anglo-Saxons. The Secretary of State must have thought this question over both in regard to the wishes of the Australian Colonies and the claims and requirements of the Chinese Government. The matter may easily be placed upon a Treaty footing. Quite recently the Government of the United States arranged such a Treaty. A Conference, at which the Australian Colonies are to be represented, is to be held shortly at Sydney to consider this question. Nothing could be better or wiser than to hold such a Conference; but I must ask, with reference to one very important particular, who is to represent our Imperial interests, and who is to expound the views of Her Majesty's Government at that meeting? I sincerely hope and trust that the noble Lord is not going to allow this Conference to be held without sending over someone to attend it who is in the confidence of, and who knows the mind of, Her Majesty's Government, and can speak their opinions with regard to this question. This question is essentially an Imperial one, and it involves responsibilities from which no English Government can possibly escape. I hope that my noble Friend will recognize the fact that Her Majesty's Government are bound to take part in the solution of this question, and will give their hearty assistance in bringing it to a satisfactory solution. I will further say that it is essential, as it appears to me, to both England and Australia that a friendly solution of this question should be brought about. I should like to ask your Lordships whether it has ever occurred to you to note how great has been the advance of the Chinese Empire during the last few years, both as regards their domestic and their external affairs? They have adopted steamers, railways, and telegraphs, while their trade has increased enormously. The Chinese Empire is, in fact, year by year, for better or worse, taking its place in the family of civilized nations, while her material force in our Colonial waters enables her to make her views respected. These are all serious facts which Her Majesty's Government will do well to consider. China has had her disputes with France and Russia, but our relations with her have recently been of a peculiarly friendly character. I would also ask the Australian Colonies to remember that their interests and those of China are by no means antagonistic, and that friendship with that Empire is well worth purchasing, even at the cost of some little sacrifice. This, therefore, is a question in which there must be, on the one side, co-operation and friendly offices, and on the other great forbearance. I beg, my Lords, to move for copies of the Correspondence of which I have given Notice.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, for copies or extracts of correspondence between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Governors of the Australasian Colonies on the subject of the admission of Chinese immigrants to such colonies."—(*The Earl of Carnarvon.*)

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN said, he begged to move the addition of the following words to the Motion of the noble Earl:—

"And for a Return of all Acts passed by Colonial Legislatures affecting Chinese immigration."

His reason for wishing for a Return of these Acts was that a great mass of Colonial legislation dealing with Chinese immigration existed, but was very little accessible, and it was very desirable that Parliament and the country should clearly understand the views that the various Colonies had from time to time taken on this subject. On the general question raised by the noble Earl he only proposed to say a word or two. The noble Earl had thoroughly explained to the House the universal desire expressed by statesmen and the public generally in Australia that some check should be placed upon Chinese immigration. No doubt at various times broader views had been held by different Colonies, but the sudden influx of Chinese into the Northern part of South Australia had brought about a different state of feeling. It was of great importance to preserve a friendly feeling with China, and he trusted that Her Majesty's Government would use as much expedition as possible to arrive at a conclusion on this subject.

Amendment *moved*,

To add, at the end of the Motion, the following words:—"And for a Return of all Acts passed by Colonial Legislatures affecting Chinese immigration."—(*The Earl of Dunraven.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Lord KNUTSFORD): My Lords, with respect to the Amendment of the noble Earl who has just sat down, I will only say that I am prepared to give the information he desires. I understand him to wish for the production not only of the existing Acts, but of any that may have been passed within recent years, although since repealed, so as to show generally the lines of legislation upon this subject. I am satisfied that your Lordships have listened with great interest to the statement of the noble Earl who introduced this subject, and with greater interest, perhaps, because he has so recently come from Australia, and, therefore, is far more in touch with the feelings of the Australians than I can possibly be. I hope the noble Earl will acquit me of discourtesy if I reply to his speech rather briefly, because, as has already been stated, an Intercolonial Conference is to consider the whole of this subject on June 12, at Sydney. The more fitting time, therefore, to make a full statement on behalf of the Government, and to produce Papers, will be when the Conference has concluded its labours, and when we shall have in our possession the Report of its proceedings. As at present advised, I am unable to agree as to the advantage of sending an Imperial delegate to that Conference. The noble Earl who suggested that a delegate should be sent is well aware of the jealousy that is still entertained of anything approaching to what is called Downing Street spirit or Imperial influence, and I think it far better that the Colonial Governments should express and discuss their views upon this matter free from the presence of an Imperial delegate. If I answer briefly, it is not because I do not recognize the importance of this subject. The Government are, indeed, fully alive to its importance and to the strong feeling that has very naturally sprung up in Australia. The Government are as anxious as any of the Colonial Governments to secure that proper checks should be put upon this Chinese immigration, and proper precautions taken to prevent the Colonies from being swamped by it. The noble Earl has shown very clearly, and, indeed, it cannot be disputed, that the character of Chinese immigration is totally different from that of immigration from any other country. There are certain special evils, or rather defects, inherent in Chinese immigration, from which the other class of immigration is free, and therefore it is absolutely necessary that Australia should be protected from unchecked Chinese immigration. The Australian Government have shown for many years their sense of the difficulties, and, I may say, dangers, arising from unchecked Chinese immigration, and, as your Lordships are aware, there have already been many Colonial Acts specially directed against this immigration. In some Colonies a poll tax, varying from £10 to £30, has been imposed, and in all the larger Australian Colonies, I think, there are legislative provisions for limiting the number of immigrants by enacting that there shall be only one Chinese immigrant, not being a British subject, to 100 tons. I have promised the production of Papers, and stated my reasons for not now entering upon a full discussion of this very important question, but as attacks have been made not only in this country, but, unfortunately, in the Colonies also, upon the action of Her Majesty's Government, and as we have been accused of neglecting the interests of the Colonists, perhaps your Lordships will allow me very briefly to explain the position of affairs and to show that these charges are unfounded.

The feeling of distrust and alarm at Chinese immigration was very greatly intensified at the beginning of this year by the large and unexpected influx of immigrants into the Northern territory of Australia. Great fear was entertained lest the Chinese, whose presence might possibly be very useful and unobjectionable in that territory, if they could be confined to that territory, should spread from there over other portions of the Australian Colonies. The report of this sudden influx of Chinese into the Northern territory was received by me on April 7, and I received at the same time a telegram from New South Wales referring to the rumour of a Treaty between the United States and China, and asking for some similar protection. I rather fancy that that Treaty has not yet been ratified in the Senate, but, at all events, its terms were published, and I sent them out to the Australian Colonies. Upon receiving the telegram from New South Wales I replied at once that the matter was under consideration, and I learnt by a telegram that that reply was received with satisfaction. During April, therefore, there was no pressure upon the Government to lead them to take immediate action. In fact, at the end of April we received a telegram from the Governor of Victoria asking us not to take any decision adverse to opening negotiations with the Chinese Government until we should have received despatches which had been forwarded. I mention this to show that during April there was no delay on the part of the Government and no disinclination to act. In the last days of April and the beginning of May vessels with an unusual number of emigrants on board arrived at Melbourne and Sydney, and then followed the action of the New South Wales Government. There is some defence to be made for that action in the sudden panic and great alarm which sprung up at Sydney. It resulted in the prohibition to land, and in hasty legislation. That I regret, because it made any opening of negotiations with the Chinese Government at the time impossible. It certainly would have been useless to begin negotiations then. The charge against the Government of having before that time refused to negotiate is absolutely unfounded. It was unfortunate that not only that report but many other unfounded reports appeared in the Colonial newspapers, because they tended to excite feeling and to spread the belief that the Government did not desire to meet the wishes of the Colonies. I have more than once contradicted the reports; but, perhaps, as a proof of the desire of the Government to meet the wishes of the Colonial Governments, I may be permitted to read a telegram which I sent to Lord Carrington on May 11—

> "Referring to your telegram of April 26, no foundation for report that the Government refuse to negotiate with Chinese Government. Negotiations being carefully considered. Before arriving at conclusion against negotiations, Australian Colonies would have been consulted further. Her Majesty's Government fully recognize strength of feeling."

The fact is that we have been always ready to negotiate, but it was necessary before beginning negotiations that we should thoroughly understand the case. Exact information as to the state of Colonial legislation with respect to Chinese immigration had been called for by a Circular Despatch early in the year; and it would have been useful to have had that information, and to have learned whether the Colonial Governments were all agreed upon total prohibition, or upon carefully restricted immigration, and the nature of such restrictions. We should have been unwise to enter upon negotiations at once in a hurry, and with imperfect information. So much for the charge, which, I trust, I have fully disposed of, of refusal of Her Majesty's Government to negotiate. Let me add, as another proof of the unfounded character of the charge, that we did not regard the strong feeling existing in Australia upon this subject, that although, as I have before said, we regretted the action of the New South Wales Government in passing through the Assembly a very stringent law against Chinese immigration, we gave the Governor leave to assent to the measure, without prejudice to Her Majesty's power of disallowance should the provisions prove inadmissible. I shall not now enter upon the Treaty question which has been touched upon by the noble Earl, but I may say that there is no reason to suppose that legislation restricting the immigration of Chinese and imposing certain limitations upon it is opposed to the Treaty of Tien-Tsin. I have now sketched the action of the Government up to the middle of May, and shown that there was no disinclination, but that there was, on the contrary, a desire to co-operate with the Colonists. Early in May we were informed of the proposal to hold a Conference, and from the very first we readily assented to the plan. We offered at once to communicate points which we thought were deserving of special consideration and discussion, and, within the last few days, we have formulated and sent over certain questions which we think might usefully be brought before the delegates at the Conference. The object of these questions is to discover how far an effective restriction of Chinese immigration can be secured in a manner conducive to the general interests of the Australian Colonies and the Empire at large. I have great confidence that the whole subject will be most carefully discussed at this Conference, and that all its bearings, political and commercial, will be considered. But until that Conference has reported, it would not be right for the Government to take any further step or to make any more definite declaration of policy. I cordially concur with what the noble Earl said as to our position with China, and I need hardly assure your Lordships that it is our earnest desire to maintain and strengthen our relations with that great country. Her Majesty's Government will do all in their power to secure a friendly solution of this very important question, whether by Treaty or otherwise. With the co-operation of the Australian Colonies, we hope to come to some arrangement beneficial and honourable alike to all interested. I feel that the answer I have given to the noble Earl does not meet many of the points to which he refers; but he is more in the position of a chartered libertine than I am. Speaking for Her Majesty's Government, I should desire to express our sympathy with the views and wishes of the great Australian Governments, our sense of the importance of the question, and our hope that we may arrive at a speedy and satisfactory solution of it.

THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, I do not rise for the purpose of criticizing the conduct of the Government, as to which I was not aware that they had been subject to attack, nor do I wish to find any fault with the very wise caution and reserve which my noble Friend has exercised in his present announcement. I think he is quite right not in any way to anticipate the discussions or decisions of the Conference which is about to be held; but we who are not responsible, we who have simply the position of interested lookers-on, are not under the same restraint; and I do not think that a plain and frank expression of opinion on the part of Members of this House can do any harm or increase the present complications. There are two questions involved. One is whether the line of conduct which the Australian Governments have pursued, are pursuing, and evidently intend in the future to pursue upon this question of Chinese immigration, is in itself an altogether wise and reasonable one; and the other is whether, supposing we entertain some doubt upon that point, it is any part of our business to interfere to prevent their taking their own course. The former, to my mind, is really an abstract and theoretical question; as to the latter, the question, What is our duty? is a practical question. I apprehend there may be some shades of difference between individuals; but, speaking generally, there will be an almost unanimous feeling in this country that, in point of fact, and to put it plainly, we have no option. Supposing we were to veto any anti-Chinese legislation on the part of the Colonies and to announce that any similar legislation would be similarly vetoed in future, what would be the result? Can we suppose that that veto would be submitted to? You know perfectly well that you would have an agitation spreading through every one of the Australian Colonies, and even if the prohibition of Chinese immigration could not be obtained by legal means, we know very well that popular feeling would be translated into action and whether by legal means or by means beyond the law, the immigration would soon be stopped. We are in the hands of the Colonists, and they must do in this matter as they please. If there is in Australia any opinion which is universally held, it is that Australia belongs to the Australians, and that it is not for us to regulate the conditions for the admission of the Chinese or other immigrants into their country. I do not for a moment conceal that certain inconvenience may arise from what is being done in Australia with regard to the Chinese; but I do not think it will interfere with our general relations with China. I do not believe that at any time it has been the policy of China to encourage emigration. The Chinese have plenty of room at home; and, if we know anything of their way of thinking, those among them who have most considered the matter seem to be anxious to see the stream of Chinese emigration directed towards their own interior Provinces rather than to foreign countries. But the matter does touch us in this way. We have for many years past been trying to obtain admission for our merchants, traders, missionaries, and whoever may have business of any kind into the interior of China. I am afraid that what our Colonial friends are doing will cut the ground from under our feet. We can have no *locus standi* to claim the right of unlimited admission into China for our people when the Chinese are practically excluded from Australia. But if this is a question which touches us, it is not a question which greatly concerns Australia; and it is childish to suppose that in a matter in which their own feelings and, as they suppose, their own interests are very much concerned, they will sacrifice their own wishes to considerations of Imperial policy. I believe that upon this question of the keeping out of the Chinese, the Australians are practically of one mind. I quite agree with my noble Friend the Colonial Secretary in his reason for declining to send a delegate to the Conference now being held in the Colony—that he wishes the discussions of that Conference to be uninfluenced or unbiassed from home. As to the merits of the Colonial policy itfelf, perhaps the less said the better. I have seen articles in the newspaper Press about the alleged immoral habits of the Chinese; but, taking them in the mass, I believe the Chinese population are quite as moral as any similar number of Europeans. Nor can I treat seriously the supposed danger to Australia of becoming a Mongol rather than a white community. Some 10,000 or 100,000 Chinamen pouring into Australia would not make it a Mongol community any more than the negroes imported into the United States have made the United States a black Republic. It really is, to speak plainly, a question of wages. The Chinaman is exceedingly industrious; he works very hard for very low wages; he does not spend his wages when he has earned them, but he takes them home; and that course of conduct is naturally not popular in a country which is governed by its working class. The rate of wages all over Australia is one which we in England should think abnormally high; those who have the power in their hands do not desire that it shall be lower. The strongest objection that I see—and it is one that may really cause some practical difficulty—is the exclusion of those who are formally British subjects from our own Colonies. There are immense numbers of Chinese naturalized or Colonial-born in Hong Kong, Singapore, and the Strait Settlements; and it is not easy to justify upon any general ground the absolute exclusion of British subjects belonging to one Colony from another Colony. Whether any concession will or can be made on that point I do not know, but I think it is a matter to which attention should be drawn. One moral I draw from this agitation. We hear a great deal in these days about large schemes for pouring out our surplus population upon the Colonies. If we were to do it upon such a scale or in such a manner as to materially lower the rate of wages, we should find that the immigrants being Englishmen and not Chinese would not prevent them from being almost as unpopular among the working class as the Chinese are. The whole question of immigration is really in the hands of the Colonists, and the sooner and more thoroughly we recognize that fact the better.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I agree with my noble Friend that, practically, when the Australian Colonies are united upon a point of this kind it is impossible that they should not have their own way; but I should like to call attention to the fact that the interests of the Australian Colonies are not the only interests that have to be considered. There are the interests—and they are not small—of the rest of the British Empire; and a portion of that Empire which is specially concerned is India. No one can deny that it is most important as affecting India that the relations of this country with China should be not only friendly but cordial. It is of the highest moment to this country that China should be our cordial ally. It is impossible not to feel that this question of Chinese immigration places us in difficulty in the conduct of our foreign relations. Although I do not profess to be able to suggest a solution, yet if my voice could have any influence in Australia I would say I hope that in discussing this question they will take into serious consideration our relations with other countries of the world and with China. I would deprecate strongly—I trust it is not likely to happen—that this question should be left simply to the Colonists to settle by legislation of their own, and that it should not be settled by some distinct and, I hope, satisfactory agreement with China. I trust that the Australian statesmen will so conduct this matter that, while doing justice to the strong feeling of their countrymen in Australia, they will do everything in their power to facilitate the negotiations with China which have to be conducted by Her Majesty's Government.

The Earl of CARNARVON said, he readily assented to what the noble Lord had said as to the ground for delaying the production of the Papers on the assumption that as soon as that reason ceased to operate they would be produced. He wished to impress upon the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies not to leave this matter to be decided entirely by the Australian Colonies. He did not think that that represented at all the view of the Government or their wish in the matter. The arguments used that night as to the complexity of the interests involved, not merely Colonial but foreign also, showed how important it was that there should be someone in the Colonies who could speak on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, who could indicate the view of the Government, and who could remind the Colonies that ultimately the management of affairs must rest with Her Majesty's Government. He wished, therefore, to impress upon his noble Friend the great importance of not abdicating in any degree the Imperial responsibility and the Imperial power in this matter. Australian statesmen, in dealing with this question, would prefer to know the views of Her Majesty's Government, and once they were assured of the sympathy of this country with them, he believed they would not be found to be in the slighest degree unreasonable in their demands.

Lord KNUTSFORD: What I intended to say, though I fear I may not have expressed myself clearly, was that Her Majesty's Government did not wish to interfere with free discussion at the Conference, and that when they had the result of the Conference and the views of the Colonial Governments before them, and not till then, they would decide what course should be taken. Her Majesty's Government are aware that the responsibility of finally dealing with this question rests upon them, and the power is also in their hands, because, as the noble Earl is aware, they could disallow Colonial legislation, though they would be very unwilling to take such a step. This responsibility will devolve upon Her Majesty's Government when they have received in a concrete form the views and wishes of the Colonies.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Then the original Motion, as amended, *agreed to.*

House adjourned at half-past Six o'clock,
to Monday next, a quarter before
Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 8*th June*, 1888.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.] — Select Committees — *Second Report*—Army Estimates [No. 212]; Navy Estimates [No. 213].

Committee of Selection (Standing Committees) (Special Report).

Public Bills—*Committee*—Local Government (England and Wales) [182] [*First Night*]—r.p.

Provisional Order Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Local Government (No. 13)* [287].

Third Reading—Local Government (Ireland) (Bangor and Warrenpoint)* [225]; Local Government (No. 3)* [249]; Local Government (No. 4)* [250]; Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 6)* [251]; Local Government (Gas)* [252]; Tramways (No. 1)* [222], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

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IMPERIAL AND COLONIAL DEFENCE—ADEN.

MR. ERNEST BECKETT (York, N.R., Whitby) had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Secretary of State for War, Whether he is aware that the new guns recently sent to Aden arrived without sights and pumps, and are, consequently, useless; and, whether he will take steps to rectify this omission, in consequence of which Aden is practically defenceless, as soon as possible?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I hope the House will allow me to answer this Question, as it is of great importance. Two 6-inch breech-loading guns were received at Aden without sights and other stores. Steps were taken to supply this deficiency, and the sights and pumps will be sent out forthwith. But I am strongly of opinion that the mistake ought not to have occurred. I hope, however, that no delay has been caused, as the guns and their mountings will take some time to set up.

MR. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland) asked, if the right hon. Gentleman could identify any person responsible for this omission?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I must have Notice of that Question; I think I know where the mistake occurred.

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—ALLEGED DEFECTIVE GUNS.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the statement contained in an evening newspaper of Saturday, June 2, is correct—namely,

> "That two certainly, probably three, out of the four heavy guns of the *Rodney*, 69-ton B.R., are practically useless, and that one of the *Warspite* 24-ton guns is in the same condition;"

and, if not correct, whether he can assure the House that these guns are perfectly sound and efficient and ready for active service whenever they may be called on?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The detailed Report on the examination of the *Rodney's* guns has not yet been received; the delay is due to the time occupied in obtaining impressions of the bore of guns of such magnitude. I regret, however, to have to confirm the report that the liners of two of the guns are cracked. As regards the *Warspite's* 9·2-inch gun that had its liner cracked, it will be replaced by another gun, to be issued this week.

NORTH AMERICAN FISHERIES — RIGHTS OF FISHING ON THE COAST OF LABRADOR.

MR. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Hudson's Bay Company claim the exclusive right to set fixed nets for the capture of salmon on certain points of the sea shore, and also in the tidal portions of sundry rivers on the coast of Labrador, thus interfering with the fishery rights of the settlers in those regions; and, whether, having regard to "Magna Charta" and the laws bearing on fishery rights, the Government will inquire into the validity of these claims on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Her Majesty's Government are not informed as to the nature and extent of the fishery rights at present held or claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company on the coast of Labrador; but they are aware that the Company have for many years past carried on their operations at certain ports on the coast which have been reserved to them under the Order in Council by which they surrendered the greater part of their rights to the Crown, and that these operations have been of great advantage to the Indians in those regions, who, without the Company's help, would probably have been unable to live. No complaints have been made to Her Majesty's Government from any quarter; and it does not appear desirable to institute an inquiry into matters which would probably come under the cognizance of the Colonial Courts, if it is desired to call in question the Company's rights.

POOR LAW (METROPOLIS)—GUARDIANS OF POPLAR PARISH—CASE OF F. BURGE.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, if the Guardians of the poor of the parish of Poplar exceeded their duty in refusing Mr. Frank Burge, an inmate of the workhouse of that parish, three weeks' leave to provide a home for his family on being offered employment, thereby rendering him a permanent pauper, and making his family chargeable on the rates; and, whether, in the event of Mr. Burge again obtaining employment, the required leave will be allowed?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Frank Burge has been a solicitor's clerk, and is now an inmate of the Poplar Workhouse, where he has been with his wife and children for about five years. In 1884, he was prosecuted for desertion, and sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment. During the earlier years of his stay in the workhouse the Guardians repeatedly allowed him to leave the workhouse without his wife and children; but the continual recurrence of these applications tended to interfere with the discipline of the workhouse, and leave was refused. Burge subsequently brought an action against four of the Guardians for maliciously refusing to allow him to leave the workhouse; but he was nonsuited, and the Court of Appeal confirmed the decision of the Divisional Court. He was allowed 14 days' leave of absence without his family in November last, but without any practical result. I am informed that if Burge can show that he has obtained employment, and that there is a reasonable prospect of his providing a home for his wife and children, the Guardians would, undoubtedly, assist him.

THE NORTH SEA FISHERIES—SALE OF TOBACCO.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, taking into consideration the fact that since the vessels belonging to the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen Society have sold tobacco duty free to the crews of fishing smacks in the North Sea, the "Copers," or floating grog shops, have greatly decreased in number, he will arrange with the Custom House authorities that, in cases where a fishing vessel is obliged to return to port on account of stress of weather or for repairs, the unconsumed tobacco in the hands of the crew may be placed under seal while in port, in the same manner as in the case of a yacht returning from abroad with tobacco, wines, or spirits on board?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, that the Board of Customs would give directions to the Custom House authorities, that in cases where a fishing vessel was obliged to return to port on account of stress of weather or for repairs, the unconsumed tobacco in the hands of the crew sold to them duty free by vessels belonging to the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen should be placed under seal while in port.

POST OFFICE—COUNTRY POSTMEN—TICKET BOOK FOR POSTAL ORDERS.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) (for Mr. AINSLIE) (Lancashire, N., Lonsdale) asked the Postmaster General, If, in view of recent cases of misappropriation of money by country postmen, he can arrange that such postmen shall carry a ticket book containing forms for obtaining postal orders of every kind, such book to be examined daily at the office where such orders are obtained?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that an arrangement of a nature similar to that proposed has been under my consideration for some time, and that I hope soon to be in a position to come to a decision.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MESSRS. CECIL ROCHE AND HODDER, R.M.—SUB-COMMISSIONERS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What salaries and allowances are now paid to Messrs. Cecil Roche and Hodder, Resident Magistrates; what salaries and allowances were paid them as Sub-Commissioners under the Land Act, 1881; and, what are the average salaries and allowances of Sub-Commissioners and Resident Magistrates at present?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The emoluments of office of the Resident Magistrates named are in each case—salary, £425; commuted forage allowance, £100; allowance for postage, stationery, &c., £8; together with travelling expenses (including subsistence allowance), when incurred. As legal Assistant Commissioners they were each in receipt of salary at the rate of £1,000 a-year; together with travelling expenses (including subsistence allowance) when incurred. Salaries at the same rate and like travelling expenses are still paid to legal Assistant Commissioners. Lay Assistant Commissioners are paid £3 3*s.* for each day on which they are actually employed. They also are reimbursed the actual cost of locomotion. The average salary of Resident Magistrates, including the extra remuneration of Divisional Magistrates, is about £558 a-year; and the average allowances, including travelling, about £193 a-year.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, whether it was not a fact that the remuneration of Sub-Commissioners was payable by the day, and that they were liable to dismissal at a day's notice?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: They are under the Land Commission, and I should not like to say anything as to the nature of their tenure of office; but I think the hon. and learned Gentleman is correct.

THE EXECUTIVE (IRELAND) — THE LORD LIEUTENANT — THE LORDS JUSTICES.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Would there be any objection to a Return showing how often, and for what periods, Lords Justices have been sworn in during the absence of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland during the past 10 years, distinguishing Viceroys who were Cabinet Ministers; or could he say how often Lords Justices have been sworn in during the present Viceroyalty?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he thought that no advantage could be gained from any such Return, and therefore he could not consent to it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman say how often the present Viceroy, the Marquess of Londonderry, has been absent from Ireland since his appointment?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I have no information on that subject.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that, on the first opportunity, I will call attention to the fact that the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is never in Ireland, but always attending race meetings in England.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONS IN WESTMEATH.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can now state the date in this month on which the Sub-Commission will hold its next sitting in Westmeath, and the names of the gentlemen who will constitute the Commission?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Land Commissioners reported that they were unable as yet to furnish a reply.

ADMIRALTY — PENSIONS — CASE OF JOHN M'CARTHY.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he is aware that John M'Carthy, chief boatman in charge of the Coastguard Station at Portmuck, Islandmagee, County Antrim, who died suddenly on December 31 last, was entitled to £22 for good service money; whether M'Carthy, who had spent his life in the service and had received a medal for long service and good conduct, left his wife and child unprovided for; and, whether, considering the exemplary conduct of M'Carthy, and that he lived and died in the British Service, he will advise some provision to be made, by way of gratuity or otherwise, for his widow and only child, without causing the child to be removed from its mother?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The widow of John M'Carthy has been granted the good conduct gratuity of £20 due to her husband, together with £20 given for a former injury, also his pension up to January 31, 1888. M'Carthy had received a medal for long service and good conduct, and has left his family unprovided for. There was nothing special in M'Carthy's services, and there are no funds from which his widow can be given any further assistance. The widow has been invited to apply for the admission of her child to a school at the expense of Greenwich Hospital Funds, but no grant can be made for his education at home.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—REMOVAL OF PLACARDS AT ENNIS.

Mr. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether an action was recently commenced against the police at Ennis by Mr. Dennis MacNamara, a local newsvendor, for stealing the publishing board and placard of *United Ireland* placed outside his shop; whether, by way of defence, the police paid a sum of money to meet their liability in the matter; and, whether, if this be so, instructions will now be issued to the police, in Clare and elsewhere, not to interfere in future with placards of newspapers outside newsvendors' shops?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Inspector General of Constabulary reports that an action for damages against certain members of the Constabulary at Ennis for carrying away a board exposed outside the licensed premises of Dennis MacNamara was instituted. Five shillings was lodged in Court by the solicitor for the constables to meet a liability which was denied, the amount being considered sufficient, should the jury give a verdict for the complainant. The solicitor for the constables recently received a notice that the case would not be proceeded with.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—ADMISSION OF DYNAMITERS TO THIS HOUSE—MR. LAFONE, M.P.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the noble Lord the Member for Tavistock (Devon), If he would explain why the Select Committee, over which he presided, as to the Admission of Strangers, did not request an explanation from the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Lafone) of the statements made affecting him by Mr. Monro of Scotland Yard, or why no opportunity was given to the hon. Member to reply to the statements contained in Answers 782—789?

Viscount EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock): I believe that every member of the Committee, except the hon. and learned Member for West Ham (Mr. Forrest Fulton), was present when the statement referred to in the Question was made in answer to a question put by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), and neither that right hon. Gentleman nor anyone else suggested that it was desirable to take the course indicated in the Question addressed to me. There is, therefore, no foundation whatever for the suggestion made yesterday by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), that the majority of the Committee resisted such a proposal from political motives. I cannot answer for anyone but myself; but I did not think that there was any need to ask the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Lafone) for an explanation—[*Cries of* "Why not?" and Mr. Speaker: "Order, order!"]—as no imputation appeared to have been made or suggested. Perhaps, as the hon. and learned Gentleman who puts the Question to me was so particular the other night about the correct description of the constituencies of hon. Gentlemen, I may tell him that mine is not accurately described on the Paper.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I must apologize to the noble Viscount—I got it from *Dod.*

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—RELIEF OF LOCAL TAXATION (SCOTLAND).

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can now state in what way the money allocated to Scotland for relief of local taxation in the ensuing year will be distributed?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Papers are being printed which will show hon. Members the exact particulars of the scheme by which we propose to distribute the amount in regard to which this Question is asked. I will give the main figures now; but I would ask the hon. Member to suspend his judgment on the whole scheme until he sees the Papers, with the explanations. Of the Probate Duty, which amounts to £156,000, £70,000 will be allowed to disturnpiked roads—the same amount as was allocated last year—and £86,000 for local and parochial assessments. Of the latter, £30,000 will go to the Highland and Island parishes, according to the scheme, the details of which hon. Members will gather from the published correspondence, which will be put before the House, and which has been carefully prepared by the Board of Supervision. If the Horse and Wheel Tax be applied to Scotland, there will be a further £74,000, of which £39,000 will go to parochial assessments, and the rest to roads.

WAR OFFICE—H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF HER MAJESTY'S FORCES.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the Secretary of State for War, What change, if any, has been made in the military status of the Duke of Cambridge by the Letters Patent referred to in the following notice published in *The London Gazette* of November 29, 1887—

> "The Queen has been pleased by Letters Patent passed under the Great Seal of Great Britain and Ireland, bearing date the 26th instant, to appoint His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, K.G., to be Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Forces"?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): No practical change in His Royal Highness's military status results from the issue of Letters Patent constituting His Royal Highness Commander-in-Chief. His powers in regard to the Army and to the Secretary of State remain unaltered. It has been customary for the Sovereign, from time to to time, to mark his appreciation of the exceptional services of certain officers who have held the office of General Commanding-in-Chief by conferring upon them this dignity; and it will, I think, be generally conceded that His Royal Highness's services to the country fully deserve such a mark of the Sovereign's approbation.

MR. E. ROBERTSON said, what he really wanted to know was, whether the intention of the issue of those Letters Patent was to confer on His Royal Highness a life tenure of his office?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I have already explained that there is no real alteration in the military status of His Royal Highness.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: Does he hold the office for life?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I say that there are no terms at all.

METROPOLITAN POLICE—MISTAKEN ARREST OF DR. O'BRIEN.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What explanation he can give of the unwarranted arrest in Clerkenwell Road of Dr. O'Brien, of 96, East India Road, Poplar, on Tuesday, May 21; and, why Dr. O'Brien was not allowed to prove his identity by application to his solicitor in Theobald's Road, and to other residents in the neighbourhood, instead of being taken to Scotland Yard?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The arrest of Dr. O'Brien was made by a police constable under a mistake as to his identity. He was taken to Scotland Yard because it is the Chief Inspector, and not an ordinary police constable, who could assume the responsibility of dealing with such a question of identity. Dr. O'Brien was only detained a few minutes in Scotland Yard.

COAL MINES, &c., REGULATION ACT, 1887—THE AYRSHIRE COLLIERIES—THE SPECIAL RULES.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true that the colliery proprietors in Ayrshire have refused to supply their workmen with copies of the proposed Special Rules; whether the printers who printed the Rules have been prohibited from selling a copy to any except the Masters' Association; whether the Mines Inspector for the West of Scotland has found it impossible to comply with a recommendation from the Home Office to the effect that he should supply the workmen with copies thereof; and, whether he will refuse to sanction the new Special Rules till such time as the workmen have been supplied with copies, and have had time to study the same?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a complaint that there has been a difficulty in obtaining copies of the Special Rules. I cannot say what instructions have been given by the Mine Owners' Association to their printers. I have directed a letter to be written to the Association, urging that every facility should be given to the Miners' Union for the discussion of the Special Rules, and that for this purpose they should be supplied with copies of these Rules, if not gratuitously, then at cost price. The Mines Inspector for West Scotland has had no spare copies which he could supply to the miners. The law does not empower me to refuse sanction to Special Rules in order to compel delivery of copies to the workmen. In accordance with the Act, the Special Rules were duly posted for a fortnight at each colliery. Various objections were made by the miners, some of which I have adopted, and on some important points arbitration is now pending.

PUBLIC MEETINGS—SPEECH OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY AT BATTERSEA.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the following extract from his Battersea speech on May 16 was correctly reported in *The Times*:—

> "Then Mr. Gladstone goes on to state another fable, which I may say has been disseminated broadcast over the land by his organs. It is that lads and poor men have been put in prison for selling copies of Irish newspapers in which there were reports of suppressed meetings; and he went on to ask how these lads and poor men could be expected to know that in their papers there were reports of these suppressed branches. That statement has been met over and over again; it has been absolutely and categorically contradicted on the authority of the Irish Government. There is not a fragment of truth in it. No lad and no poor man has been put in prison for selling copies of any Irish newspaper of which he did not know the contents. The whole is absolutely a fiction; it is a gross libel on the Government of Ireland; and if Mr. Gladstone knew that it was untrue when he stated it, he behaved as no responsible statesman in this country has behaved, and if he did not know it, he has failed to make himself acquainted with the most elementary facts of contemporary Irish history;"

and, if he would grant a Return of the depositions made against newsagents and newspaper proprietors prosecuted under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, setting forth the charge in the summonses in the following cases, and the result of the prosecutions:—20th November, Denis M'Namara, Ennis, newsagent; 29th November, John Breen, Killarney, newsagent; 29th November, J. D. Brosnan, Killarney, newsagent; 5th December, John Malony, Tralee, newsagent; 12th December, Thomas O'Rourke, Tralee, newsagent; 23rd December, Denis M'Namara, Ennis, newsagent; — December, Edward Harrington, Tralee, newspaper proprietor; —- December, Timothy Harrington, Tralee, newspaper proprietor; — December, T. D. Sullivan, Dublin, newspaper proprietor; 2nd March, Patrick Ferriter, Dingle, newsagent; with the names of the Resident Magistrates who convicted?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The report, as now amended by the hon. and learned Member, is substantially accurate. But I fail to see any connection between the first and second half of the Question he has placed upon the Paper; nor is it possible that any light could be thrown on the statement I made at Battersea by the Return asked for by the hon. and learned Member. The allegation I was dealing with—contained in the speech made by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) and the Nonconformist Ministers—was to the following effect:—

> "Lads and poor men selling copies of newspapers in the streets are made responsible and put in prison because they contained reports of branches of the National League, . . . and those men were to ascertain for themselves, I suppose, whether in the particular places the League had been declared illegal by the Lord Lieutenant."—(*The Times*, May 10, 1888.)

To this I replied in the strong, but not, I think, too strong, language quoted by the hon. and learned Member for Longford. Now, it cannot be contended that any of the newspaper proprietors, Members of Parliament, and others mentioned in the second part of the Question, come under the description of "poor men and boys selling copies of newspapers in the streets;" nor can it be alleged that they were ignorant of the illegality of the notices contained in the newspapers they were selling, since in every case the offence was committed with every circumstance indicating a deliberate intention to violate the law.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked the right hon. Gentleman, whether there were any other persons amongst those convicted for selling newspapers who were not newspaper proprietors nor Members of Parliament, but who really were poor men?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, no; they did not come under the description of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian of poor men and boys selling newspapers in the streets. He begged pardon. He ought to say selling papers of the contents of which they were ignorant.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked, was the right hon. Gentleman's point that these papers were sold in shops and not in the streets?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was afraid, if he had not made his point clear by the answer he had given, no further explanation could bring it home to the mind of the hon. and learned Member; but he ventured to say that the hon. and learned Member would be alone in his incapacity to understand it.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked, whether Mr. Ferriter, who was in gaol for three months, was not known to be a poor man, and also Mr. O'Rourke, of Tralee, and Mr. Breen, of Killarney, and Mr. Brosnan, of Killarney; and, whether Mr. Breen was not prosecuted on the second occasion for actually selling papers in the streets, having established a kind of sentry-box in the street in order to avoid selling them in his house?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, the hon. Gentleman appeared not only to have misunderstood his (Mr. Balfour's) speech, but the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. The point was the allegation that these people selling newspapers in the streets, like the ordinary boy selling copies of *The Pall Mall* in the evening, were ignorant of the contents of those newspapers; but, as a matter of fact, not one of those who were convicted, whether they were poor or rich, was convicted of the illegality in ignorance.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked, had it been proved whether they had that knowledge or not? He asked that the evidence against these men should be produced. Would the right hon. Gentleman oblige the public to rely on his statement alone, or would he produce the evidence?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not think anything would be gained by producing the evidence in question. The statement he made was perfectly clear.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—ADMISSION OF DYNAMITERS TO THIS HOUSE—EVIDENCE OF MR. MONRO, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF POLICE.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will ask Mr. Monro, of Scotland Yard, for some explanation of his statement in reference to the charge that suspected strangers were introduced to the House on an order procured through the Speaker's Secretary by the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Lafone), which that hon. Member contradicts; whether the order is in existence; and, what is the proof which exists for Mr. Monro's assertion?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): The statements made by Mr. Monro were made, in the first instance, in answer to unexpected questions put to him by Members of the Committee, and without the opportunity of refreshing his memory with documents. He, therefore, spoke doubtfully in Answers 593 to 598, and 785 to 788; and was accordingly requested by the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) to put into the evidence, when sent to him for correction, the name of the person who signed the order of admission to the House. This addition to the evidence the hon. and learned Member will find in the last sentence of Answer 789, in these words—

> "Having since inspected the ticket, I find that it was not signed by Mr. Lafone, but by the Speaker's Secretary, and that it was stated to have been given to the visitor by Mr. Lafone. It was the visitor himself, when the ticket was taken from him by the police, and his admission thereby prevented, who stated that the ticket had been given to him by Mr. Lafone."

The contradiction of the hon. Member for Bermondsey is conclusive against the truth of the statement of this visitor, which was quoted by Mr. Monro. The order is in existence.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is there any objection to produce the order?

MR. MATTHEWS: I do not think I can produce the order.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Was the Speaker's Secretary asked by the Committee for the order?

MR. MATTHEWS: Not so far as I am aware. The matter came out incidentally, and was treated by the noble Viscount (Viscount Ebrington) — the Chairman—as not requiring to be further inquired into. There is nothing whatever to identify those orders.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—ESTIMATE OF VALUE OF PUBLIC-HOUSE PROPERTY.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he can lay upon the Table of the House any facts or statistics that would enable hon. Members to form an estimate of the value of public house property in this country; and, whether, if he is not at present in a position to do so, he will take such steps as may be necessary for the purpose?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am obtaining a statement of the total gross annual value of publicans' licensed premises in the several Inland Revenue collections in England and Wales, which I shall be glad to lay upon the Table of the House when completed.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would procure and lay on the Table of the House a list of the Members of the House who were Directors or shareholders of Joint Stock Brewing Companies who owned these houses.

MR. RITCHIE said, he did not consider it possible to obtain such a list; and, even if it were possible, he did not see that any public advantage would be gained by procuring it.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) inquired, whether it would not be possible to show by figures whether the market value of licensed houses was, on the average, more than three years' purchase?

MR. RITCHIE considered the Question not at all germane to the statement he had made.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: With reference to this Question, I should like to ask you, Mr. Speaker, a Question. Rule 211 declares that no Member of this House shall be entitled to vote on any question in which he has a direct pecuniary interest, and that the vote of any Member so interested shall be disallowed. May I ask, whether those interested in breweries will be allowed to vote on this matter,

MR. SPEAKER: That is a point which is settled by the judgment of the House.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACTS—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, If he can inform the House how soon the Report of the Royal Commission on the Elementary Education Acts will be presented?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): It is hoped that the Royal Commission may complete its labours by the end of this month.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL—THE COMMISSIONERS.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the Lord Advocate, How many of the Commissioners named in the Universities (Scotland) Bill have passed through the curriculum of arts in the Universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and St. Andrew's respectively; and, whether it is the fact that 11 out of the 12 nominated Commissioners are Tories or Liberal Unionists?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St, Andrew's Universities): The hon. Member must excuse me for not making official inquiries into the private history of the education of gentlemen, and for not giving official opinions as to the political views of members of the Royal Commission, whose duties are in no way associated with Party politics.

MR. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman think the Commission, of which Notice was given in the House of Lords last week, is one that properly represents the general opinion of Scotland?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! It is a Rule of the House that the mere opinion of a Member on a particular subject is not the proper subject for a Question.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): May I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman, whether, as a matter of fact, any one of the nominated Commissioners has any practical acquaintance with one of the Universities—namely, St. Andrew's —which the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself represents?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I am not in a position to answer that Question. If the hon. Member will put it down upon the Paper I will inquire.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE AFFRAY AT MITCHELSTOWN IN SEPTEMBER LAST—THE OFFICIAL SHORTHAND WRITER'S NOTES.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN (Cork Co., N.E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the notes taken by the official shorthand writer of the proceedings at the inquest on the bodies of the three men shot by the police at Mitchelstown on September 9, 1887?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): As the House knows, in answer to a Question put yesterday by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), I said I would consider what, if any, information could be supplied on the subject. I am considering that question; and, until I have done so, I am unable to answer the Question of the hon. Gentleman.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPLICATION FOR FAIR RENTS, CO. ANTRIM.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can state how many applications to fix fair rents in the County of Antrim were remaining unheard on the 1st instant; how many of these applications are from the Poor Law Union of Ballycastle; when a sitting was last held to hear applications from this Union; on what date, and in what town, the first sitting of a Sub-Commission will be held for the County of Antrim; and, whether he can give the names of the gentlemen who will constitute this Sub-Commission?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, the Secretary to the Land Commission has stated that the report would be forwarded in a few days.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE BALLYMENA BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a Resolution of the Board of Guardians at Ballymena, County Antrim, on the 2nd instant, expressing want of confidence in Colonel Studdert, the Local Government Board auditor, and requesting that another auditor should be sent down there instead; whether Colonel Studdert had publicly certified that the sureties of Relieving Officer Duffin were alive, and whether he had since written to the Board of Guardians on Saturday last to know if these sureties were alive; whether he can state if these sureties are dead or alive; and, if dead, the dates of their deaths, and also the date of the last certificate in which this auditor certified that they were living; whether the Guardians telegraphed to the Local Government Board on Saturday last, calling for a new auditor to be sent down to them; whether a new auditor will be sent there, and if he can give the name of the new auditor; and, whether Colonel Studdert is the same gentleman who audited last year, and for some years past, the accounts of the Belfast Town Council?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he was sorry he was not able to obtain a reply to the Question. He hoped to have it by Monday. Hon. Members would understand that he made every effort to obtain answers as soon as possible; but where the information depended upon the result of local inquiry there must be delay.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—SIGNALLING AT SEA—INTERNATIONAL CODE OF SIGNALS.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, When the Committee of Experts appointed by the Board of Trade to consider the whole question of signalling at sea are likely to make their Report;

and, whether the scope of their inquiry will include the system of signalling in use in the home waters of the United States and other countries?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): I am not in a position to say definitely when the International Code of Signals Committee is likely to make its Report; but it is proceeding with its labours with the greatest possible expedition. The Committee has been appointed to report upon the question of night signalling generally, and to bring the *International Code Book* up to date; and will, I have no doubt, inquire, if necessary, not only into systems of signalling referred to it by inventors and others, but also into systems that may actually be in force in the United States and other countries.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—IMPRISONMENT OF MRS. DAVIES FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has read the judgments delivered in the Queen's Bench Division in the case of Mrs. Davies, lately imprisoned for contempt of Court, in the course of which Mr. Justice Mathew said—

> "It is not deemed right for a Judge in a Criminal Court, compelled to sentence a prisoner, to direct that his imprisonment shall continue until some condition is complied with, and the prisoner is entitled, when he has undergone his punishment, to unconditional release. Further, we have the assistance of the opinion of the Legislature against indefinite imprisonment for contempt, an opinion expressed in Acts of Parliament, and Rules of Court made with Parliamentary sanction;"

whether there are at present imprisoned in Irish gaols for indefinite terms five prisoners for contempt of Court—namely, Cornelius Brien, James Quigley, Thomas Moroney, Nicholas Grace, and Mary Brien; whether he is aware that, in the case of a prisoner named Thomas Moroney, his mind is giving way, and that in another case, that of Mary Brien, the prisoner is reported "aged and infirm;" and, whether, inasmuch as three out of the said five prisoners have already been imprisoned for more than 12 months (the term to which by "The Debtors Act, 1869," "even in a case of grievous delinquency the imprisonment is restricted"), he will consider the propriety of advising Her Majesty to exercise her Prerogative of Mercy, and direct the release of these prisoners?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Of course, the point is not one that comes within my official cognizance; but I find that the report of the case of Mrs. Davies does not contain the observations attributed to Mr. Justice Mathew. I am referring to *The Times* report, which is the only report I have seen. According to that report, Mrs. Davies, who had been imprisoned for one year and four months for contempt of Court in asserting her claim to certain property by taking forcible possession, was brought before the Court in custody with a view to her making an application for discharge. Inasmuch, however, as she gave no undertaking to obey the order of the Court, the Court decided that her imprisonment should continue. Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, in delivering the judgment of the Court, in which Mr. Justice Mathew concurred, is reported to have said—

> "It is not the Court which keeps her in custody. It is her own conduct in refusing to comply with the order of the Court. She has only to say she would not continue her molestations, and she may at once walk out of prison."

With reference to the prisoners mentioned in the Question, I have no doubt that if they would take the course suggested by Lord Coleridge, the Judges by whom they were committed would act on the principles laid down by the Court of Queen's Bench. It is not a case for the exercise of Her Majesty's Prerogative of Mercy, but one in which the prisoners can obtain immediate discharge by purging their contempt. My information as to the condition of Thomas Moroney does not agree with that stated in the third paragraph of the Question.

MR. CONYBEARE explained that whilst the right hon. Gentleman was referring to a Judgment on the 30th of April last, his Question referred to another Judgment which was given by Mr. Justice Mathew only two or three days ago. He would not further proceed with the matter now, but would put another Question on Monday.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BALLINASLOE BOARD OF GUARDIANS COLONEL CALEB ROBERTSON.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Colonel Caleb Robertson who has been appointed paid Guardian in Ballinasloe, where the Local Government Board have dissolved the elected Guardians, is the ex-agent of the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland; whether this is the same gentleman recommended by the Local Government Board to the Royal Commission on Fairs and Markets as Assistant Commissioner for Ireland; whether the Royal Commission declined to act on this recommendation; and, who recommended Colonel Caleb Robertson to the Local Government Board?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The reply to the first paragraph is, I understand, in the affirmative. This gentleman is one of the two persons whose names were given by the Local Government Board to the Royal Commission on Fairs and Markets. Neither was appointed. He was, however, an Assistant Commissioner under the Duke of Richmond and Gordon's Commission, and was for a short time a Vice Guardian under the Local Government Board in another Union, and he is, in the opinion of the Board, in every way well fitted for the office for which he has been now selected.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, whether this was one of the gentlemen recommended by the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman)?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, it was quite clear the Local Government Board had been influenced only by the qualifications of this gentleman, because he had already filled with efficiency the same kind of office.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED INSURANCE FRAUDS AT BELFAST.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether, considering the disclosures made at the recent trials for assurance frauds at Belfast, and the danger to society involved in the practice of the illegal system of persons assuring the lives of others in whom they have no insurable interest, and without their consent, he will, for the prevention of crime, advise the Government to bring in a Bill to amend the law relating to life assurances, by obliging Life Assurance Companies to register the names and addresses of assurers, and of the persons whose lives are assured, in a book to be kept for the purpose by the Clerk of Petty Sessions, or other local officer of the district in which the person assured resides, so that every inhabitant of a district may be able to ascertain whether or not his life has been assured by any other person?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) (who replied) said: I am afraid it will not be possible for the Government to bring in a Bill during the present Session to amend the law relating to life insurances in the manner indicated by the hon. Member. The subject is one, however, to which I will give my careful consideration.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL—LEGISLATION.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the great anxiety felt by the agricultural community in the question of the creation of an Agricultural Department, the long promised Bill for the creation of the same may be introduced without further delay?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am well aware of the anxiety which is felt in this House that this measure should be introduced as soon as possible. The Business before this House is already so great that the Government are considering whether it would not be possible to introduce the Agricultural Bill in the other House. The difficulty in the way of such a course of procedure is that the Bill deals with financial questions; but this difficulty might be outweighed by the advantage of letting the country know at once the lines on which the Government propose to deal with the question,

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—TITHE RENTCHARGE BILLS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can now state when the Tithe Rent-charge Bills will be proceeded with?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I can only refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave a few nights ago—namely, that the Tithes Bills will be proceeded with in this House as soon as an opportunity offers.

AUSTRALIA—NEW SOUTH WALES—CHINESE IMMIGRANTS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government were in a position to give any further information on the subject of Chinese immigration into Australia?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Conference of the Colonial Governments on this subject is to meet, as arranged, on the 12th instant; and Her Majesty's Government have communicated fully with the Colonial Governments on the points which appear to them specially deserving of consideration, with a view to the effective restriction of Chinese immigration in the manner most conducive to the general interests of the Australasian Colonies and the Empire at large. Until the Conference has deliberated Her Majesty's Government will necessarily not be in a position to make any further statement of policy.

IRELAND—THE BANN, BARROW, AND SHANNON DRAINAGE BILLS—LEGISLATION.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he had any serious intention of proceeding with the Bills standing in his name for the drainage of the Bann, Barrow, and the Shannon; and, if so, was it his intention to make a statement when introducing the Bills, or to reserve them till the second reading? He begged to ask the right hon. Gentleman further, whether, in the event of the Bills being acceptable to the House, he would press them forward through all their stages, so that they might become law during the present Session?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am unable to understand what the hon. Gentleman means by "serious." He must be aware that the other day I got up to move the introduction of these Bills, and the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) was of opinion—of which I do not complain—that a more convenient season might be chosen for doing so; and in deference to his wish, which I understood to be the wish of hon. Gentlemen sitting near him, I deferred introducing them on that occasion. I am anxious to do so on the first possible occasion, and I should like to make a statement which would not be unduly curtailed. I will consult my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury as to what day will be most convenient.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD: May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that the Bills were on the Paper for last night, and the right hon. Gentleman did not move them then, although the hon. and learned Member for North Longford did not oppose. I also asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, in the event of the Bills proving acceptable to the House, he would press them forward and pass them this Session?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I presumed that the objection of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford would apply to last night the same as to Monday night, and I am bound to say I think there was a great deal in the objection. As to the second Question of the hon. Gentleman, of course I mean to ask the House to pass into law this and other proposals which I have the honour of laying before the House in regard to Ireland.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—THE SCOTCH EDUCATION VOTES.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON (Wick, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he could inform the House when he expected to reach the Scotch Education Estimates?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, he was sorry to say it was not in his power to give an answer to the Question at present.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—[BILL 182.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

COMMITTEE. [SECOND NIGHT.]

[*Progress 7th June*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

COUNTY COUNCILS.

PART I.

Clause 1 (Establishment of County Councils).

MR. GURDON (Norfolk, Mid), in rising to move, as an Amendment, in page 1, line 7, and elsewhere, to leave out the words "County Council," and insert, instead thereof, the words "Shire Court," said, this was a very small Amendment, and he hoped the Government would accept it. He trusted they would agree with him that the term "Shire Court" would be more familiar and certainly shorter than "County Councils." In the county which he had the honour to represent, the building in which they sat for the transaction of county business had always been called "Shire Court." The term "Court" was very well known. It was used in the case of the Quarter Session, the High Court of Parliament, and the High Court of Justice; and in many other instances the word "Board," such as Local Board and Board of Guardians, was employed. The word "Council" was not at all familiar to the rural mind, and, therefore, he considered that the name of "Shire Court" or "Board," as it might seem best to hon. Members, would be more appropriate for the new Bodies to be constituted under the Bill. He, therefore, begged to move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 7, and elsewhere, to leave out "County Council" and insert "Shire Court."—(*Mr. Gurdon.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'County Council' stand part of the Clause."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, the Government were of opinion that the term "County Council" was more appropriate to the functions which would devolve upon the Council than the term suggested by the hon. Gentleman. As far as the word "Court" went, it seemed rather to imply a Body having judicial magisterial functions; and the word "Council" was, therefore, much more appropriate. It was a well-known word, and was used throughout the country in connection with Town Councils. "County" was more familiar to the general public than "Shire," and, on the whole, the Government were disposed to recommend the Committee to adhere to the designation contained in the Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne), in moving, as an Amendment, in page 1, line 7, to leave out "Council," and insert "Assembly," said, he proposed to take the same course in regard to the rest of the Bill where the word "Council" was used. He hoped the Government would not think that, in moving this Amendment, he was at all desirous to obstruct the progress of the Bill. He was as anxious as the Government, or anyone else in the Committee, to see this new form of Local Government established in such a way as to secure the fullest respect of all those for whose benefit it was intended to be established. It appeared to him that by the Amendment he suggested that object was more likely to be effected than by retaining the word "Council," which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had expressed his preference for. He did not think the same objection applied to this Amendment as to the last. He proposed to substitute the word "Assembly" for "Council." It was quite true that the word "Assembly" would convey an idea of the exercise of different functions from those now exercised by Municipal Bodies called "Councils;" but the County Boards were to have enlarged functions, and he thought they ought to have a different name from that enjoyed by other Courts and Councils. With respect to the term "Council," he would respectfully suggest that, if they took that name for the supreme Body in the county, they would not give to it that kind of superiority over other Bodies which it ought to enjoy, seeing that it was likely to be a Court of Appeal from the lesser Bodies in the county. At the same time, they would run a risk of of mixing up a number of different Bodies, seeing that there would exist Councils performing very different functions in the same county. There were already Town Councils, and, under the present Bill, there would be District Councils, and probably other Councils. On that ground, it appeared to him desirable to substitute the larger and more dignified name of "Assembly" for what was intended to be a more dignified and far more important Body than a Town Council. The Body about to be constituted would probably include high dignitaries of the Church, Members of Parliament, and others, and would be far more dignified in its general character than even Town Councils. However admirably they did their work, the members of a Town Council were much lesser luminaries than this County Assembly was intended to be. That was the main reason why he suggested that the term "Assembly" should be substituted, because he desired to make the new Body as authoritative as possible for the purpose of securing, in the work they had to perform, the respect of the whole county. Another reason was, that it was a well-established rule in that House, and in most Assemblies called Deliberative or Legislative Bodies not to address Members in the House by their names. That course had been found extremely inconvenient in practice, and it might be said that the turmoil and unseemly conduct which frequently occurred in Vestry meetings, and meetings of Boards of Guardians, arose from the fact that the members of such Bodies were addressed as Mr. So-and-So. In the new County Councils the persons returned would be members representing a distinct division of the county. In large counties, for example, such as Cornwall and Devonshire, the members returned would represent a particular district as distinctly as they now did in the House of Commons. It, therefore, seemed to him convenient, if possible, to refer to a member as member for a certain division of a county, rather than by name. That appeared to him not to be an immaterial consideration in discussing the Amendment. He might point out that they had a precedent for it in connection with the Legislative Assemblies in the Colonies, and he did not see why it should not be used to distinguish gentlemen who would belong to the new Deliberative Bodies in our counties. It would be far better to add to the end of the name of a gentleman who represented a particular district, M.C.A., and would be much preferable to M.C.C., when considering that it was very well known what those letters were generally supposed to imply. He, therefore, humbly submitted that, on all those grounds, it would be much better, in starting the new Deliberative Assembly, to give it a title which would distinguish it from other and lesser Bodies, which would confer upon it a higher position, and add to the dignity of the debates which would take place. He begged, therefore, to move the substitution of the word "Assembly" for "Council."

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 7, to leave out the word "Council," and insert, instead thereof, the word "Assembly."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Council' stand part of the Clause."

MR. RITCHIE said, he differed altogether from the hon. Member who had moved the Amendment. The hon. Member said that if they were to put the letters M.C.C. after the name of the member of the County Council, the position might be misunderstand; but if they began to talk about County Assemblies, he was afraid that also would be liable to be misunderstood, and it might possibly suggest an entertainment, and the officers of the Council might be confounded with assembly rooms. The Government could not accept the Amendment.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. CONYBEARE said, he had not had any desire to divide the Committee, therefore he would proceed to the next Amendment which stood in his name—namely, in line 9, after the second "the," to insert "legislative." He proposed to introduce the word "legislative," so that the Council might be entrusted with the management of the administrative, legislative, and financial business of the county. It had always been understood that when these County Councils were established, they were intended to relieve the House of Commons of a great deal of the Private Bill legislation which at present hampered their proceedings to such a great extent, and not merely Private Bill legislation, but Public Bill legislation, because there were a considerable number of projects they were asked to discuss which merely referred to Parochial or Vestry matters. It appeared to him that that principle of relieving the House of Commons of a certain amount of its local business should be recognized in a Bill establishing so wide and fundamental a system of Local Government as that which was now before the Committee. He did not propose to give an independent power of legislation to the County Council; but he would remind the Committee that the right hon. Gentleman, further on in his Bill, had made provision for handing over to the County Councils what was distinctly legislative business in connection with Provisional Order Bills, and so on. [Mr. RITCHIE dissented.] It certainly seemed to him that some of the clauses which would be brought on later referred to legislative matters which it was proposed to hand over to the Councils. He thought it would be better, at the outset, to make it clear whether these Councils were to have such powers or not. His own opinion was that the wider the powers conferred on these County Councils the better, and, therefore, he would move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, after the second "the," insert the word "legislative."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'legislative' be there inserted."

MR. RITCHIE said, it was not proposed by any clause of the Bill to confer any powers of a legislative character upon the County Council. Provisional Orders would be made by the County Councils in the same way as they were now made by the Local Government Board, but the Local Government Board was not a legislative machine. Neither would the County Council be a legislative machine. All legislative business would have to be conducted in the House of Commons. That was his answer to the particular point which had been raised by the hon. Gentleman —namely, that it was not proposed in any part of the Bill to confer legislative powers on the County Councils, and, therefore, the Government could not assent to the Amendment.

MR. CONYBEARE said, he should like to know what could be understood by what had been said as to the necessity of relieving the House of Commons of a great deal of its Business? It had been complained, over and over again, that Private Bill legislation wasted a good deal of the time of the House, and it was admitted by all Parties that the House of Commons should be relieved from it. It certainly seemed to him that if every Provisional Order or Order in Council was to be deliberated upon and passed by a County Council before it came before the House of Commons, it would simply add to the work they would have to do in that House. It was upon that ground that he submitted the Amendment, and it certainly would appear that the Amendment he proposed assumed a greater amount of importance than he had imagined at the outset, and, if he received any support at all, he should go to a Division upon it.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. CONYBEARE, in moving, as an Amendment, in page 1, line 11, to leave out the word "Chairman," and insert "President," said his object was to make the head of a County Council its President, instead of Chairman; but he scarcely expected that it would be of any use endeavouring to influence the mind of the right hon. Gentleman on this subject. The right hon. Gentleman had already adopted an attitude of *non possumus*, and there was no good in indulging in any expectation in regard to his accepting the present Amendment. He was bound, however, to say to hon. Members who suggested that these were matters of very little importance, and who asked him what there was in a name, that there was a very great deal in a name in these cases. It would add an appearance of great dignity to the Assembly they were proposing to establish, and would have a marked effect upon the proceedings of that Body, and would tend to the orderly conduct of business and the general good of the county. As he had proposed former Amendments with that view, he now proposed this Amendment to substitute the word "President" in place of that of "Chairman." In the case of a Town Council, they made use of a word which was certainly better than Chairman. They had a Mayor, and as the President in this instance was to enjoy considerable prerogatives in connection with the County Councils, he thought it desirable that the title conferred upon him should be consistent with the dignity and importance of the position. He, therefore, proposed, that the word "President" should be substituted. He thought it was desirable that the head of the County Council should be looked upon as being placed in a somewhat different category from the Chairman of a mere Local Board. He certainly thought the Amendments he suggested deserved more consideration than had been given to them.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 11, leave out the word "Chairman," and insert instead thereof the word "President."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

Question, "That the word 'Chairman' stand part of the Clause," put, and *agreed to.*

THE CHAIRMAN said, the next Amendment, which stood in the name of the hon. and gallant Member for the Barkston Ash Division of the West Riding of Yorkshire (Colonel Gunter), and which provided that—

> "The meetings of the Council shall be held in such buildings, rooms, or premises, either within or without the county, as the Council shall from time to time, or at any time, provide,"

ought to be brought up as a separate clause, and not proposed as an addition to Clause 1.

SIR HENRY JAMES (Bury), in moving to add at the end of the clause the following Proviso:—

> "Provided, that every borough containing at the time of the passing of this Act fifty thousand inhabitants (which are the boroughs named in the Fourth Schedule to this Act) shall, for the purposes of this Act, and subject to its provisions, be a county of itself,"

said, he thought it better simply to move formally an Amendment which stood in his name, as he understood the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill wished to make a statement in regard to the matter. Perhaps the Committee would allow him (Sir Henry James) to state his views after he had heard the statement of the right hon. Gentleman.

Amendment proposed,

> In page 1, at end, add—"Provided, that every borough containing at the time of the passing of this Act fifty thousand inhabitants (which are the boroughs named in the Fourth Schedule to this Act) shall, for the purposes of this Act, and subject to its provisions, be a county of itself."—(*Sir Henry James.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. RITCHIE said, that as the Bill was originally introduced, the Committee would be aware that the limit which the Government thought proper to treat as a county in itself was a borough with a population of 150,000. He did not wish to disguise from the Committee that his own feeling was that it would, on the whole, have been better that the towns which were to be taken out of the counties, and to be created practically into counties themselves, should be only the largest and most important boroughs in the Kingdom. But, notwithstanding the belief on his part that the Bill, if it had been allowed to remain as it stood, would have been in many ways better than any other provision that could have been made, the Government had felt themselves unable to adhere to the limit originally fixed. Of course, there had been a very natural and, in many respects, a most laudable desire on the part of boroughs below 150,000 inhabitants to participate in the advantages proposed to be given to boroughs with over 150,000 inhabitants, and, therefore, the original figure had been reduced to 100,000. Still further pressure had been brought to bear on the Government to include boroughs even below 100,000 inhabitants, with the result that they had come to the conclusion to assent to the principle of this Amendment. The arguments which had been made use of were arguments which they had felt to be very strong indeed, and the announcement he had to make to-day was that, although the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) would probably, after the explanation he had given, not think it right to press his Amendment, because this would not be the place for any Amendment of the kind, the right hon. and learned Gentleman would undoubtedly expect from the Government some expression of opinion in regard to the decision they had arrived at, and what arrangements they proposed to make in the Bill, and what the boroughs were which would be included in the fourth schedule. As he had said, the Government had come to the conclusion upon the whole to accept the proposition of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. They proposed, therefore, that when they came to that part of the Bill which dealt with this question, to make provision that all boroughs which had 50,000 inhabitants in 1881, and which desired to come into the schedule, should be admitted into that schedule. With regard to the boroughs which could give satisfactory proof that they had now 50,000 inhabitants the Government had decided that they also should be included in the schedule. As to this latter class, however, they had not, at this moment, any reliable information. The only statistical information they had on the subject of population were the Registrar General's Returns, and they had been made up by taking as the increase since 1881, the same rate of increase as occurred between the Census of 1871 and 1881. Of course, this had been simply a work of calculation, and in many respects the figures might be fallacious. There might be boroughs which had had their area increased since 1881, and others which had not. The result of the decision of the Government was that all boroughs which desired to be admitted into the schedule which had a population of 50,000 in 1881 should be admitted, and all such boroughs as could satisfy the Government that their population had increased to that figure since 1881. As the right hon. and learned Gentleman was aware, there existed a means of finding that out by ascertaining how many additional houses had been built since the last Census, and that the Government would be prepared to accept as sufficient proof. Now that they had gone down so far in population as 50,000, there arose certain considerations with reference to the admission of other boroughs which had not so large a population as 50,000, and yet had their peculiar claims for consideration. He was speaking now of certain counties of cities. When the Bill was originally drafted, it was found impossible to take the claims of these cities into consideration, however great and substantial they were, and, therefore, boroughs and cities which formed counties—some of which had a population as low as 30,000—were not included. But now that it was proposed to come down as low as 50,000 inhabitants, the Committee would see that the condition of things had altered, and while the Government would have been justified in refusing to recognize the position taken up in regard to these cities of counties, they were no longer prepared to insist on their exclusion. Therefore they were prepared, in addition to the boroughs he had spoken of, to admit these cities of counties, which from their antiquity, their associations, and ancient usage gave them a very strong claim to be included in the schedule. That claim was more accentuated by the fact that these boroughs had never been within the jurisdiction of the county at all. The population of three or four of these cities was exceedingly small, and he did not propose to deal with them in this way. But in reference to the cities whose names he would read, it was proposed to include them in the fourth schedule—namely, Warwick—which, of course, had a population of more than 50,000, and might be left out of the question—Exeter, Lincoln, Chester, Gloucester, Worcester, and Canterbury. The population of Canterbury was considerably below that of Worcester, but they felt that if Canterbury did desire to come in, the historical claims of that City, notwithstanding the smallness of its population, would probably be recognized by the Committee. Therefore, if Canterbury desired to come in, it would be admitted. He hoped the Committee would understand that they did not propose to force any of these boroughs or cities to go out of the counties. It was quite optional with them, and perhaps they would take some other means of letting the Government know whether they desired to be included in the schedule or not, because, as they did not propose to force any of these boroughs or cities to take up this particular position, so also they were prepared to provide means in the Bill by which at any time in all these boroughs or cities, if they thought it more advantageous to their own interests, they could become part of the county to which they belonged. There was another consideration which they were bound to regard now that the number of boroughs included in Schedule 4 had been so greatly increased. A large and very influential deputation from Lancashire waited upon him at the Office of the Local Government Board a few days ago, to represent to the Government that the counties in which these boroughs were situated might be placed at a very great financial disadvantage if the boroughs were taken out of the counties and placed in an independent position by being put in the fourth schedule. He was bound to say that the representations made to him at that time seemed to him to have great force and weight, and that it was impossible for the Government to ignore them. He did not believe that any of these boroughs desired that the counties from which they were taken should suffer financially from the severance. He had always, when representations were made to him on behalf of the boroughs, said to the deputations who placed the cases before him, that in any event they would take special care that the county finances were not adversely affected, as far as the existing contributions were concerned, by such boroughs being taken out of the counties. In no single case had there been the smallest objection on behalf of these towns to an arrangement whereby these contributions should be maintained as at present. But the circumstances of the various boroughs were so different, that it was absolutely impossible for the Government to lay down a hard and fast rule by which each case should be settled. They, therefore, resolved to prepare a large clause of an equitable character providing for the establishment of a Commission, to which all these cases might be referred in the absence of agreement between the boroughs and counties affected; and such a Commission should have power to decide each case upon equitable grounds. Of course, the Commission was said to consist of a system of arbitration. The Government had felt it of extreme importance that whatever machinery they established, it should be as little costly as possible, and hon. Gentlemen would be aware that in resorting to arbitration heavy costs were sometimes incurred. It was, therefore, thought better to set up a small Commission, whose names would inspire confidence all over the country. By that means a tribunal would be provided which would settle all these matters in a fair and satisfactory manner, with the least possible amount of expense. Those were the proposals the Government had to make. He hoped in a few days to be able to lay on the Table of the House the clause or clauses by which this object was to be effected, so that Members who were interested should have the fullest opportunity of studying the provision proposed to be made, and of seeing whether it met with the justice and the necessities of the case. Under these circumstances, and as the Government undertook at the proper time, and in the proper place, to insert the names of the boroughs that were to be included in the fourth schedule, he hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman would consent to withdraw the Amendment.

SIR HENRY JAMES said, he thought the Committee had heard with satisfaction the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. Speaking on behalf of the boroughs affected by the Amendment, he gratefully accepted the announcement which had just been made. The extension of the principle was not, he was sure, one that would be objected to or complained of by the larger boroughs. A great boon had been conceded, and if it were extended to other towns and cities it was not a matter of which they could make any complaint. There were one or two observations he desired to make upon the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman had suggested that the Amendment should not now be inserted in the Bill. He knew the great practical difficulty the responsible Minister in charge of a Bill felt in accepting an Amendment under these circumstances, but he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to accept this Amendment for the time, in order that there might be a record of it, because it would afford great satisfaction to the boroughs affected. Therefore, unless the right hon. Gentleman's objections were insuperable, he would ask him to permit the Amendment to be passed on the full understanding that the drafting of the Bill would be made complete on the Report. In that case, if any change was to be made in the Bill in order to carry out the views of the right hon. Gentleman, he would undertake that the Amendment should be removed from the special position it would occupy, so that he might assist the Government in confirming their alterations and embodying them in the Bill in such form and plan as the right hon. Gentleman might think convenient, so far as it carried out in its entirety what had now been accepted by the Government. He asked the right hon. Gentleman, if he possibly could, to accept the Amendment in order that it might be inserted in the Bill now, and when they came to the Report it could be withdrawn or modified in the most convenient form the Government could suggest. With regard to the time from which the population was to be calculated there were some boroughs about which great care would be required. He would not speak about his own constituency, which had no great interest in the matter, but he knew there were others, such as Wigan and Reading, which would require to be carefully considered. He thought it would be sufficient if any reasonable proof were given that the boroughs desiring to be scheduled had reached the limit of 50,000. That, he thought, would be a proper solution of the question. There was only one other matter, and that was the important subject of the terms on which the boroughs were to be converted into counties. That question was raised by the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for the Clitheroe Division of Lancashire (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth). His (Sir Henry James's) own constituency would be perfectly willing to bear the burdens they had already borne, and they were willing to pay to the county fund the contribution they had already made, accepting as their reward the benefit of being erected into a county themselves. They had no wish to make any pecuniary benefit out of the transaction, and he was sure the House would see that it would be for the benefit of the boroughs that were to be included in the fourth schedule to continue in many instances to make this contribution. Take, for instance, the case of lunatic asylums already existing. The boroughs would not want to erect new ones. He would not, however, enter into details at that moment, he would only say that, as far as he had gathered the opinion of the Representatives of the boroughs which were to be inserted in the fourth schedule, they were ready to accept the responsibility of paying, as they had hitherto paid, and contributing, as they had hitherto contributed, to the county funds. As to the best means of arriving at that contribution, he should desire to see the clause before expressing any opinion, and probably the Government would explain what their views were when the Amendment of the hon. Member for Clitheroe was reached.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, he only rose to support the suggestion of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James). He, like his right hon. and learned Friend, represented a town which was extremely interested in the question. The Town of Derby was nearly within the limit of 100,000 inhabitants, but until recently it had been excluded from the fourth schedule of the Bill. He agreed with his right hon. and learned Friend that it was very important, unless some reason could be stated, that the Amendment should be, at least for the present, accepted and introduced into the Bill. It would give security, and remove the uneasiness and anxiety which the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill knew to exist in a great many of the boroughs of the country, and would smooth the passage of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had given an assurance of the intention of the Government to accept the Amendment, and he thought the chariot wheels of the right hon. Gentleman would run easier in consequence. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would accept the suggestion which had been thrown out. There was one other, and a very important point, and that was the question of the contribution of the boroughs to the county fund. There, again, he entirely agreed with his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury. He did not understand that any of the boroughs desired to cease to contribute what they contributed already, or in the degree they contributed now. Where a borough contributed now, it ought to continue to contribute, but where there was a borough which had made its own lunatic asylum, it ought not to be called upon to contribute to the cost of maintaining a county asylum. Then, again, there was the question of main roads. If a borough did not now contribute to the maintenance of main roads, he thought it ought not to be called upon so to contribute hereafter. That he considered to be the view of the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill, because he took down the right hon. Gentleman's words—namely, that care would be taken that the county should not be affected so far as existing contributions were concerned. He desired now to emphasize those words. What he understood was that the boroughs were to contribute on the scale of their existing contributions, and that their payments were to be measured by the existing contributions, and that no fresh liabilities were to arise in consequence of any of the provisions of the Bill. That being so, he did not see any objection to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, and there was certainly no reason to complain of it. Of course, the particular machinery to carry it out they could not discuss until they had the right hon. Gentleman's proposals before them. If the right hon. Gentleman would incorporate this Amendment for the present, at least, in his Bill, with a clear understanding that the boroughs concerned were only to make existing contributions, he thought they would be satisfied with the concession the right hon. Gentleman had made.

MR. RITCHIE said, he hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman would not insist on the Amendment being inserted in the Bill in this place. He was informed that it would be extremely inconvenient for the Amendment to be put in here, and there was a further answer to the proposal now made. The same argument used by the right hon. Gentleman just now might be made with regard to any other Amendments in a large measure like this, and if they put in an Amendment wherever an hon. Member wished to insert it, merely because they desired to assent to the principles raised, the measure would present a ghastly appearance before it got out of Committee. He hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir Henry James) would be satisfied with the assurance he had given him, that care would be taken to give full effect to the proposal in the proper place. In regard to what the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) had said, he had accurately interpreted the views which he (Mr. Ritchie) had endeavoured to place before the Committee. With reference to the main roads, reference had been made to him to get the law amended, and to bring in for contribution, for main road purposes, Quarter Sessions boroughs which had not contributed for years past. What he had always said in respect of representations of that kind was that they must take the law as they found it, and that they could not attempt in a Bill of this kind to remedy any grievance a county thought it might suffer in consequence of the non-contribution of any of the boroughs within its area. They must leave that to future legislation, and if there was a grievance it might be removed by a special Bill; but they could not attempt to bring within this Bill, in regard to contributions for main roads, boroughs which did not contribute to them at the present time. So far, he was speaking of boroughs which were treated as boroughs themselves. Of course it might be argued against his proposition that it was proposed by the Government that Quarter Sessions boroughs which remained within a county, and which were not at present assessable for main roads, were to be made assessable. That was perfectly true; but the position of things was different in the case of boroughs which remained in the county to what it was in the case of boroughs which were taken out of the county altogether. The Government recognized that they could not ask the Quarter Sessions boroughs in a county to contribute to main roads without some corresponding obligation on the part of the county. They, therefore, proposed that the county should have the obligation cast upon it of making the main roads, or of supplying the borough with funds for making the main roads within its boundaries. He might point out, also, that the liability to contribution for main roads would be very small, because the amount of the transferred licence duties for that special purpose would be as large as the whole cost of the main roads at the present time throughout the county. Consequently, he should be much astonished if it were found necessary to make a main road rate at all; and, even if it were necessary to make one it would be a very small one. In his opinion no hardships would be inflicted upon anyone from the making of any new main road. That, of course, would be different with reference to the boroughs which were taken out of the county for all administrative purposes. It would be impossible for them to lay on a county the obligation of maintaining main roads outside the area of that county. He hoped that after the assurance he had given on the part of the Government, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury would not think it necessary to press his Amendment.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he hoped he might be allowed to say a few words in reference to the borough which he had the honour to represent. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board for the concession he had made in accepting the principle of the Amendment, and he would not add a single word in the nature of a general argument. He desired, however, to express the satisfaction which he, and those he represented, felt that they were not to be tied down to the Census of 1881. The Census of 1881 was now for many purposes an obsolete and spent Census. They were now fast approaching a new Census in 1891, and anything of a permanent character based on the condition of affairs which existed when the Census of 1881 was taken would very soon become an anachronism. He should like to say one word in reference to the borough of Reading, to which reference had been made. He had had the honour of serving on the Committee which investigated the question of extending the boundaries of the borough; and he desired to take that opportunity of saying that the part of the population then added to the borough of Reading was entirely part and parcel of the borough. Therefore, the claim of Reading to have the advantage of the increased population which had been added to the Bill was indisputable, and justice would not be done unless the right of Reading to be included in the fourth schedule was fully recognized. So far as his own constituency were concerned, they were quite ready, without any reservation, to bear their fair share of the county burdens. That which they wished for was the autonomy which they would gain by the concession of the Government. With that autonomy they were entirely content, and were quite ready and willing to make their full contribution to the county funds.

Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said, that before his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury replied to the appeal which had been made to him by the President of the Local Government Board, not to persist in the Motion he had made at this stage of the Bill, but to be content to have the principle recognized in some later clause, he should like to say a few words on the Amendment generally, and the mode in which it would affect the county he had the honour to represent. He thought he was justified in thus early bringing to the notice of the Committee the case of Lancashire, because special reference had been made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite to the deputation which waited upon him the other day and placed before him views of great force and weight. He wished to show the right hon. Gentleman how necessary it was, if any Amendment like this were introduced, to make an adequate re-adjustment of burdens between the counties and boroughs. The Amendment was one which affected the County of Lancashire in an exceptional degree. He, therefore, hoped the Committee would allow him to point out what would be the effect on that county if the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury were adopted. He might say at once, on behalf of those who were now charged with the county administration, that they did not desire to offer opposition to the Motion of his right hon. and learned Friend. All they said was this—and he spoke also for many of the boroughs and for the Lancashire Local Boards—that if that Motion were adopted it would be necessary to go further, as had in fact been admitted by the President of the Local Government Board, and to introduce Amendments securing that justice should be done as between the counties and the boroughs. Before he pointed out to the Committee what he thought were the matters which ought to be taken into consideration in order to do justice, he would first explain to the Committee how the Amendment would operate. As the Bill originally stood only two boroughs in Lancashire—namely, Manchester and Liverpool—would have had the power and position of a county. If, however, the Committee adopted the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury, there would be admitted also at least nine, and probably 11, other boroughs, making 13 county boroughs within the County of Lancaster. It had been doubted whether the borough of Wigan had grown to a population of 50,000 since the last Census, but, after the speech of his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. F. S. Powell) there could be little doubt that that borough would be able to make out a case. He did not know what course his hon. Friend the Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine) proposed to take, but no doubt a similar claim would be made on behalf of that borough. Altogether, there would thus be 12 or 13 county boroughs within the County of Lancaster. But that was not all. These county boroughs contained rather more than one-half of the population and rather more than one-half of the rateable value of the whole county. Therefore, he asked the Committee to take into consideration the very serious nature of the proposal now made. He did not ask them to go against the principle of the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend, but he asked them in discussing the Bill to remember that the towns in the County of Lancaster which it was proposed to remove from the county constituted more than one-half of its population and rateable value. This fact applied not only to the County of Lancaster, but in a less degree to other counties. His belief was that, if the Bill stood as it did now, the county boroughs would be the recipients of a very large portion of the Probate Duty grant and of the local taxation duties and transferred duties which the Government had promised to apply to the reduction of the county burdens. They believed that within the boroughs a large revenue would be raised which would not really arise from their poulation, and some part of such revenue ought to be made available towards lightening the rates of the county. He would only instance the City of Manchester, which was something like the City of London, in having a huge day population drawn from surrounding districts. Under this Bill Manchester would receive large sums really arising from the taxation of the wants of the county. A fair proportion of these should surely be devoted towards the relief of the county rates. He maintained that there were many circumstances connected with a revenue of this kind which required that it ought not to go wholly into the pockets of the cities for the relief of their rates alone, but should be made available for the general relief of the rates of the county. All those subjects ought to be considered by a proper tribunal so that justice might be done, some equitable arrangement being made between the county and the boroughs. The proposal with regard to the Probate Duty would also work very much in favour of the boroughs, since it was to be allocated upon the basis of the amount of indoor pauperism, and indoor pauperism was far greater in the boroughs than in the rest of the county. He was afraid that the effect of carrying out the present proposals would be to allocate to the boroughs a larger portion of the Probate Duty than they would be fairly entitled to. All that he asked on behalf of those he represented was that justice should be done both to the counties and boroughs. Perhaps he might be allowed to say a word about the Van and Wheel Tax in connection with this subject. The bulk of this tax would be levied in the county boroughs, and not in the counties. Consequently, as the Bill now stood, the county boroughs would enjoy nearly all the benefit of the tax. This would be most unjust. In reply to the deputation the other day, the right hon. Gentleman had explained that he would alter the Bill and carry the proceeds of this tax to a common fund for the benefit of the whole county. But he should like him to go somewhat further, and explain how he proposed to distribute the money from this fund to the different parts of the county. It would not, he thought, be fair to distribute the proceeds of the Wheel and Van Tax according to the rateable value, because the mileage of main roads in the county was enormously larger than in the county boroughs of Lancashire, whereas the rateable value of the county boroughs would be rather greater than that of the rest of the county. There were in that county 564 miles of main roads, against only 38 miles in the county boroughs. If the tax were distributed according to rateable value, county boroughs would get rather more than one-half, whereas the proportion of the main roads to be maintained by the counties was 564 miles as against 38. He admitted that the expense of repairing a main road in a town was larger than in the country; but if the main roads in the boroughs cost twice and a-half as much to repair as the main roads in the county, still there was an enormous disparity between the total cost of maintaining the county main roads and the borough main roads. The former at £120 a mile would cost nearly £68,000: the latter at £300 a mile £11,400. He would suggest that the basis of distribution of the proceeds of the Wheel and Van Tax should be, not rateable value, but mileage of main roads, with some allowance for the larger cost of roads within a great town. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board told the Committee that he would propose that there should be an equitable Commission, with power to decide all questions between the counties and the boroughs. He trusted that, as the right hon. Gentleman had intimated, that Commission would be constituted of men who would command general confidence; but he should like to have some further information as to the questions that were to be referred to that Commission, and the directions that were to be given to that Commission, to guide them in carrying out their instructions. He certainly should like to have that information in detail before hastily giving an approval to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman would not expect him to say, on behalf of the County of Lancaster, that that proposal satisfied that county until they knew how far it went. He had no desire to detain the Committee at the present moment by going into the question of main roads. Perhaps the Committee would allow him, on a later stage of the Bill, to go more fully into that matter; but he should like to point out that, as the right hon. Gentleman had admitted even in the present Bill, the Government went behind past legislation, and did interfere with the existing contributions. As the Bill stood, without the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury, the Quarter Sessions boroughs in Lancashire of less than 150,000 inhabitants would have been made to pay their share of the charge for main roads, notwithstanding that they had been exempt under the Highways and Locomotives Act of 1878. That exemption would have been done away with as far as Quarter Sessions boroughs were concerned which did not become county boroughs. But what was the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman now? He had decided that the Quarter Sessions boroughs should in future contribute to the main roads on the principle that it has been unjust to relieve them from the contributions in 1878. Undoubtedly it was an injustice that a road so greatly used by the boroughs as the road between Oldham and Manchester should be paid for and maintained by the county. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had recognized the injustice; but now that he proposed to convert the Quarter Sessions boroughs into county boroughs, he ignored the injustice, and revived their unjust exemption from all charge for county main roads. He should have, at a later stage of the Bill, to press strongly the fact that the Act of 1878 had not worked justly. It was recent legislation in the nature of an experiment, and as it had not been found to work well, it was only right that Parliament, in dealing with the question of main roads, should do justice between the counties and boroughs. As the Bill was drafted, it pointed out the way in which justice might be done, and all he claimed was that the Government should do the same justice between the boroughs and counties as they had proposed in the case of Quarter Sessions boroughs. He would not, however, raise that question now; but he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to give full information, and as soon as possible, as to the exact subjects proposed to be referred to the Commission, and the nature of the directions given to the Commission; and he also hoped the right hon. Gentleman would state how soon his Amendments would appear in print on the Paper, so that hon. Members might have full time for considering them in all their bearings, and especially in the light of the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury. In the meantime he would reserve all further comments until he came to move the Amendment which appeared in his name on the Paper. He should persevere with that Amendment if he found it necessary to do so; but it was for the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board and his right hon. and learned Friend the member for Bury to decide whether the whole of this subject should be discussed now on the 1st clause, or deferred until a later stage.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE (Exeter) said, that, as one of the deputation who waited upon his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board with regard to the exemption of these boroughs, he would venture to make an appeal to the right hon. and learned Member for Bury not to press his Amendment on two grounds—first, that they had received a large and substantial concession from his right hon. Friend; and, secondly, that it would be rather hard for the Borough Representatives to press the Government to accept the Amendment at this particular moment, instead of waiting until the Government were prepared to say exactly what they proposed to do. It might be that the provision to be hereafter inserted in the Bill would differ materially from the Amendment which the right hon. and learned Member for Bury had on the Paper; because he understood the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to say that he anticipated that a good many of these boroughs would not avail themselves of the opportunity to come under the Fourth Schedule of the Bill. Consequently, the clause which was intended to be introduced would be permissive and not compulsory. In the next place, the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman made no reference to the boroughs which were already counties in themselves, one of which he had the honour to represent, and on behalf of that city he tendered his thanks to his right hon. Friend for the concession he had made; and, under all the circumstances, he hoped the right hon. and learned Member for Bury would yield to the appeal of the Government and not press the Amendment.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, there was only one question which he desired to put to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, and that was what means he proposed to take, in the event of the Amendment being withdrawn, to ascertain what the desire of a borough was, and how it was to be expressed? In regard to the borough which he represented, would the placing of an Amendment upon the Paper be regarded as a sufficient expression of a desire on the part of that borough, or what form of desire would the Government wish to have? On behalf of Northampton he would add his thanks to the Government for the concession they had made.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked how the Amendment, if carried, would affect the Metropolitan boroughs? Nearly every one of them contained more than 50,000 inhabitants, so that every borough in London would become a county in itself.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, as he had had the honour of being the first to bring this subject before the House, he also should like to express his thanks to the right hon. Gentleman for having conceded the just claims of the existing municipal boroughs. The Main Question now before the Committee was whether the Amendment should be inserted in the Bill, or whether it should be withdrawn. There were, no doubt, a number of Amendments, to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred, which, if adopted, might disfigure the Bill, and which related to another great question that was subsequently to be discussed in the Committee. But this was one of the most vital questions in the Bill—namely, the area and extent to which counties and boroughs were or were not to be subject to the jurisdiction of the County Councils. It was quite evident, from the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Clitheroe Division of Lancashire (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) that he was not disposed to accept the decision at which the right hon. Gentleman opposite had arrived, but that he reserved to himself his approval or disapproval of the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) as to whether certain provisions ought to be made or not for carrying out what the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board desired to secure—namely, the preservation of existing contributions to the counties, and an entire reform in the relations between the boroughs and counties. The right hon. Member for Clitheroe raised the question of Lancashire, and told them that the large boroughs of that county—such as Manchester, Liverpool, Wigan, Bolton, Blackburn, and so on—had only

38 miles of main road between them, whereas the county had between 500 and 600 miles. But these towns had many hundreds of miles of streets; and Piccadilly Street and Market Street of Manchester, and Bold Street of Liverpool, were just as much main roads as anything in the county.

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, he wished to put that point right. Did his right hon. Friend forget that country parishes had to bear a heavy rate—often a 1*s.* rate—for highways—in addition to the rate for main roads?

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER said, it must not be forgotten that the borough ratepayers were bearing heavy burdens in the shape of local taxation, and were expecting relief from the Bill as well as the county ratepayers. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Clitheroe asked that the Wheel and Van Tax should be apportioned on some principle which would give to the county the whole of the advantage. He would not deny that heavy burdens were imposed on the counties, but there were equally heavy burdens upon the boroughs. What he understood the proposal of the Government to be was that boroughs with 50,000 inhabitants were to be taken out of the county administration and finance before the Schedules of the Bill were finally settled, except to the extent of the conditions which they were now subject to county administration and finance. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board said he was going to appoint a strong Commission to adjust this question; but he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) was at a loss to understand what adjustment was necessary, nor could he understand that that Commission was to apply to boroughs already included in the Fourth Schedule, because in the Fourth Schedule it was provided that such towns as Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, &c., which were to be dealt with as separate counties, should not contribute to the county fund, except under contract or agreement, and, in default of agreement, on terms to be fixed by arbitration. The 7th sub-section of Clause 30 was as follows:—

"After the appointed day a borough named in the said schedule shall not, save as provided by this Act, contribute to the county fund of any other county otherwise than under any contract (whether a contract respecting a lunatic asylum or otherwise), but where any such borough has heretofore contributed to the county rate of a county otherwise than under any such contract, the council of the borough shall redeem the liability to that contribution on such terms as may be agreed upon with the council of the county, either by a capital payment or by an annuity, or by a transfer of debts and liabilities or otherwise, and, in default of agreement, on such terms as may be fixed by arbitration."

Sub-section 8 said—

"Until such redemption comes into operation the council of the borough shall pay out of the borough fund to the council of the said county the average annual amount contributed by the borough to the county rate during the three years next before the appointed day, and such sum shall be carried to the general county account of the county fund."

This was not a difficult question to settle, because the officials of the Local Government Board knew that the County Authorities throughout England had a custom of sending in an account to each Quarter Sessions borough which were outside the county jurisdiction, showing its proportion of what was called the county expenditure to which it was bound to contribute. That county contribution was assessed, not as a county rate, but under the poor rate or borough fund, and was paid accordingly. He, therefore, did not see what adjustment was necessary except in the case of the Wheel and Van Tax. If Parliament was of opinion that there should be some appropriation of the Wheel, Van, and Horse Tax in respect of main roads, the provision to be made for the contribution ought to be put into an Act of Parliament, and not left to any Commission to settle. The same principle would apply whether the county was Lancashire, Cheshire, or Dorsetshire, and provision should be made for it without introducing any new machinery or jurisdiction. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Clitheroe desired to do something which the Government did not contemplate, and which he hoped the Commission would not sanction. The boroughs did not want to be exempted from one single penny they paid to-day of the county expenditure; but they did object to have a single additional shilling of county taxation placed on their shoulders. They wanted to have their fair share of the relief of local taxation. He asked that the point should be now decided, so that they might know what boroughs were to be in the Schedule, and what boroughs were to be out of it, so that no one hereafter could raise the question, and be met with a reminder by the Chairman that the question had already been disposed of.

The CHAIRMAN said, that before the discussion went further it was necessary that he should point out that the orderly despatch of all Business was intimately connected with the orderly presentation of Amendments. It was admitted that the Amendment under discussion had not been presented in the best place, and that it was not in the place in which it would ultimately have to come. It was held that it ought to be discussed, but it seemed to him that the proper place for the discussion of it would be when Clause 30 was reached, which dealt with boroughs that were to be considered counties in themselves. The Government would place down the Amendments they intended to propose in that clause, and the Committee would then be able to proceed regularly with the discussion.

Sir HENRY JAMES said, that upon the point of Order he was quite sensible that this section was not the best for drafting purposes in connection with the question he had raised; but he had thought it would be convenient for the Committee to know exactly the course that would be taken when they reached Clause 30. No doubt, Clause 30 would be a better place for bringing on the Amendment, and he would be willing to withdraw it at this stage upon the explicit understanding that it was the intention of the Government to allow this Amendment, in some form, to be part of the Bill If that was perfectly and clearly understood, he did not care to press the Amendment at this stage; but if it was not understood, he would have to ask for a decision upon the question now, for this reason—that if it were defeated many hon. Members would take up a position in regard to some of the clauses of the Bill which they would not otherwise adopt. He had not the slightest objection to accept the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, on the understanding that the Amendment was accepted in principle, that it was only objected to in regard to the place in which it was proposed to insert it, and that it would be fairly carried out at the proper time and place.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he thought he had, in the most explicit terms he could possibly use, given the right hon. Gentleman the assurance he had asked for. He would say again that the Government accepted the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, and that they would use every effort in their power to insure that the Amendment should be inserted in the Bill when the proper time came.

Mr. GULLY (Carlisle) said, he had an Amendment to reduce the limit of population to 25,000. He could not help feeling that there was a great gulf between the present clause and Clause 30, and it was impossible to say when the debate on the new Amendment would come on. He should prefer the discussion upon his Amendment to take place at once; but, as he had no desire to take what might appear to be an unreasonable course, he was willing to assent to the suggestion that had been made.

Mr. WOODALL (Hanley) said, the Committee must be very sensible of the conciliatory spirit shown by the right hon. Gentleman in making this concession; but he felt that the statement of the right hon. Gentleman did not by any means satisfy those important boroughs having a population of less than 50,000, and which were larger than those he had specially exempted. With regard to his own constituency, one of the municipal boroughs included would profit by the concession of the right hon. Gentleman, while another borough below the figure mentioned would be left without any such advantage. He did not wish to go into the question now, because he hoped the case of the pottery towns would be dealt with in a manner special to their peculiar circumstances. The right hon. Gentleman must dismiss the illusion that it was possible to treat as a whole a population both urban and rural; and, whether they liked it or not, there would be drawn a distinction between urban and rural interests, more and more, as the discussion on the Bill proceeded.

Mr. T. FRY (Darlington) said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give the small boroughs, considering the amount of taxation they would have to pay, the option of saying for themselves whether they would be included in the County Councils or not. He believed there were 25 Parliamentary boroughs of 25,000 inhabitants, and it seemed to him very hard that they were not to be allowed to have this, when Canterbury, with a population of only 17,000, was to have the privilege. The amount of licence duty which his (Mr. Fry's) borough paid could not be less than £6,000 a-year, independently of Probate Duty. He supposed that the whole of that amount would be paid to the County Council, and that the borough would receive back only a very small portion of the money that would go to the County Council. He would like to hear that the right hon. Gentleman could reconsider this question, so as to give, if possible, the boroughs in question an opportunity of saying that they would be included in the County Council area.

Sir JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said, it was very hard that cities which were also counties, and which had had the control of their own affairs, and had held their own Quarter Sessions for the last 300 years and upwards, should be disfranchised. There were some boroughs which had done this for 800 years; their Charters had been handed down from generation to generation; they had their own police, and had managed their affairs properly. The whole principle of the Bill, as represented by the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen opposite generally, was that nothing should be taken away from cities which had certain privileges, and they thought it very hard that under the Bill there was a probability of their being deprived of their ancient rights and Charters. He was bound to say that in some cases—the city which he had the honour to represent, for instance—this was almost a sentimental feeling; because, although they found that under the Bill they would be receiving some relief from their present burden of taxation, they would rather waive that advantage. They said they would prefer to retain their ancient status, with their own government, the Quarter Sessions and Coroners, and that they would maintain their main roads at their own expense, and, in fact, be no burden at all on the country, rather than be disestablished. He earnestly hoped that that great hardship would not be inflicted on cities that had conducted their own affairs from the time of the Conquest, especially as the principle of the Bill, as stated by the Government, had been that they would not take away any privileges from boroughs which desired to retain them. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman, if this question were not brought on then, whether a further opportunity would be given of discussing the question?

Mr. RITCHIE said, the Amendment of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) would come forward for discussion when Clause 30 was reached, and then, if the hon. Baronet wished to move an Amendment to the right hon. Gentleman's proposal, he could do so. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Carlisle (Mr. Gully) suggested that the Government should go below the limit proposed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but he (Mr. Ritchie) could not hold out any hope that the limit would be reduced; they felt they had reached a limit beyond which it was impossible to go. He hoped the hon. Gentleman (Sir John Swinburne) would not imagine that there was the smallest idea on the part of the Government to take away their rights and privileges from boroughs under the limit in respect of population. There were in the Bill some proposals which, he believed, would be generally acceptable to the boroughs, with reference to the transfers; but matters of that kind they would be quite ready to consider when they came to a later portion of the Bill. The hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) had asked how London would be affected by this proposal to reduce the limit of population. Of course, this would not affect London at all. As his hon. Friend would know, the Bill dealt with municipal boroughs; whereas the boroughs of which he spoke were Parliamentary boroughs. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) asked how boroughs which desired to be included in the Schedule were to make their population known? All boroughs of 50,000 inhabitants in 1881 were to be included, unless the Government received intimation of their wish to the contrary, and they would, no doubt, receive, from those who desired to be included, specific information on the subject of population. He would not go further into the criticism of the

Amendments on this subject, because, as the Chairman had pointed out, some of them were not in Order, and would be more properly considered when a later part of the Bill was reached.

Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, he did not think the Chairman had ruled that this Amendment and the debate upon it were out of Order, but that the proposal would be be better moved at a later part of the Bill. He did not rise for the purpose of going further into this matter, as he intended to reserve his remarks until that part of the Bill was reached. The Committee greatly desired the further information on various subjects promised by the right hon. Gentleman, particularly the statistics of taxes which were to be transferred to the new County Authorities. He imagined that the information given would discriminate between the amount that would be raised in a county and that raised in the various boroughs. Hon. Members would be glad to know when those Returns would be laid on the Table, because some of them were of vital importance to the clauses to be discussed. And, again, when might they hope to see on the Paper the Amendment to which the right hon. Gentleman had alluded? It was absolutely necessary, as he had said, that it should be for a time in the hands of hon. Members for consideration, so that its scope might be fully understood; and, therefore, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to assure the Committee that the Amendment would be shortly in their hands.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he had already stated, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), that the information which the right hon. Gentleman asked for with regard to the transfers of taxes would be in the possession of the House in about a fortnight. Nearly the whole of the information had been got in, and he trusted that within a week it would be with the printer and presented to the House at the time mentioned. He also hoped, at the same time, to be able to put on the Table of the House the proposal with regard to the number of County Councillors. The Amendments, he hoped, would be on the Paper in a week.

Mr. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked, whether it was part of the understanding that the excepted towns should be liable, practically, for their own contributions?

Mr. RITCHIE said, the understanding was that, so far as the existing contributions were concerned, the excepted boroughs, in conjunction with the counties from which they were taken, should not suffer financially—that whatever adjustment was made should be upon the existing contribution of those boroughs.

Sir JOHN SWINBURNE asked, if that meant that the boroughs he had referred to were to retain their Quarter Sessions and Coroner? He spoke personally for the borough of Lichfield, which had its own Council and had managed its own affairs for 500 years.

Mr. RITCHIE said, the Government did not intend to interfere with the Quarter Sessions in any borough; but he suspected that under the operation of the Bill the Coroner would be interfered with.

Mr. ROWNTREE said, he was afraid the small boroughs would be prejudiced in respect of the amount of contribution under the arrangement arrived at that afternoon. He hoped the Government would take care that that did not occur.

Viscount EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock) asked if the Government were going to make any proposal as to the division of large counties, for he thought there were boroughs of 50,000 inhabitants whose acceptance of the offer now made would be influenced by that consideration. He believed there were boroughs in a certain county which would, undoubtedly, desire to become counties of themselves if the county was not divided; but if it were divided, and they were made the centre of a portion of it, the case might be different.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he did not know to what county the noble Lord referred; but there were certain counties whose position the Government were now considering, and which, either by long usage or by Statute, had been divided into two divisions; but they did not propose to take any steps to create any conditions of the kind where they did not already exist. Whether provision might not be made, however, for allowing a County Council, with certain consents, to divide a county, if it seemed convenient, was a matter, of course, open to consideration.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, he understood that only the municipal boroughs throughout the county were to be considered—not the Parliamentary boroughs. If that was so, it would be a considerable disadvantage in cases where municipal and Parliamentary boroughs practically constituted one town; and he could not help thinking that the anxiety displayed by the boroughs to be quit of the benefits supposed to be conferred by this Bill showed how far they estimated its value. Their attitude towards it appeared to be well expressed by the line—*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*

Mr. SLAGG (Burnley) asked, if in this matter the Government would proceed collectively or individually with the boroughs?

Mr. RITCHIE said, he imagined that the case of each of the boroughs should be considered by itself. In answer to the hon. Member for Camborne (Mr. Conybeare), he was bound to say the boroughs the Government referred to were not Parliamentary boroughs. With regard to another question that was asked, the Government was assuming that all boroughs of 50,000 inhabitants would desire to come into the arrangement, unless they heard from them to the contrary.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N. W.) said, as general statements were so likely afterwards to be misunderstood, he would like a little further information, His right hon. Friend had failed to tell the Committee what he intended to do with the contributions which the Government were going to make in aid of the local rates. His right hon. Friend had stated that where a borough was taken out of the county, the same contributions as were now made to the county rates would be continued; but the point he referred to was most important. It was, how much of the taxes proposed to be transferred would come to the rural parts of the counties, as they did not feel inclined to lose their chance of getting a fair share of the contribution?

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the new local taxation, such as the Horse and Wheel Taxes, under the Bill as now framed, would be collected in the excepted boroughs for the use of the boroughs themselves; but the Government did not think that an equitable arrangement under the present circumstances, and they proposed that, whether a borough remained in or was taken out of the county, the whole sum should go into one common purse and be distributed through the county, including the boroughs, according to rateable value. With reference to the transferred licence duties, they would be collected within the area of the borough, and the county would collect its own contribution within its own area. Whether the county would or would not be placed at a disadvantage in consequence of this was a matter, no doubt, for consideration.

Mr. STANSFELD (Halifax) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give the Committee the statistics of the numbers of Councillors before they came to the discussion of the sub-section dealing with that subject?

Mr. RITCHIE said, he was inclined to hope that the Committee would discuss the question, even if they could not get the figures before the sub-section was reached; because it was obvious that the number of Councillors would be governed by the principle of the sub-section. He desired to say distinctly that, as far as the Government were concerned, their wish was, as far as possible, to consult the views and wishes of hon. Gentlemen who might become Councillors of Counties, and when the Return was laid before the House he should take care that full opportunity for criticism was given to those interested in the matter.

Mr. STANSFELD said, he did not see how they could discuss the figures when they had passed the 2nd sub-section; nor how they could discuss the clause until they had the figures.

Mr. RITCHIE said, it was, of course, desirable that the Committee should be in possession of the information in question as soon as possible; and in view of the discussion he would promise to press forward the Papers, so that they might be in the hands of hon. Members in a few days; or if it were considered desirable, he would undertake, when the clause was reached, to deal with the subject in a Schedule.

Mr. T. FRY said, he thought they had a right to ask that if the counties were not to suffer by the withdrawal of the boroughs from the counties, the smaller boroughs should not suffer by being included in counties.

Mr. FIRTH (Dundee) said, he hoped that in drafting the clause it would be made clear that it did not apply to the Metropolis. The City of London was a municipal borough, of more than 50,000 inhabitants, and he apprehended that it was not intended to start a new county in the midst of London.

Mr. RITCHIE said, the County of London was, of course, totally different from others, and the Government were not prepared to accept any proposal by which London would be split up. With regard to small boroughs which remained in the counties, the Government must treat them with reference to finance as a portion of the county. It was impossible to do otherwise. He did not think, however, that boroughs interested would suffer. The transferred licence duties were to be given in lieu of the grant now given to the counties, and in paying them over to a common purse the small boroughs would not be prejudiced. They would only be paying to a Local Body for the benefit of the whole instead of to the Government.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER asked, whether the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman with reference to a common purse were to apply to the boroughs mentioned in the schedule—Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and others?

Mr. RITCHIE said, that was the case.

Mr. ROWNTREE said, it seemed to him that in this arrangement the small towns were to be made the scapegoats; and, if so, he submitted that this was a most unfortunate misunderstanding to arise at the outset of the discussion on the Bill. It appeared that the smaller boroughs were not to have the weight which it was supposed would attach to them.

Mr. RITCHIE said, the hon. Gentleman had quite misunderstood the position of the small boroughs. The county would be bound to perform, and pay for all duties which it now performed in the boroughs; and the boroughs, moreover, would get a contribution from the county for indoor pauperism and police, while any surplus which remained in the county purse at the end of the financial year, after all charges were met, would be divided amongst all Local Bodies in the county, boroughs included, according to their rateable value.

Sir RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) said, it was impossible for hon. Members to pledge themselves to any particular arrangements without they were in a position to judge from figures what the result would be; and he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would, therefore, take steps to expedite the Returns that would be necessary in this case. He asked whether he was right in supposing, as was originally the proposition in the Bill, that the whole of the statutory payments would continue to be made as hitherto in respect of police and other matters that were now the subject of subvention?

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the whole of the revenue obtained by counties, whether by means of licence duties, Probate Duty, or anything else, would be charged with the existing statutory payments, and also with 4*d.* for every indoor pauper; and if there were a surplus, it would be divided, as he had pointed out, amongst the various Local Bodies in the county, according to their several rateable values.

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY (Lancashire, N., Blackpool) asked, whether the statutory payments would include the present contribution to the main roads? There were practically no main roads at all in the district of Lancashire which he represented; and of the sum paid for main roads since the Act of 1878 about one-third had been paid by townships who themselves derived no benefit whatever, having no main roads. They did not ask to be put in a better position than at present; but they did ask that their position might not be made worse than it was, and, unless they secured the same contribution as hitherto from Imperial resources, he apprehended that the gross injustice of which he complained would be aggravated.

Mr. RITCHIE said, the existing contribution of the Government towards the main roads amounted to £250,000, which represented one-fourth of the total cost in counties. That contribution would cease; but, in lieu of it, the licence duties to be transferred to the counties, together with the proposed Horse and Wheel Tax, would, it was estimated, yield considerably more than the amount now contributed — namely, about £1,000,000, or the whole cost of the main roads throughout the Kingdom.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Composition and election of council and position of chairman).

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) said, in rising to move the next Amendment, which was in his name, he might refer to a remarkable article in *The Nineteenth Century*, in which Lord Thring pointed out that no fewer than 22 sections of the Municipal Corporations Act were embodied in this clause. The words which he proposed to omit were as follows :—

> "The council of a county and the members thereof shall be constituted and elected, and conduct their proceedings in like manner, and be in the like position in all respects, as the council of a borough divided into wards, subject, nevertheless, to the provisions of this Act,"

and so forth. If hon. Members would look at the clause, they would see that it would read quite as well if the sub-section were left out. The 1st sub-section incorporated a number of sections of the Municipal Corporations Act, and it would be, therefore, necessary that the Act should be referred to, in order to understand the sub-section, because, as had been pointed out, 22 sections of that Act were embodied in the clause. His idea, and that of his hon. Friends, of a Local Government Bill was that it should be a self-sufficing and self-contained code in all matters relating to Local Government; and, when they found it was necessary to the understanding of the measure to refer to an Act containing so many legal niceties, they could not but feel that the clause was constructed upon a wrong principle. As an illustration of the object of the Amendment, he pointed out that the Act to which reference was made disabled clergymen of the Established Church and ministers of religion from being elected as Councillors; but there was nothing whatever said about this in the Bill before the Committee. The Government would, no doubt, accept the Amendment proposed to deal with that matter; but it would have been much better if they had distinctly stated in the clause who might be elected and who would be the selected Councillors than to have referred Members to a most complicated section of another Bill. To expect the clause to be passed on a mere reference to another Bill was something like asking them to "buy a pig in a poke;" and on that ground, as well as upon the ground that it would prevent waste of time, he begged to move that the sub-section he had cited be omitted.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, leave out Sub-section (1).—(*Mr. F. S. Stevenson.*)

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, there was no doubt that everything which fell from Lord Thring was deserving of attention, and he should have been very glad to incorporate in the Bill the provisions of all the various Acts with which it dealt, if he had found it possible to do so. He very much sympathized with the desire of the hon. Gentleman to have the provisions of the Act referred to by him set forth; but, as a matter of fact, had they attempted to incorporate in the Bill the provisions of the various Acts with which the Bill dealt, it would have been of unmanageable bulk; and, with reference to the Municipal Corporations Act, the Government had less difficulty than in other cases, because the Act was practically thoroughly well understood by all those who had made themselves familiar with Local Acts and the course of local life for years past. The Act in question was before the House in 1882, and he undertook to say that its leading principles were thoroughly well understood. The argument of the hon. Gentleman cut both ways, because it was within a very few days of the Bill appearing in print that the Government was assailed from many sides by hon. Gentlemen who did not desire this disability. He was satisfied that if they had time to deal with the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman the Bill would have been totally unmanageable, and one which they could not have hoped to carry through the House. He hoped the Committee would, under the circumstances, approve of the course the Government had adopted, a course which, in their opinion, was the most convenient.

Mr. STANSFELD (Halifax) said, he did not wish to offer any opposition to the *fiat* of the right hon. Gentleman, but it was not unfitting that they should upon this occasion utter some protest against this characteristic of modern drafting. The modern method of drafting had grown up certainly within his memory. Possibly it had grown up in consequence of Parliamentary exigencies, from the multiplication of debates, and from the impossibility of passing measures drafted and framed in the old customary and clear way. That was the reason for what the right hon. Gentleman had done, but he (Mr. Stansfeld) was bound to say that he had not yet met a Bill or an Act which seemed so remarkable in this respect as the Bill for which the right hon. Gentleman was responsible to the House. There, again, the reason was patent. In the first place, the Bill had been drafted in this manner on account of the immense complexity of the subject; and, secondly, on account of the desire—a very justifiable desire—on the right hon. Gentleman's part to put the measure forward in such a form that it would be possible to pass it within a Session of Parliament. Although he hoped the attention of the Parliamentary Draftsmen's Department ment would be drawn to the advisability of not proceeding further in the direction of this style of drafting, he did not see that they could, if they wished to pass the Bill, object to accept the difficulties of the situation and make the best of them. It was extremely true of this Bill that it was very difficult to understand; it was difficult even for men familiar with the subject and with the interpretation of Statutes; it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, for men who were familiar with the subject but not with the law to understand the provisions of the Bill with any reliable accuracy. Therefore, with regard to the difficulties of understanding, on which they were all agreed, he asked the right hon. Gentleman to be patient as they proceeded with the Bill in respect to the queries he might find addressed to him, and to give them explanations which they really could not always work out for themselves. He was sure the Committee would readily accept the explanations given by a Minister on his own responsibility. They would frequently want explanations in this case, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not imagine that hon. Gentlemen wished to delay the passing of the Bill if they called for explanations.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, it appeared to him that there was strong reason in justification of the Government for the method they had adopted in drawing up this Bill. He understood from his right hon. Friend that one of the objects of the Bill was to apply to the government of the counties the same method which was now applied to the government of towns—that the District Council should be similar to the Town Council. As the Bill was drawn there was entire identity between District Councils and Town Councils, except so far as the Committee chose to make exceptions. If the Bill had contained a series of clauses and provisions taken, word for word, from the Municipal Corporations Act of 1882, every word of those clauses would have been open to controversy, and they would have come out of the deliberations of the Committee with identity, to a certain extent, between District Councils and Town Councils, but, at the same time, with an identity of a bewildering and perplexing description, because subject to so many exceptions. He thought that reason was an entire justification for the policy of the Government. If the Committee would permit him he would give one illustration—a remarkable one—of the result of endeavouring to embody in a Statute the whole of the law contained in other Statutes. There had been before the House for a number of years a Consolidating Bill with reference to the management of towns in Scotland. That Bill had been introduced year after year by successive Governments, and year after year it had failed to pass. The Bill of the present year had been referred to a Select Committee on which he had the honour to serve. The progress made with the Bill was most slow, and by the proceedings in the Committee upstairs he was convinced of the entire impossibility of passing the Bill this Session unless it were drawn on the lines of reference.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

The CHAIRMAN: The next Amendment stands in the name of the hon. Member for the Ashburton Division of Devon (Mr. Seale-Hayne). It is perfectly in Order, but it is proposed at a most inconvenient place. It is clear it would be best proposed when we reach the 2nd sub-section, and I will call upon the hon. Gentleman to move it then.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) thought that perhaps before saying anything as to his reason for proposing the Amendment which stood in his name it would be well to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to explain exactly the purport of the words "and to be in a like position in all respects." He confessed he found difficulty in understanding how these newly constituted Councils could be in a like position in all respects to Town Councils. At any rate, one argument he would like to put before the Committee as to the reason why he put this Amendment down was, that he, in common with other hon. Members, had a strong objection to the aldermanic principle which it was proposed to introduce. It seemed to him that in view of the Amendments which came later with respect to Aldermen or selected Councillors it would be desirable to get rid of these words in this particular clause. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will explain what will be the exact result of the words he (Mr. Conybeare) had mentioned.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 14, leave out from the word "and" to "respects."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RITCHIE said, he had been as puzzled to understand the meaning of this Amendment as the hon. Gentleman had been to understand the words he desired to omit. He could not quite gather why the hon. Gentleman proposed to omit these words. The only object they had in putting in these words was to make a general distinction which should show that these Councils should be framed as far as possible upon the lines of the Bodies framed under the Municipal Corporations Act. Of course, when they came to the Definition Clause it would be quite open to the hon. Gentleman to move any exceptions he desired to make in the constitution of the new Councils as compared with the old.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, he was satisfied with the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman, and would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton) said, that the object of the Amendment he had put down was to remove the disabilities which prevented clergymen and ministers of religion from exercising the functions of County Councillors.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) rose to a point of Order. He had an Amendment on the Paper which was precisely to the same effect. It was a matter of perfect indifference which Amendment was moved first; but what he desired to ask was, whether the effect of the Chairman's ruling in this case would not be that, if any hon. Gentleman wished to get precedence for a particular Amendment, he would have nothing to do but to place it on the Paper in the wrong place in order to be called upon first, although, at the same time, another Member might have put down an Amendment in the right place?

The CHAIRMAN: I was under the impression that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Seale-Hayne) had put down his Amendment first. Undoubtedly, if the hon. Gentleman put the Amendment upon the Paper after the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division (Mr. Chaplin) had placed his there, he ought not to move it.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he was certainly under the impression that his Amendment appeared upon the Paper first.

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE said, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that his Amendment appeared on the Paper at least two or three days before the right hon. Gentleman's appeared. The object of the Amendment was, as he had said, to remove the disabilities which would prevent clergymen and ministers of religion from exercising the duties of County Councillors. From a Liberal point of view, he held, of course, that it was inexpedient that any class of men should be restricted in their civil rights and privileges. As a matter of fact, clergymen and ministers of religion were able at the present time to exercise functions in Courts of Quarter Sessions and upon various Local Boards—upon those public Bodies whose functions were going to be handed over to the new County Councils. Therefore, without labouring the point, he saw no reason whatever why this disability should exist, why clergymen and ministers of religion should not be able to be elected both to the County Councils and to the District Councils.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 13, after "constituted," insert "except that clerks in holy orders and ministers of religion shall not be disqualified for being elected and being councillors."—(*Mr. Seale-Hayne.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. RITCHIE said, that, as he had already intimated, the Government were prepared to accept this proposal, but he was still of opinion that it would be most convenient for the Amendment to appear in the place where his right hon. Friend the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) had proposed to insert it. Of course, it was for the Committee and the Chairman to say whether or not that should be so. It was clearly the opinion of the Government and of the draftsmen that the Amendment ought to be inserted where his right hon. Friend proposed. It would certainly be more convenient that it should appear there, and therefore he hoped the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Seale-Hayne) would withdraw the Amendment now, and allow it to be inserted in what was undoubtedly a much better place.

THE CHAIRMAN said, that in addition to that, this was an enfranchising Amendment, and there was another standing in the name of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for East Somerset (Mr. Hobhouse). It was immaterial which Amendment was taken first, but he thought that Amendments of this class ought to be taken before other Amendments.

MR. F. S. POWELL said, he thought that the words removing disqualification ought to be like to those which enacted it. The words used in the Act of 1882 were, "is in holy orders or is a regular minister of a Dissenting congregation." He thought that it would be much more convenient if they followed those words. The words as they stood were open to question, as to whether a clerk in holy orders was a minister of religion or not —he hoped they generally were. He suggested to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Seale-Hayne) that they should follow the exact language of the Act of 1882, and thus use the words, "is in holy orders, or is a regular minister of a Dissenting congregation."

MR. PICTON (Leicester) said, he hoped the wording of the Amendment as now moved would be allowed to stand, for he thought it was a distinct improvement upon the wording of the former Act. He did not like the description "Dissenting minister," and the feeling of the public was gradually beginning to realize that it was a somewhat offensive definition. Therefore he thought it should be dropped in all Acts of Parliament if the meaning could be made clear in so doing.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he ventured to point out that unless they used the disqualifying words "minister of a Dissenting congregation," it might be a matter for a Court to determine whether the qualifying words, "minister of religion," did deal with the disqualification. He considered there was great force in what had been urged by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell.) If they wanted to get rid of a disqualification, they ought to get rid of the express words of disqualification.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, he hoped that the words of the first of these two forms would be adopted. He did not belong to the Church of England, nor was he a Dissenter. The members of the Church in which he was born, and in which he hoped to die, did not recognize that they were members of the Church of England or Dissenters—they were Wesleyan Methodists. They did not desire to be called Dissenters, not from any motives of contempt for those who were Dissenters, but simply as representing the historical fact that they had not dissented. Their ministers were not ministers of a congregation—they were ministers of religion, which was a totally different thing.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said, that to meet the objection of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell), he begged to move that the word "other," be inserted before the word "minister."

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, to insert, after "and," the word "other." — (*Mr. Brunner.*)

Question, "That the word 'other' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment, as amended, proposed,

In page 1, line 13, after "constituted," insert "except that clerks in holy orders and other ministers of religion shall not be disqualified for being elected and being councillors."

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) said, that in the Municipal Corporations Act no person was qualified to be a Councillor who was not qualified to vote. He had on a former occasion pointed out to the House the great advantage of extending the privilege of sitting on these Local Bodies to every person who had a substantial stake within the county. Of course, there was room for considerable difference of opinion as to whether the franchise should be altered to include certain classes, but he did not think there would be room for much difference of opinion as to the advisability of admitting to this qualification to sit upon the County Council all those who were qualified by having a substantial stake within the county. The Amendment which appeared in his name was to insert the words—

"A person shall be qualified to be a councillor who, though not qualified in manner provided by the 'Municipal Corporations Act, 1882,' as applied by this Act, is registered as a Parliamentary voter for the county or division of the county, or any borough therein."

But he proposed to alter that Amendment so that it would read—

"A person shall be qualified to be a councillor who, though not qualified in manner provided by the 'Municipal Corporations Act, 1882,' as applied by this Act, is registered as a Parliamentary voter for the county or division of the county in respect to the ownership of property of whatever tenure."

He himself preferred the words on the Paper, but he understood the Government were only willing to assent to an alteration of their Bill to the extent of owners on the list of Parliamentary voters. The difference was extremely small; there would only be in the other case a few lodgers and a few service franchise voters, and, therefore, he did not see that the alteration was a very material one. With the view of saving time and promoting discussion, he proposed to move the Amendment in the amended form. He left out the words "or any borough therein" for the reason that there were no ownership voters on the borough register, but only on the county register.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 18, after the last Amendment, to insert the words "a person shall be qualified to be a councillor who, though not qualified in manner provided by the 'Municipal Corporations Act, 1882,' as applied by this Act, is registered as a Parliamentary voter for the county or division of the county in respect of the ownership of property of whatsoever tenure."—(*Mr. Hobhouse.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, that this Amendment practically created a new register altogether. What he was anxious to ask the Government was, whether they were prepared to extend the qualification to faggot voters who had no interest in the County Council, who were not assessed to any rates the County Council administered, and who might simply hold 40*s.* freehold interests which would create votes?

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the right hon. Gentleman would see there was a great difference between giving the franchise to those who were qualified in this way and allowing them to be elected. Clearly it would be an extraordinary hardship if a person, who, perhaps, owned a very large estate in the county, but who did not reside, and was not rated there, was unable to be elected as a Councillor. Surely there was no one more fitted to be elected, if the electors chose to elect him, than a gentleman who owned property in the county.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER: Such a man would come in under Sub-section 3.

Mr. RITCHIE: No; he would not come in at all.

Mr. STANSFELD said, that this was a very doubtful proposal. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think it perfectly reasonable and rational to form a register excluding the owners of property in counties who were not inhabitants. When it came to the question of election as Councillors the right hon. Gentleman thought it a great hardship that men of that kind should be excluded. He (Mr. Stansfeld) was not in favour of the exclusion principle at all; but, having adopted one line in regard to electors, he did not think they should desert it when they came to deal with persons who were to be elected. He thought there was considerable force in what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr.

Henry H. Fowler) had said, that to a large extent they would by this Amendment single out for exceptional favour owners of freeholds who had hardly any practical interest in the county itself. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board might, of course, if he liked, proceed on the ground that, having chosen the electors, those electors should be perfectly free to choose whom they liked to represent them; but why did they limit the thing at all? They only proposed to adopt that principle as far as the owners of property in counties were concerned. He (Mr. Stansfeld) was certainly disposed to vote against the Amendment.

MR. A. E. GATHORNE-HARDY (Sussex, East Grinstead) said, he wished to point out that in almost every constituency Members of Parliament were elected who formed no portion of the constituency for which they sat as Representatives, and he could not see why there should be any disqualification to be elected because there was not this particular qualification which was suggested here. For his part, he rather agreed with the right hon. Gentleman—he would go even farther than the Amendment, and be prepared to vote for removing altogether any disqualification to the election of any person. He held that the right persons to decide as to their representative were the constituents, and that, when they had set up a constituency, they might fairly trust it to elect those who would reasonably satisfy it. It might be said, no doubt, that there would be a certain number of persons elected possibly who had no interest in the particular county for which they might be elected, but that he could not credit. He could not think that to keep up a qualification, or such a qualification as existed in this Bill already, would in reality exclude anybody whom it was in the slightest degree desirable to exclude. He should vote for the Amendment as it stood, but he should certainly be prepared to vote for a very much larger Amendment.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, that there was only one logical conclusion to be drawn from the Amendment, and that was that all disqualifications should be removed. He could not understand the argument of the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment, when he inferred that certain persons would not be qualified to stand. If what he meant was that he only wanted persons to have the right to sit as Councillors who had no direct rated qualification, simply because they were owners of property, instead of widening, as he professed to do, the scope from which persons could be selected as County Councillors, he wanted to give privileges to the wealthy classes of the community. There was no force whatever in the argument that an owner of property, as put by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, should be allowed to sit on the County Council simply because he was an owner of property and did not contribute to the rates. If the supporters of this Amendment wanted the Amendment to go unchallenged, they must go as far as to provide that the lodgers of London, as well as ground landlords, should have the right to sit as County Councillors if they obtained the confidence of their fellow-men.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, he rose to say how entirely he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) in respect to this Amendment. The fact was that this was the old question as to whether property or persons should be represented. He regarded the Amendment as one of the most dangerous character. There was only one logical conclusion in this matter, and that was pointed out by the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Finsbury (Mr. J. Rowlands)—namely, that they must abolish all disqualifications. If the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for East Somerset (Mr. Hobhouse) was prepared to go to that extent, they, of course, would agree with him. If he was not, the Amendment was one which ought not to be supported.

MR. ASQUITH (Fife, E.) said, he heartily agreed with the very sound democratic sentiments he heard expressed by the hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for the East Grinstead Division of Sussex (Mr. A. E. Gathorne-Hardy), and he was going to give the hon. Gentleman an opportunity of showing in a practical way that he stood by his opinion. He proposed to amend the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for East Somerset (Mr. Hobhouse) by leaving out the word " who " in the first line of the Amendment, and by leaving out all the words which followed the word "Act" in the third line of the Amendment. The result of that would be that the Amendment would read as follows :—

> "A person shall be qualified to be a Councillor, though not qualified in manner provided by 'The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882,' as applied by this Act."

The effect of that Amendment of the proposed Amendment would be to raise definitely the issue the hon. Member (Mr. A. E. Gathorne-Hardy) had so fairly stated, and to determine whether there should be any restriction of any sort or kind.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment, in line 1, to leave out the word "who."—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'who' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

MR. RITCHIE said, it was quite true that, so far as Members of that House were concerned, there was no qualification whatever for a Representative, and he thought rightly so, but it was a different thing with respect to County Councils. He must say, speaking for himself, that it was very desirable that those who represented a county should have some kind of stake in the county. It had been said that these gentlemen might not be ratepayers; but he would like to know what man was more interested in the question of rating in a county than an owner of property in the county ? He could not conceive anyone more fitted to represent the ratepayers in a County Council than an owner of property, who, perhaps, was as much as anyone affected by extravagance in rating.

Question put.

The Committee *divided* :—Ayes 247; Noes 210: Majority 37.—(Div. List, No. 131.)

Question again proposed.

SIR WILLIAM PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.) said, that before the Amendment was put to the Committee, he should like to propose another Amendment to it. It had just been decided that there must be a qualification. He was opposed to a property qualification. In these circumstances he thought it would be an advantage if, after the word "Act," they were to add the words "is resident in the county area." That would give to them not a property qualification at all, but would simply determine that the person to be elected should reside in the area for which he was elected as representative. He begged to move to omit from the Amendment the words—

> "Is registered as a Parliamentary voter for the county or a division of the county in respect to the ownership of property of whatsoever tenure ;"

and to insert, in lieu thereof, "is resident in the county area."

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out the words after the word "registered," in order to insert the words "is resident in the county area."—(*Sir William Plowden.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment."

MR. PICTON said, he thought that if these words were added the Amendment suggested was not necessary at all, because if a landowner was resident in the county he was qualified as a ratepayer. But he objected to giving the landowner any special privileges whatever. It did not matter how this Amendment might be changed or altered in its language, so long as its substance remained the same he should protest and vote against it.

SIR WILLIAM PLOWDEN said, that there was no landowner recognized at all in this clause ; the hon. Member was under a mistake.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, that a man might not be eligible, but, at the same time, be eminently qualified to represent his fellow citizens. It seemed to him that this was an extremely democratic Amendment, and, therefore, he hoped his hon. Friends would not divide against it.

MR. STANSFELD said, he certainly should oppose the original Amendment, and even divide against it. They could accept the principle that there should not be any clog imposed on the choice of Councillors, as in the elections for that House ; but the Amendment was a distinct declaration in favour of a property qualification. They, on the Opposition Benches, were opposed to any such distinction being made, and they would divide against the Amendment.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 236; Noes 193: Majority 43.—(Div. List, No. 132.)

Question again proposed.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, that the words "or any borough therein," which appeared in the Amendment upon the Paper, had been struck out, and in their place the words "in respect to the ownership of property of whatever tenure" had been inserted. They had refused to qualify lodgers who were resident within the county, and it was now proposed to qualify owners of property not resident in the county. That was a property qualification which he could not assent to, and, therefore, he should vote against the Amendment.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he begged to move the omission of the words "in respect to the ownership of property of whatsoever tenure."

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has already decided that these words shall stand part of the Amendment.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, that there seemed to be some mistake about this matter. The Government apparently proposed to endow absentee landlords with the special prerogative to come down and swamp the residents of a particular county. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Yes; or, at any rate, to oust those residents who happened to be lodgers. It seemed to him that that was altogether unfair, and he was very glad that the right hon. Gentleman above the Gangway (Mr. Stansfeld) proposed to push this matter to a Division.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, he desired to ask the Members of the Government how far they considered themselves consistent in pushing this Amendment? It would be remembered that, in respect to the Electors' Bill, he made a proposition, which was negatived in the House, to the effect that the Parliamentary Register should practically be the register of voters under this Bill; and now the Government were about to extend to one section of those persons, whom they refused to admit to be voters, the privilege of acting as representatives. He certainly thought the Government were landing themselves in an exceedingly illogical position. He should oppose this Amendment on account of the property qualification, not because it gave special privileges, but because through it the Government were going dead against what they resolved on the Amendment which he proposed.

Viscount CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen) said, he would remind the hon. Gentleman that it was no fault of some of them that owners of property were not electors under the Bill passed earlier in the Session. When the Voters Bill was under discussion, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) announced that he would concede the very point they were now discussing—namely, that the owners, though not electors, should be allowed to act as members of the Councils. He gathered from the way in which hon. Gentlemen discussed the particular question now before the Committee that they could not have been in the House during the greater part of the discussion upon the Voters Bill, or else they would have remembered what the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board promised to concede.

Mr. JAMES STUART said, that the Amendment he proposed would have admitted lodgers to this franchise. He certainly thought that the new form of this Amendment went even more dead against the position the Government assumed in respect to his Amendment than the form which appeared on the Paper.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the hon. Gentleman seemed to think there was something illogical in allowing persons to be elected who were not voters. There was nothing at all illogical in it. The hon. Gentleman was aware that men were returned to that House for constituencies in which they could not vote.

Mr. JAMES STUART said, that the right hon. Gentleman seemed to forget that they were in this Bill proceeding on the basis of the municipal franchise.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS said, it would be in the recollection of the Committee that when his hon. Friend the Member for the Hoxton Division of Shoreditch (Mr. James Stuart) moved his Amendment providing that lodgers should have the right of the franchise, the right hon. Gentleman told them that he did not wish to deviate at all from the principle laid down in the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882. What were they doing now? They were certainly deviating from the Municipal Corporations Act, and what the Opposition were asking the Government to do was to be consistent with the position they assumed upon the Voters Bill. The right hon. Gentleman did not for one moment attempt to answer their arguments; he did not attempt to deny that there was equity in the proposition put forward in favour of lodgers in large towns. His only argument was that he wished the Bill to be based on the Municipal Corporations Act. They only asked him to remain true to the position he then took up.

Mr. J. S. GATHORNE-HARDY (Kent, Medway) said, he remembered very well the day on which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) gave a pledge upon this subject. He (Mr. J. S. Gathorne-Hardy) had that day received a deputation of gentlemen, in the main landowners, upon this subject. In reply to them he said they were going on the franchise of the Municipal Corporations Act. But with regard to the qualification to be elected, it was perfectly ridiculous to suppose that a man owning large property in a county should be incapable of being elected, if the ratepayers chose to elect him, because he did not happen to be a ratepayer. At the time the right hon. Gentleman pledged himself that an Amendment of this kind should be carried it was received with cheers from all parts of the House, and if hon. Gentlemen had only remembered the cheers given then they would not have adopted the course they had taken in regard to this Amendment.

Mr. JAMES STUART asked to be allowed to recall the recollection of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) to the Act of 1880. The object of that Act was to abolish the property qualification for members of Municipal Corporations and local Municipal Bodies. The right hon. Gentleman was departing distinctly and clearly in a large measure from that principle.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he begged the hon. Gentleman's pardon; there was no question of property qualification at all. The only claim they put forward for owners of property being capable of being elected was that they would have a little interest in the welfare of the county, and, therefore, ought to be eligible for election. There was no qualification at all.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he hoped he would be in Order in moving to insert after the word "tenure," the words "or is a lodger, or in respect of any service holding."

Amendment proposed, at the end of the proposed Amendment, to add the words "or is a lodger, or in respect of any service holding."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

Question put, "That those words be there added."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 187; Noes 257: Majority 70.—(Div. List, No. 133.)

Mr. RITCHIE rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Mr. CONYBEARE: I rise to Order, Mr. Courtney. It is now 10 minutes to 7 o'clock, the hour at which, by our Rules, the debate stands adjourned.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman was informed two nights ago that the Question can be moved on the suspension of Business.

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and *agreed to.*

Question put,

"That the words 'A person shall be qualified to be a councillor who, though not qualified in manner provided by "The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882," as applied by this Act, is registered as a Parliamentary voter for the county or a division of the county in respect of the ownership of property of whatsoever tenure,' be there inserted."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 249; Noes 171: Majority 78.—(Div. List, No. 134.)

It being after Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress at Nine of the clock.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

It being after Seven of the clock, the House suspended its Sitting.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

WAYS AND MEANS—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE OF INDIA.—RESOLUTION.

MR. KING (Hull, Central) said, the Motion which he had the honour to bring before the House was new to hon. Members, and, perhaps, somewhat unattractive in its matter. He regretted to have to trouble the House with so technical a subject. He should have much preferred, if he could, to have settled this case in conference with the Secretary of State for India, or with his right hon. Friend who represented him on the Treasury Bench; because it was one which he thought the House would have desired to see settled by the Department concerned. Memorial after Memorial, Petition after Petition had gone to the India Office, and despatches had been sent from the Government of India on the subject; but all the remonstrances of the Service had been met with a blank denial. Not even had a Select Committee been granted to consider the grievances complained of. Had that been granted, he should not now have raised the question before the House of Commons — the highest Court of Appeal. The cry was the cry of the whole Service. It was not the case of an individual, or the claims of a few disappointed men who had combined to bring a fancied grievance before the House; he spoke in this matter for the whole Service, from the highest to the lowest, and in it no dissentient voice was lifted up against the Motion which he rose to move. No less than 28 meetings had been held in India in connection with these grievances since October, 1886. At Lahore, Calcutta, Delhi, Lucknow, Darjeeling—at every principal town in India the voice of the Uncovenanted Servants had been raised against the grievances and gross injustice under which they suffered. Discontent like that must, he thought, command the attention of the House of Commons. In this case, they had a whole Service asking for justice, and he doubted that his hon. Friend the Under Secretary for India could produce any single name of distinction which did not support the Motion of which he had given Notice; nor, if he could, did he think it would be kind of his hon. Friend to name him; and it was not to be supposed that the distinguished men who had allowed their names to be associated with the agitation would have done so had there been no true grievance at its foundation. He had had some experience in dealing with *employés*, and he had long believed that an efficient Service was always a contented Service, and that you could not have contentment without just treatment. It was a poor, mean, and short-sighted policy not to meet those grievances, and to trust to the omnipotence of Government to stifle such an agitation as this at the outset. The agitation was sure to break out again sooner or later; and the agitation of which he was that evening spokesman, having simmered for the last 10 years, had at last broken out. He believed his hon. Friend would say that he (Mr. King) would not take up any agitation in that House which was not an honest one, and he warned him that either he or his Successors would have to give way on this subject—they could not face a whole Service in mutiny. There were two conditions necessary to the attainment of a contented and efficient Service—first, satisfaction with the present conditions of service; and, secondly, a mind at ease about the future. Unless those two conditions were fulfilled, you could not have a contented Service. The cheapest Service was not the most efficient; but he undertook to say that a contented Service was always the cheapest. The grievances complained of in this instance had again and again been put forward, and they had again and again been rejected; and why, he could not for a moment form an idea. In matters of the kind, one could never tell who were the persons to be reproached. There was a figure-head in the shape of the Secretary of State, and there was the Under Secretary of State; but he was not sure that it would not be found that the people who had the real power and pulled the strings in all matters relating to the Department, were the 15 irresponsible elderly Gentlemen receiving £1,200 each, who formed what was called the Council of

India, and he hoped it would not be many years before the House came to his opinion that the Council was an anachronism in these days of telegraphic and railway communication. He thought that to retain the 15 Gentlemen in question, however distinguished and eminent their past may have been, was what might be described as "the survival of the unfittest;" and although he had a respect for them in their private capacity, he thought their painless extinction was much to be desired, and he should rejoice if he could see his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India released from this degrading servitude. However able the Minister of State might be, he must always act under the Council, and he (Mr. King) was certain that abolition of the Council would not only facilitate business, but, what was of more consequence to the revenues of India, effect a large saving. With regard to the remedy for the grievance now brought forward, he feared his hon. Friend was unable to grant his request; there was a repellant manner about him, and he (Mr. King) felt that when he replied, that his voice would be that of the Member for Chatham but his hands the hands of the India Council. The European branch of the Uncovenanted Service was one which possessed strong claims upon the kindly consideration and sympathy of the House. If not the most eminent, they were not the least useful in the Departments of our Indian Administration; if not so eminent as the Covenanted Service, they were the backbone of the Administration, and had been the chief instruments of civilization in our Indian Empire. The history of the Uncovenanted Service was curious and interesting. The first Uncovenanted Servants in India were the peons, who swept the offices, and the junior clerks, who totted up the figures and kept the accounts for the East India Company. From those lowly beginnings the Service had enlarged its scope and increased its functions, until it comprised many thousands of officials who had assisted in the social, moral, and material progress of India; while in the highest branches it had furnished Commissioners, Judges, and Collectors. Its members in the European branch were men of high ability and superior education; to it had been entrusted almost entirely the great work of University Education in the East; in its ranks were some of the most eminent Judges; and to it had been entrusted the great public works of India—the system of irrigation, the construction of railways, the extension of telegraphs, scientific forestry, the promotion of learning and agriculture; the survey of India, as well as the work of the Customs and Excise. That was not a small list of occupations in which the humble and lowly Uncovenanted servant had been engaged. To meet the demands of advancing Western civilization, the number of the members of the Uncovenanted Service had been largely increased, so that the history of that Service had been the history of civilization in the East. These men carried on their shoulders a large portion of the burden of our Indian Administration; they were treated as inferiors by their more favoured brethren; they had no representation, although their numbers were twice as great as the other branch of the Service; they had had no representation since the days of Warren Hastings, either on the Legislative Council of India or on the Council at Whitehall; they had no means of making their influence felt in Calcutta, Simla, or in London; individual Petitions only were received, and the rules of the Service absolutely prohibited the members from combining together to send Petitions or Memorials to the Viceroy or the Secretary of State—*Divide et impera* was the rule of the Indian Service, and that was why he was occupying the time of the House in representing the grievances of those active servants of the State, whose only hope of redress lay in the omnipotence of Parliament. He said that it would be merely a waste of time to refer to the Report of the Public Service Commission, which it was explained was "not to discuss the general question of the present official system of the Uncovenanted Service, or any grievance of that Service as at present constituted," and which did not throw the slightest light on the matter. The Uncovenanted Civil Servant served for 30 years with only 2 years' furlough. He (Mr. King) did not want to find any fault with the rules of Service or draw any unnecessary comparisons. The Covenanted Service had done noble and great work, and he would be the last to say that any of their privileges should be curtailed or any of their existing rights taken from them. But the House should understand the difference between the two Services. The Covenanted Servant had six years' furlough out of 25 years service; so that after 21 years' service in India he was qualified for a pension of £500 a-year. He contended that leave was absolutely necessary for the health and efficiency of the Service; at least, he did not understand on what other ground it was granted to the Service. It had been alleged that the Government gained by leave being taken. He could not go into that intricate calculation, because, unless he had the records of the India Office at his disposal, he could not arrive at a satisfactory conclusion; and he should be forgiven for not doing so, for the Code was of so labyrinthine a character that he did not profess to understand it. As he had said, he had done his best to get to the bottom of it, and he believed he did understand it as well as any other man in the House, even as well as the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst). He really thought this was a matter with regard to which the hon. Gentleman should, even at the last moment, relent. It was a matter which should be referred to a small Select Committee of the House. He (Mr. King) had no wish to take up the time of the House on the intricate and technical questions which were involved, and he should, therefore, be delighted if the hon. Gentleman would signify his assent to the proposition he made. If the hon. Gentleman would intimate his willingness to appoint a small Committee, he (Mr. King) would not deal further with the subject, and he was sure that the House would not occupy much time in debating the matter. No one, he thought, could properly investigate the question without coming to the conclusion which he desired the Government to arrive at, and which he trusted the House would come to that night. Perhaps that was the very reason why the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India was reluctant to grant a Select Committee. He (Mr. King) had that day seen a telegram sent to this country through Reuter's agency, an agency which was not usually inaccurate in regard to its foreign communications. That telegram, dated Simla, June 7, said—

> "It is understood that the Government of India has no objection to a Select Committee being appointed to inquire into the grievances of the members of the Uncovenanted Civil Service."

He (Mr. King) did not know how long it might take for information to travel from Simla to London. Probably, the old system was still adhered to, that of relying on the Post; but, certainly, if the Government of India had no objection to this investigation, he hardly thought the voice of 15 irresponsible Gentlemen sitting at Whitehall should outweigh that of the Uncovenanted Civil Servants and their employers the Indian Government. Why should he have to come down here year after year, and take up the valuable time of the House which could be very much better employed than in listening to his remarks upon this subject, in order to plead for this inquiry, to which the Indian Government had no objection? The Service asked, in the first place, for an increased furlough. One of its great grievances was, that only two years' furlough out of 30 years of service was allowed. They asked for something more than that, and in the next place they asked for some of this furlough to count as service. In the third place, they asked that the service might commence at the age of 21; and in the fourth place, they asked that initial employment should count. There were two obvious arguments which must have occurred to everyone in reply to these demands, so obvious that the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India, who was a practised and past master in the art of debating, probably would not fall back upon them, and he (Mr. King) only alluded to them in passing. The two obvious arguments were these. First of all, it might be said that good men could be got, without increasing the furlough, and without making those other alterations in the position of the Civil Servants to which he had just referred. He (Mr. King), however, hardly thought the Indian Government would feel inclined to use that class of argument, in the face of the names he had quoted. Another argument which could be used was this—"You have made your bed, and, therefore, you must lie on it," and that argument he (Mr. King) looked upon as a very strong one. He could understand an argument founded upon the sacredness of a contract, the Government saying to the Uncovenanted Civil Servants—"You have made your contract with your eyes open, and, therefore, you must abide by it." But the Government had cut the ground from under their own feet so far as that argument was concerned by conceding to a large number of men the privileges asked for. The Government of India had repeatedly recommended this concession. They had done so in 1865, and again in 1868. He wanted the House to distinctly understand the request he made. What they asked was this, that those holding positions in the Uncovenanted Civil Service should have the same advantages extended to them that were enjoyed by Covenanted Officers occupying similar positions. At this moment they had anachronisms and anomalies existing, juniors enjoying privileges of leave, etc., which were denied to the heads of their Departments. He would give an instance of this; a Superintendent, the head of the Engineering Department of the Eastern Bengal State Railway, had four or five juniors who had greater privileges in the matter of leave than himself. In that way, the heads of Departments in some cases were treated as being in an inferior position to their juniors. He did not wish to take up the time of the House by going minutely into the mysteries of the Schedules A and B; but he should like to point out that the real distinction was, that certain of these gentlemen were appointed by the Secretary of State for India, and the Secretary of State's men, provided they occupied certain positions, were given six years' furlough, four of which counted for pension, whilst the other servants, those in the Uncovenanted branch, were denied those privileges. Well, the effect of that was to create a great amount of annoyance in the Service. There were a great number of people who considered that a serious hardship, and why it should be allowed to exist he (Mr. King) had never been able to discover. What discipline could they hope to maintain in a Service when the head of a Department was branded as inferior through having an inferior leave to that which was enjoyed by some of his juniors? What influence was brought to bear upon the Indian Office he did not know, but a sudden fit of generosity seemed to have come over them at one time, for suddenly, in 1876, every gentleman drawing 500 rupees a month—that was to say, 6,000 rupees a-year—was admitted to the benefits of the rules under Schedule A, whether appointed by the Secretary of State for India or by the Viceroy. But that fit of generosity as suddenly ceased. A number of gentlemen were then admitted to these privileges, but though hundreds since then had obtained positions exactly similar, drawing 500 rupees-a-month on their appointment, they were kept under the inferior conditions. Hundreds had become entitled to enjoy those privileges formerly extended to all under Schedule A; but for some mysterious reason none of them were admitted to those privileges, and the House could hardly wonder that those gentlemen considered themselves to be treated somewhat unfairly, and failed to understand the grounds of their exclusion, for which no reason was assigned. Now, he should like to go a little further, and point out that this treatment of the Uncovenanted Civil Servants was distinctly contrary to the recommendations made by the Government of India in the year 1870. He was sorry to be obliged to detain the House by reading the financial despatch of the Secretary of State, dated the 4th of October, 1870, in which it was advised that the privileges granted to Civil Servants in England should be extended to the Uncovenanted Civil Servants of India. It was as follows:—

"It being then established that many important offices cannot ordinarily be filled either by Natives of India, or by officers of the Covenanted Civil Service, or the Staff Corps, it is obviously most important that suitable rules for leave of absence to the officers who must fill them should be passed. Not only have the officers themselves a strong claim to liberal treatment in this respect, but it is most important in the interest of the Public Service to facilitate by every legitimate concession, periodical visits to Europe or America by every Native of those continents in our Service, Uncovenanted as well as Covenanted.

We cannot suppose that it was your Grace's intention, *primâ facie*, to exclude from the benefit

> of the more liberal rules to which you have assented, the many meritorious Uncovenanted officers who are now in our Service; . . . . at least, we can conceive of no ground upon which we could make any distinction between two gentlemen not Natives of India, of equal rank, or holding the same office, in our Service. . . . . We desire strongly to recommend that, whatever may be decided for the future, every officer now in our Service in any of the appointments mentioned in the list (Schedule A, Civil Leave Code) attached to our draft rules, may be admitted to the benefits of the more liberal rules which have now been approved by Her Majesty's Government."
>
> "And for the future we would submit for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, that we shall be placed in an unfair position if the fact of an officer being appointed in India shall, *ipso facto*, place him in an unfavourable position as compared with officers not more than his equals, and perhaps his inferiors, only because they have been appointed in England."

Further on, in the same despatch, the following occurred:—

> "The financial gain, therefore, of treating the Uncovenanted Service less liberally in this respect than the rest of our officers would not in any way compensate for the sense of wrong caused by making an invidious distinction between officers doing perhaps the same duty, and, at any rate, receiving the same salaries, merely because they belong to different classes."

That was the opinion of the Government of India, and that was the recommendation they made to the 15 gentlemen sitting at Whitehall. He asked the House to put an end to the present unjust and anomalous state of things under which people in the same position and serving on the same basis were treated differently. He urged the House to put all the Civil Servants on the same footing, as the present condition of things was altogether lamentable. By following his suggestion in that particular, they would be fulfilling, at any rate, the first two or three conditions necessary to render the Civil Servants contented, and, therefore, necessary to maintain the efficient Service. He would not go into the Report of the Public Service Commission—he did not know whether the Government intended to act on it or not; but, whatever they proposed to do, he did not think it could affect the case of his friends; because it was expressly pointed out that they ought to be separated from the operation of any new rule. The gentlemen for whom he pleaded were in the Service that day. They existed under the rules of that day, and it was these rules he was asking the House to recommend should be amended, or, at all events, should be inquired into by a Select Committee of the House. But whatever was done, he trusted that it would not be a sham remedy which would be put forward. He trusted they would not attempt to redress these grievances in the usual way, giving with one hand and taking away with the other. The Government the other day introduced a system of graduated pensions. It used to be the rule that, after 15 years' service, a man got one-third of his pay as a pension; but now he only got fifteen-sixtieths; but he had not heard that any one had taken advantage of that precious regulation. These grievances affected about two-thirds of the Service. Even a cursory glance at the facts of the case would show hon. Members that from the highest to the lowest of these Uncovenanted Servants all were affected. The House would see that this bore upon his second position—namely, that a man to be an efficient servant should have his mind at ease as to his future. He need not point out that, after all, a pension was merely deferred pay, and he might draw an elaborate argument as to the right of a man to have his pension paid, at anyrate, at the rate of exchange prevailing in the country in which it had accrued; and he hoped, by a very short historical retrospect, to be able to make an unanswerable case for the reconsideration of this question. He made no claim whatever on the ground of law. If the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India had been consulting his lawyers, and had been drawing up an elaborate legal answer to him (Mr. King), he would make the hon. Gentleman a present of that argument. He (Mr. King) gave away the whole case. He made no claim whatever on the ground of law, admitting that, legally, the position of the Government was unassailable. So was the position of Shylock. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India was going to demand his pound of flesh in the same spirit as Shylock—the spirit that guided every Jew money lender. ["Oh, oh!"] He trusted the House would pardon him if, feeling somewhat strongly upon this subject, he desired to make the House feel it in the same way. His object was to put the matter as clearly as he saw it himself. He wished the House to listen to Rule 2 of the Civil Pension Code. It ran as follows:—

> "The Government reserves to itself the rights of changing the Rules of the Code from time to time, at its discretion, and of interpreting their meaning. An officer's claim to pension is good by the Rules in force at the time when he resigns, or is discharged from the service of the Government; he is not entitled to concessions withdrawn before or made after his requisition or discharge."

He did not see, with a Rule like this Rule 2 of the Civil Pension Code, any case could ever arise against the Government of the day. It would be simply impossible to go into Court, whatever the regulations might be; but he wished to try to argue the matter upon higher grounds. He wished to see and to ask the House to consider what the obvious intentions of the contracting parties were at the time they entered into their contract. He wished the House to assume in this matter the attitude which would be taken by any two honourable men, meeting 30 years after service, to revise a contract made 30 or 40 years before. He thought the House would admit that that was a fair and equitable way of putting it. No doubt, if the Government insisted upon their pound of flesh and refused to yield to his persuasion, he could not sustain his case against them as a matter of right; but he did maintain that the obvious intention of the parties at the time they made the contract was a very material factor. Up to 1855, up to the 19th May of that year, the Uncovenanted Servants always received half-pay or one-third pay as pension, and this often amounted, the House would be surprised to learn, to as much as £1,200 per annum. But the Uncovenanted Service had been growing, and the Court of Directors of the old East India Company met at the beginning of 1855 to consider what was a fair scale of pensions to establish for future use. They spent considerable time upon the subject, and they went to great pains to investigate it, and they came to the conclusion that a fair maximum pension was, as they expressed it, £500, or 5,000 rupees, per annum, and the other pensions £400, or 4,000 rupees, and £200, or 2,000 rupees. The Despatch of the 28th February, 1855, he would read, as it was rather interesting from the wording of it. They wrote—

> "We concur in thinking the present Rule to be defective, and we desire that a clause be introduced providing (as respects persons hereafter appointed to the Service) that in no case shall a larger pension than £400 per annum be granted to Uncovenanted Servants receiving salaries of Rs. 700 to Rs. 1,000 a-month, nor a larger pension than £500 per annum to Uncovenanted Servants receiving salaries above that amount, whether that retirement be from ill-health (after either 20 or 30 years' service) or without a medical certificate after 35 years' service, under the authority conveyed in our despatch of 5th May, 1854, No. 18."

The House would notice that in the case of the pension of £500 to Uncovenanted Servants, the sum was absolutely set forth in sterling. Well, in accordance with these Orders, the Government of India published a Resolution, under date the 19th May, 1855, by which officers of the Public Works Department were admitted to the benefit of the Pension Rules, and it was added that—

> "In no case (as respects persons hereafter appointed to the Uncovenanted Service) shall a larger pension than £400 or Rs. 4,000 per annum be granted to Uncovenanted Servants receiving salaries of Rs. 750 to Rs. 1,000 a-month, nor a larger pension than £500 or Rs. 5,000 per annum to Uncovenanted Servants receiving salaries above that amount, whether the retirement be from ill-health (after either 20 or 30 years' service), or without a medical certificate after 35 years' service."

He pointed this out to the House in order to show that the words pounds and rupees, in their proportionate values, were absolutely interchangeable. As time went on, the Uncovenanted Servants wished to have their pensions paid in this country, and undoubtedly that was the transaction upon which the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State would chiefly rely. The Uncovenanted Servants applied to the Secretary of State to allow them to have their pensions paid in sterling. They were told by the Secretary of State that hitherto the pensions had been paid in India, and in that statement the Setary of State was quite correct. They had only been paid in rupees up to that time. The despatch entered into particulars, and went on to say—

> "The rate of exchange is an important consideration in regard to payment in England. Her Majesty's Government will not now fix any permanent rate for the purpose, but as a rate of exchange, based on the intrinsic value of the

rupee and the market price of bills, is annually fixed in communication with the Lords of the Treasury for the adjustment of transactions between the British and Indian Exchequers, which rate is applied to family remittances of officers serving in India, the same rate appears to be equitable for the payment in England of the pensions of Uncovenanted Servants, and is therefore to be adopted."

Now, he wished the House to see what was in the official mind at that time. The rupee in 1861 and 1862 had been up to 2*s.* 2*d.* and 2*s.* 3*d.*, and in the official mind it was evident that it was thought it might go up to 2*s.* 4*d.* or 2*s.* 6*d.*; but he would undertake to say that not a single man connected with India or with this country at at that time ever expected the rupee to descend to as low a rate as 1*s.* 4*d.* It had, however, descended to 1*s.* 4*d.*; indeed, it had gone below that the other day, and when the House saw that the difference between 2*s.* and 1*s.* 4*d.* in the value of the rupee was a difference of 30 per cent of the incomes of those living in this country and drawing pensions from the Indian Government, it would be admitted that this was really a serious matter; 1*s.* 4*d.* was the official rate—that was to say, the rate fixed for family remittances and other transactions for the coming year by the Treasury. That was what was officially considered to be an equitable rate; but, to his mind, the equitable rate was 2*s.*, because the Court of Directors had said that the maximum pension should be £500 or Rs. 5,000. If the higher rate had been fixed, the transaction would have been equitable, but the low rate of 1*s.* 4*d.* was not equitable. For 10 years from 1864 the rate of exchange on the rupee did not vary a penny, but from 1874 to 1888 there had been a steady downward progress, year in and year out, and at the end of the year the rupee had almost invariably fallen lower than at the beginning of the year, and he was sorry to say he could see no prospect of any end coming to that process. What had been the result of this fall in value of the rupee, so far as the Uncovenanted Civil Servants were concerned? Why, the maximum Civil Service pension, which the Court of Directors of the old Company had fixed at £500, had fallen down to no more than £320. These Directors had spoken of £500. They were English gentlemen sitting in Leadenhall Street, and speaking of the currency of this country, and giving expression to everyday ideas with regard to that currency. When people spoke of a sum of money in this country, they did not speak of rupees, but of pounds; and in that way the Court of Directors had stated that they considered an equitable maximum pension to be £500 a-year. Well, did his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India mean to argue that £320 a-year was an adequate maximum pension for 35 years' work in a tropical climate in the highest official position? Would he maintain that view if the rupee went down to 1*s.* Would he still, in order to be logical, exact his pound of flesh? That was the point to which the hon. Gentleman must devote his attention. He (Mr. King) was sure that hon. Gentlemen opposite, who were not, as a rule, very favourable to pensions, and certainly not to increasing them, would not answer the question in the same way as his hon. Friend. It was a common thing for the people who had not studied this question to say that the fall in the rate of exchange was due to the depreciation in the value of silver. That was a very easy way of getting out of the difficulty. This was one of those cases where people desired to give a reason for taking a certain course, and gave a reason without exactly knowing what it was, simply to get rid of the difficulty. Now he, for one, did not believe that the fall in the value of the rupee was due to the fall in the value of silver. To a certain extent, no doubt, it was; but he contended that the great, the extreme fall in the value of the rupee was due to the direct action of the Government. It was due to the increase of Home Charges. There was no one acquainted with the theory of foreign exchanges—the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was the greatest authority on the subject, and he (Mr. King) believed the right hon. Gentleman would bear him out in this—that there was no one acquainted with the theory of foreign exchanges who would contend for one moment that the exchange would not fall when the amount of bills offered for sale was largely in excess of the demand, and the result of increasing year by year the Home Charges was to bring that state of things about—namely, to cause a larger and larger number of bills to be thrown upon the market. He was not going to detain the House with a lecture on foreign exchanges at that hour of the evening, because the fall did not affect his argument; but he trusted the House would believe that he knew something upon the subject, seeing that it lay in the direction of his own business. He maintained, therefore, that one large cause of the decrease in value of the rupee was the development of Home Charges. What was the position of the Government in the matter? He took it that their position was to be compared in some degree to that of the landlord in regard to the agricultural tenant. Did the House not think that if a landlord was called upon, because there had been a fall in the value of produce, to make a reduction in rent, that the Government should also be called upon to make some reduction in the loss which the Civil Service pensioner suffered on account of the depreciation of the rupee? So far as the Government themselves were concerned, even if they did suffer from the fall in the rate of exchange directly, there was no doubt that indirectly they gained very considerably. It had brought about a bonus on the export trade, which had increased the wealth of India and its taxpaying power; and that being so, it did seem to him that the Government, in a case like this, ought properly to be called upon to jump into the breach. He imagined, if the proposal he put forward were adopted, there would be no reason for taking the extreme view that fresh taxation would be required. Only a little economy would be necessary. The total amount required, as shown in the answer given by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India, in reply to a Question put to him a year ago, was about £20,000 per annum. Now, the abolition of the India Council would supply that. Perhaps the House was unaware that India was rich enough to spend two lachs of rupees extra last year on the Viceregal tour, over and above the amount allowed. Those acquainted with Indian affairs would know something about the annual migration of the Indian Government to Simla; they would know something about the new palace, which had cost something like 13 lachs, or £113,000; and he believed that at that moment the

Secretary of State for India had his mind very much troubled with the question of the erection of a new Town Hall at Simla, which was to cost four lachs of rupees. Under such circumstances, he thought his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India would not be able to take refuge under the plea of poverty, and he did not think that it would break the back of the Indian Government to carry out his (Mr. King's) proposals. He thought if the Indian Government had come down to its £20,000, it had better shut up shop altogether. The Indian Government were not the only people who would have to deal with this fall in exchange. There were other employers of labour besides the Government who had to deal with it, and it would, perhaps, be worth while to consider what they had done. He might, perhaps, be allowed to say what he himself had done with his European *employés* similarly situated with those of the Government. He had—not since he started this agitation in the House, but when the fall in exchange first manifested itself—when his *employés* came home, which they were allowed to do once in five years, he had allowed them a free passage and half-pay. They submitted to him that they could not live comfortably or enjoy themselves when they had come home on their half-pay at the prevailing rate of exchange, and as a result he had fixed the exchange at 2*s.* the rupee. Why on earth could not the Indian Governmant do the same? He did not do it out of philanthrophy; he did it as much in his own interest as in that of his *employés*, and because he wished his people to be well treated. Then this argument was put forward—it was true that the maximum pension had fallen, through the fall in the rate of exchange, from £500 to £300, but that £300 a-year now was equal to £500 in 1874; but that was a plutocrat's argument entirely, and was a thoroughly ridiculous one in the face of the charges which had to be met for rent, servants, schooling, insurance, and so on; and even if there was anything in that contention, it did not touch his argument that when these people contracted to enter the Service, they contracted that they should get for their maximum pension £500 per annum. The amount fixed upon as equitable was £500, and not £300. He believed lawyers said that the making of a contract was when the intentions of the two parties met, and although he was not a lawyer he could very well understand that that must be so. When the minds of two parties came together to one identical point, then the contract was made, and as the House had seen, in this case, the contract was for a maximum pension of £500 and not £300. There was one argument which had been used which he did not wish to lay undue stress upon, and he did not wish to ascribe to it the virtue of imposing any legal obligation upon the Government, but he quoted it as illustrating his argument as to what the intention of the parties was when they entered into the contract. He wanted to ask the House, as a body of fair straightforward Englishmen, what they, as young men going out to India to take service, would have thought of such a statement as that to which he was about to draw attention. A young man, when asked to go out to take service there, was asked to do it under the big book of the Codes of the Financial Department. No young man would read that book through, but he would gather the gist of it and accept service accordingly. The following note, by some officious clerk, but one who evidently had in his mind what was intended by the authorities on the subject of the pensions, was printed in the Official Pension Code:—

> "Whenever in the following Resolution a pension is stated in sterling, the equivalent in rupees is meant, at 2*s.* the rupee, which had been at that time, for several years, the fixed rate of exchange for the adjustment of financial transactions between the Imperial and Indian Governments."

Then let them turn to the Cooper's Hill Prospectus. It was there stated in one part, in speaking of the office of Assistant Engineer, second grade—

> "The salary of which grade is Rs. 4,200 (about £420) per annum, and the remaining one-tenth as Assistant Engineer; third grade, the salary of which grade is Rs. 3,000 (about £300) per annum."

and further on, in a note to a paragraph on the various ranks of the Department of Engineers and their salaries, it was declared—

> "Ten rupees are nearly equivalent in value to one pound sterling."

Further on, again, it was stated that after a service of 25 years a pension was to be allowed—

> "Not exceeding one-half of the officer's average emoluments; and also not exceeding Rs. 5,000 a-year, or, if his average emoluments do not exceed Rs. 12,000 a-year, Rs. 4,000 a-year."

He would ask the House, whether, if they had had a prospect offered to them of going out to India on these terms, they would not have imagined that at the end of their service, seeing that 10 rupees was said to be equal to £1, they would have been in receipt of a pension of £500 a-year as the equivalent of 5,000 rupees. It would be found the pensions, as opposed to pay and allowances, was always stated in sterling in the Code until this question as to the rate of exchange arose, when it was thought that inconvenience might arise from the old method and the system was changed. As an illustration of the way in which the Indian Government dealt with this question, he thought that hon. Members would remember the Question he had put in the House on the subject of Colonels' allowances. There were certain Colonels in the Service who, at a certain time, had attained to a salary of £1,100 a-year. Well, 12 of these gentlemen out of 420 had elected to live in India; and a very excellent thing for India it was, and it should be the policy of that country to encourage people who had lived there the best part of their lives to take up their permanent abode there. Well, they found that while taking the rupee at the lowest rate in this country, the Government took it at the highest rate going in India, thus mulcting the 12 gentlemen to whom he had referred of one-third of their incomes, the rupee being valued at 2*s.* 0½*d.* The depreciation of silver, he believed, had led to a great deal of correspondence between the Government Departments at home and in India and English Shipping Companies doing business with the East. Certain seamen had been in the habit of signing contracts to the effect that if paid in India they should be paid in rupees, and that the rupee should be taken as equivalent to 2*s.* The result of that was that sailors discharged in Bombay, for instance, received very much less than they would have done if discharged in England. Lord Lytton, Lord Ripon and Lord Dufferin had successively protested against the custom, and had urged that legislation should be undertaken in England, where the agreements were made, to make void the stipulations complained of, and though it was thought, in the year 1882, that the difficulty could be got over by thoroughly explaining the state of the case, before signing articles, as late as October last the Indian Government wrote to Lord Cross asking if nothing could be done

> "In the matter of payment of seamen's wages in India, at a rate of exchange which really deprived them of a quarter of the amount which they believed they had earned?"

The Government document from which he was quoting went on to say—

> "We cannot but consider it objectionable that our officers should be compelled to assist at and sanction, as part of their official duties, the execution of agreements which involve such injustice."

He (Mr. King) declared that the views he expressed with regard to pensions were views supported, years and years ago, by some of the greatest authorities in India. Lord Lawrence's Government were in favour of increasing the amount of the pensions. Sir Stafford Northcote, when Secretary of State for India, said on the 2nd July, 1868, in a Despatch to the Governor General in Council—

> "As regards any advance in the rates of pay or of pension, I must leave it to your Government to submit to me any proposals which, after full consideration of the relative clauses of this and other branches of the Service, you may think fit to adopt. I shall be prepared to entertain them in a liberal spirit."

The Government of India, in reply, wrote that they thought a new graduated scale should be introduced for regulating the pensions of Her Majesty's Uncovenanted Civil Servants in India. They said that the Furlough Committee, whose Report they annexed to their despatch, proposed to limit the pensions of the Indian Service to 30-60ths of the salary, and also to fix an absolute limit of £600 per annum for the full pension, and proportionately lesser sums for pensions granted under medical certificate before the completion of 30 years' service. They said, further on—

> "Moreover, £600 is the maximum pension granted to Covenanted Civil Servants, and we may remark that in the case of Uncovenanted Service, this maximum will only be attained in exceptional cases."

The suggestion which was made by the Government of India was disregarded. He (Mr. King) urged the House to consider the tendency the system of paying low pensions had to block promotion. If men had no inducement to retire, and dare not face the risks of retiring, they would hang on to the Service long after the period had passed at which they were fit for effective service. If the House would think of the effect on other members of the Service of such a block in promotion, they would see other reasons for dealing with the matter more liberally than the India Office saw at present. He trusted the Government would answer the question as to whether they were going to deal with this matter of pensions in any way. He would ask the House whether it was not clear, from what he had said, that it was cruel to apply this official Rule as to exchange to Indian Civil servants who resided in this country, men who, after 35 years of hard work in India—in a tropical climate—retired at a pension which would certainly not be excessive in amount, even if it were calculated at 2*s.* to the rupee? Those men saw, year after year, their incomes dwindling away—incomes of £500 becoming £320, incomes of £400 becoming £250, and incomes of £200 becoming £133. Why, a man, under such circumstances, must live in absolute torture—he could imagine no torture equal to that of the man watching the diminishing rate of exchange under such circumstances. He had read, and many in that House remembered the story, of the prisoner who, day by day, saw his cell becoming less as first one window and then another disappeared. He could imagine that somewhat similar feelings to those experienced by this man were experienced by those unfortunate pensioners as they saw one penny after one penny fall off the rate. He thought the House could hardly have any idea of what this fall in exchange meant. They could hardly imagine how terrible was the uncertainty to any man in such a position who, at the close of his life, desired to settle his little scheme of existence. How was he to know that that which was sufficient for this year would be sufficient for the next? How was he to guess what his next year's income would be? One luxury after another—nay, almost one necessary after another—had to be cut off, and one economy after another had to be practised. A constant struggle had to be made in order to keep up the insurance premiums by which those poor pensioners hoped to keep their families from penury. He had himself seen the sacrifices those people had to make to keep alive their insurance. He had seen them with tears in their eyes looking up here and there the few pounds necessary to save their policies. With such painful scenes coming under his notice the House would not be surprised if he asked himself whether such treatment was creditable on the part of a civilized Government? Then, who had made these arrangements which pressed so hardly upon those old officers?—too old to protect themselves; whose days for energetic struggle for existence had gone by; who had earned, if anybody had done so, by long years of toil a short period of rest before they passed away? The men who made these regulations were living in luxury, hedged in and protected from similar experiences by the rules they themselves had made. He asked the House to remember that it was in their service that these Civil Service pensioners had been worn out in body and in brain. Thirty-five years' work in India was not to be done without such terrible outpouring of strength that few of these men were capable of coming home and beginning life afresh in some new avocation, so as to add to their small incomes. The House would forgive him if he spoke strongly, because he felt strongly. He had himself seen the protracted agony of this struggle; he had sat by the deathbed of the hopes of some of these men; and from the hardness of official and technical rules, and from the rigidity of legal phrases, he appealed to the House—he appealed to the sense of justice of every Member of it. He knew the hon. Member the Under Secretary of State for India would state his case with a clearness and in a style with which he (Mr. King) felt himself unworthy to compete. He knew he could not compete with the hon. Gentleman in dialectics and in argument. He (Mr. King), who was "no orator as Brutus was," could but state his case. He had tried to do it to the best of his ability—to put it plainly before the House—and if the hon. Gentleman did demonstrate, however clearly and decisively and logically, that the Government of India were within the four corners of their contract and within the letter of their bond, it was no more than he himself had told them. He had told them that his hon. Friend was entitled to his pound of flesh; but he believed that he would not make his appeal in vain, and that a result satisfactory to these aged servants of the State would yet be won from the kind and generous instincts of the House of Commons.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is inequitable and anomalous that privileges as regards leave and retirement should be refused to some classes of Officers in the Uncovenanted Civil Service of India which are enjoyed by others in similar circumstances; and that, in view of the heavy fall in the value of the rupee, the payment of pensions of retired European Uncovenanted Officers in England at the official rate of exchange is no longer equitable,"—(*Mr. King*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Colonel HILL (Bristol, S.) said, he had the honour to rise generally to support the Motion which his hon. Friend the Member for Central Hull (Mr. King) had laid before the House. The hon. Member had stated his case with much clearness, with much detail, and with much eloquence. Therefore, he (Colonel Hill) felt it would be becoming in him to offer as few observations as he could, and not to detain the House a moment more than was necessary on the matter. He proposed to confine the few observations he did offer to the question of the payment of pensions to the Civil Engineers in the Indian Service. There were two classes of Engineers. There was the first class, called the "Stanley," established in 1859, and who did most of the work until Cooper's Hill College was instituted in 1871. He had ventured to bring the case of the payment of the pensions of these Engineers before the House last Session on the Indian Estimates, and the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India was good enough to offer his compassion, but did not propose to give any direct relief to the grievances which he (Colonel Hill) had put before him. No doubt, the compassion of so distinguished and so kind-hearted a man as the Secretary of State was very valuable and very consoling, but it did not help the unfortunate Engineers of India to pay their bakers or their landlords or their schoolmasters, and he (Colonel Hill) did hope that, after this discussion, the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State would be able to see his way to offering something more than mere compassion. But he (Colonel Hill) did not appeal to the House for its compassion at all. He ventured to base his appeal to them on their sense of justice, and that alone. He did not think this honourable House would be deaf to the appeal made to that sense of justice, and he believed they would feel that it was not consonant with the honour of this great country to take advantage of a mere dry legal position to effect an economy which their neighbours in France would designate, very properly, an *économie de bouts de chandelles.* He must say he did not think it would be to the interests of the country to do so. He held in his hand a document 20 years old, brought to his notice by one of the Stanley Engineers, entitled *Rules for the Information of Candidates Employed under the Engineer's Establishment.* It was upon that document that that gentleman, and many other gentlemen, made up their minds whether they would or would not accept service under the Government of India. His (Colonel Hill's) contention was that this document led the candidates to understand that one of the conditions under which they undertook the service was that at the end of 30 years, if their conduct was satisfactory and their service meritorious, they would receive pensions of £500 a-year. To convey that belief was the intention, and he was borne out in saying that by the fact that the figures were given as Rs. 1,300 or £130, Rs. 2,000 or £200, Rs. 4,000 or £400. He had also an official document, presented by an official Department in India, to which some allusion had been made. He referred to Despatch No. 205, p. 8, sections 13, 14, 16 and 20, where pensions were alluded to in pounds sterling. Again, in the orders of the Government, in Despatch 135, of the 1st July, 1870, paragraphs 2, 3 and 8, pensions were mentioned in pounds sterling, as also in paragraph 12, sections 1 and 3. He would not trouble the House with reading these extracts; but he would say this, that no fair-minded man could possibly read these documents without coming to the conclusion that it was fairly given to these gentlemen to understand that they were to have a maximum pension on retirement of £500 a-year, and that the intention of giving them that pension was always in the mind of the Government. That paragraph, or rather note, which an officious clerk was supposed to have introduced, had been alluded to. That note was deserving of the attention of the House, as it clearly showed that in the mind of the Government, when the original arrangement was made, 10 rupees were to equal one pound sterling. In the Uncovenanted Service there were many individuals who were Natives, and that would probably account for the fact that rupees were mentioned; otherwise in the whole transaction, the payment might only have been recognized in pounds sterling. It had been said that both Natives and Europeans were to be placed on the same footing and treated in the same way. That, he ventured to think, was a very proper thing to do originally, but it was not so now. The rupee in India, as he was informed, retained the same purchasing power that it used to have, and therefore the Natives received their pensions exactly as they had been led to believe they would receive them. The European, however, had to put up with a depreciated rupee. Well, the present rate of Exchange on Government transactions was 1*s.* 5*d.* on the rupee. It was only fixed for six months, instead of twelve—for the reason, presumably, that the Government anticipated a further depreciation—and, at that rate, pensions of £500 only amounted to £334. Could it, he asked, be to the public interest to have an important class of public servants smarting under what the House must feel to be, at all events, a great disappointment to them? How was it possible, how could anyone expect that the State would receive the best services of these men when they conceived themselves to be suffering a grievance? He felt quite sure that these servants, if they did not get some redress, would feel themselves forced, in justice to themselves and their families, to seek for opportunities to abandon the Indian Public Service in order to find some other form of service to provide them with the means of living in decency and comfort. The services of the Civil Engineers had often been acknowledged. It could not be gainsaid that these men had performed their duties well. Now, he argued, as had been argued before, that pension was simply deferred pay. The House would be perfectly well aware that if they advertised for the services of a gentleman and proposed to give him a pension at the end of a given number of years' service, the salary would be fixed at a lower figure than it would if they left the man to make provision for the future himself. It appeared to him (Colonel Hill) utterly indefensible that the Government should take advantage of the unfortunate depressed state of the rupee, and give these Uncovenanted Servants their pensions the lowest possible. The very least that common justice and fairness demanded was that an average should be struck. But the Civil Engineers were no longer designated Uncovenanted Servants. In a despatch, dated March, 1883, it was ordered that the title should no longer be used in respect to these men. If they were not Uncovenanted Servants, they must be Covenanted Servants, and, like them, should be paid in sterling. It must be extremely galling to these public servants to find themselves working alongside men not in a superior position—their brethren of the Royal Engineers—who received their pensions in sterling, while they were compelled to take their pensions in a depreciated currency. He trusted the House would accede to the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Central Hull (Mr. King), and that justice might be done to a very deserving class of public servants, with whom the House must sympathize. He trusted the House would feel that in doing justice to these servants they were doing justice to themselves and their country; he heartily endorsed the remark of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Hull, that they could not have good and faithful servants unless they treated them in a fair and equitable way.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) said, he thought that the Uncovenanted Servants were to be congratulated upon having secured so eloquent an advocate of their cause as the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. King). It was impossible that their case could have been put more forcibly and clearly, and there was no need for the hon. Member to say—"I am no orator, as Brutus is." He agreed with every word of praise that had been said of the Uncovenanted Services, and if it was his painful duty, as the Representative of the Indian taxpayers, to oppose this Motion, he hoped the hon. Member would not think it was from any want of sympathy for the trouble of his clients. In one respect the hon. Member was mistaken. This question had received the anxious consideration of the Secretary of State and himself, and of those fossil Indians, as the hon. Member called them, the Members of the Council. He must remind the House that there were two sides to this question. The hon. Member had spoken as if the Uncovenanted Civil Service consisted exclusively of Europeans, whereas the bulk of them were Natives. And although the Europeans among them found many advocates in that House, the Natives were in a very different position, and it was his duty to represent their interests and feelings. In one Department, for example—the executive and judicial—there were 139 Europeans only, and 2,449 Natives. The Natives viewed the matter in a very different light from the hon. Member. Many of them thought that they ought to have the whole, or nearly the whole, of the highest places in the Uncovenanted Service to themselves, and made it a grievance that any difference at all should exist between themselves and Europeans. They thought it unfair that Europeans should receive more pay for the same work. He gave this as an exaggerated view on the side opposed to that of the hon. Member. The Government of India rightly considered that it was now, and would be for many years, the highest interest of India that in all Departments of the Public Service, and especially in the higher grades, there should be a strong leaven of Europeans, and the Government was desirous of maintaining the existing advantages to the European servants, so as to make the Service attractive. But he warned his hon. Friend and the House that at any time unduly to extend the privileges of the European servants might give rise to such action as might cause the distinction between

Europeans and Natives to be swept away. The House ought to remember the great distinction between the Covenanted and Uncovenanted branches. The former was an Imperial service, open by competitive examination to all the Queen's subjects, British, Indian, and Colonial. The Uncovenanted branch was recruited mainly in India, by a great variety of means. Some were appointed by competition of a less stringent kind than the examination for the Covenanted Service; some by pure nomination on the part of the Secretary of State, the Government of India, or the local governments; and others, again, were trained in some such institution as Cooper's Hill, or went straight from school. If those gentlemen preferred the wider and easier gate of the Uncovenanted Service to the narrower and more difficult entrance by the Covenanted Service to the Indian Public Service, they had no right to complain that they were treated upon different terms from those who were Covenanted Servants. The hon. Member had referred to the Report of the Public Service Commission, which had been appointed in consequence of the strong expression of feeling on the part of the Natives of India that they were entitled to a larger share in the government of their country. The Public Service Commission was a body consisting not only of Covenanted Servants, but of Uncovenanted Servants, independent persons, and Natives, so that it was a thoroughly representative body, in which the Natives of India and the people of this country had every confidence. The Commission sat in India, and it had heard a vast amount of evidence, and its Report was now under the consideration of the Indian Government. It would, therefore, be unbecoming of him to express any opinion upon that Report until the views of the Government of India with regard to it had been received. But one of the main proposals of that Report was to organize in India a provincial service for the different Presidencies in which Europeans and Natives were to be employed upon identical conditions. In these circumstances it would be very rash on his part were he to express any opinion as to whether it was desirable or not to place the Uncovenanted Servants upon the same footing as the Covenanted Servants. Having said so much on the question in a preliminary and a general sense, he would now proceed to address himself to the two particular points which the hon. Member had brought before the House—namely, those which related to the pension rules and to the payment of the pensions in rupees instead of in pounds sterling. Up to 1872 all the servants of the Indian Government who did not belong to the Covenanted Civil Service were treated very unfavourably by the rules, on the ground that, instead of being recruited in England, they were recruited in India, and were, therefore, not exposed to the penalties of exile from home. But in 1872 new rules were made, under which those who had entered the Service before that date were more favourably treated. The hon. Member had said that there were anomalies in the Service. No doubt there were, because there were anomalies in the treatment of officials in the Public Service of every civilized nation. He fully admitted that the Public Works and Telegraph Departments in India had been treated with exceptional favour; but he was afraid that the result of any agitation founded upon that fact would be to inaugurate a system rather of levelling down than of levelling up. No doubt the strong point which had been made by the hon. Member was that which related to the question of pensions. With regard to that point, he should like to remind the House that in 1822 even the Covenanted Civil Service had no pensions. But from that date 4 per cent of the salary of every Covenanted Civil Servant was deducted to form a pension fund, and a similar sum was added by the East India Company to that fund. Therefore, the Covenanted Civil Servants contributed towards their own pensions, which the Uncovenanted Service did not. As to the payment of the pensions in rupees instead of in pounds sterling, the hon. Member for Hull admitted that his clients had no legal claim to be paid in sterling instead of in rupees. That was undisputed; and he would ask what business had a Government which represented the poor people of India to make, out of sheer generosity, to one section of its servants, a present of this concession to which those servants did not even profess to have a legal claim? Before 1862 the pension of the Uncovenanted Servants could be drawn only in India, and they had to employ an agent in India to draw it and remit it to this country. At that time a pound sterling and 10 rupees were convertible terms. But in 1862 new pension rules were made, and one of them, rule 18, was this—

> "An officer shall on retirement have the option of drawing his pension either in India or from the home Treasury. The payments in England will be made at the rate of exchange which is annually fixed in communication with the Lords of the Treasury for the adjustment of transactions between the British and Indian Exchequers."

In 1871 there was the first fall in exchange, and then the recipients of pensions at home were paid on a lower scale. A question was raised on the subject, and on the 10th of August, 1871, the Duke of Argyll wrote the following despatch:—

> "Letters having been received from persons drawing pensions in this country under the Uncovenanted Service Pension Rules complaining of the recent reduction in the rate of exchange at which such pensions are paid, I have to point out that, prior to the rules of 1863-4, pensions granted to uncovenanted servants were only payable in India, and that, although by section 18 of those rules an option is given of drawing the pension either in India or at the home Treasury, it is at the same time provided that the payments in England will be made at the rate of exchange annually fixed for the adjustment of transactions between the British and Indian Exchequers."

The Civil Pension Code of 1872 said—

> "A pension is payable at any Treasury in India or at the home Treasury in London. Payments at the home Treasury are made quarterly at the rate of exchange which is annually fixed for the adjustment of transactions between the British and Indian Exchequers."

Could anything, then, be more plain than that if the pensions were to be paid in England it was distinctly laid down that they should be paid at that rate of exchange? He hoped he had established to the satisfaction of the House that the right to draw pensions in England was a concession, and that they were to be drawn at the rate of exchange fixed for the adjustment of transactions between the two Treasuries. The Government of India argued that the pension bore a proportion to the pay, and that in India that proportion was higher than in almost any other country in the world. It was almost one-half, and if you turned those pensions into sterling money at the rate of 10 rupees to the pound sterling you made them more than one-half and enhanced them out of all proportion to the pay. Another argument was, that in recent times several branches of the service, engineer officers and others, had had enhanced pensions granted them because of the fall in the exchange. If those officers were to obtain a larger number of rupees was it reasonable that they should demand that this increased number should be paid at more than the annual rate of exchange? He hoped the House would remember, before assenting to a Resolution like this, that we could not stop at the paltry £20,000 to which the hon. Gentleman referred. You could not restrict a privilege of this kind to the officers resident in England; you must extend it to the officers in India; and where you paid now 620,000 tens of rupees, if the proposal of the hon. Member was carried into effect, that sum would be enhanced by 100,000 or 150,000 tens of rupees. The hon. Member said that low pensions prevented officers from retiring; but to enhance pensions was to offer to these officers direct temptation to retire earlier, and thus the non-effective charge would be swelled by earlier retirements and more numerous pensions. Moreover, officers in active service as well as those who had retired were suffering from the fall in exchange. There was not an officer who was not more or less crippled in his needs owing to that particular cause, and if the House once yielded to the compassion which the hon. Member for Hull had so eloquently put forward, how could they restrict it to the case of pensioners who had retired and refuse it to those still in actual service? And, not only the Uncovenanted Civil Servants but the Government of India itself and the impoverished people of India had suffered by the fall in the rupee, and, in consequence, the Salt Tax had had to be increased. How inconsistent it would be for the House at the beginning of the Session to be lamenting because the Government of India had to extract more money from the pockets of the poverty-stricken Indian taxpayers, and then, when the Session was well advanced, to pass a Resolution which would saddle them on behalf of the retired Uncovenanted Civil Servants with further taxation still? He observed many hon. Gentlemen present who had distinguished themselves by their criticism of English pensions, and who would not suffer anything more in the shape of pensions than the State was under obligation to pay. Would they be so inconsistent as to vote for a Resolution which confessedly asked the House to pay something which the State was under no obligation whatever to pay, and to pay these additional sums of money merely in the name of compassion? He sympathized as much as the hon. Member for Hull with the people who found themselves in the position of not having the income to which they had been accustomed; but the House must remember that they were dealing not with their own money but as trustees of money contributed by the poor people of India, and, however much they might sympathize with a deserving and estimable class of men, Parliament ought not to cast upon the people of India burdens which they could not justly be called upon to pay.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) said, he warmly supported the Resolution. The question was not one that could be touched by the mere broad principles of political economy. Nor did he understand the analogy sought to be drawn by the Under Secretary between English and Indian pensions. English pensions were overpaid, Indian pensions were underpaid. English pensions were granted for nothing, Indian pensions represented underpaid work done by men who, at the end of 40 years' were relegated to genteel starvation for promoting the service of the Empire at the expense of health, absence from home, and all the embarrassments which prolonged residence in a dreadful climate involved. He denied that the effect of acceding to the Resolution would be to draw a distinction between European and Native servants, else he would vote against it; and urged that, although there might not be a legal contract in the matter, there was what was equally binding—an honourable understanding. In referring to the anomalies which existed in the treatment of Europeans appointed in this country and those appointed in India, he showed that a person appointed in India by the patronage of the Governor General did not obtain a furlough for 10 years, getting then one year; while the person appointed in England by the patronage of the India Office, received two years' furlough out of eight years. Besides, all the privileges asked for the Uncovenanted Service were, in point of fact, enjoyed by some members of that service—such, for instance, as the Telegraph and Public Works Department. Why should such an invidious distinction be made? The existence of these distinctions in treatment gave rise to heartburnings which were prejudicial to the interests of the Service.

Mr. E. B. HOARE (Hampstead) said, he listened, and he believed the House listened with very great interest to the very able speech in which his hon. Friend the Member for Central Hull (Mr. King) pleaded the cause of his clients, the members of the Uncovenanted Service. He also listened with very great interest to the very able speech in which the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) pleaded the cause of his clients—the taxpayers of India; and if the House was at all reduced to the same frame of mind as himself, they would agree with him that the House of Commons was a tribunal perfectly incompetent to judge between the two. It was utterly impossible in his opinion for the House to say which of the two hon. Members was right. The hon. Member for Central Hull had made out a very strong case. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State had stood upon the legal rights. The legal rights no one disputed; but were they to be taken as the sole test in this matter? It seemed very hard to the Uncovenanted Servants to say that the legal rights should be the test. There was very little doubt that the Uncovenanted Servants entered into a contract which they believed, and which their employers believed, meant a pension of £500 a-year. Whether that was the case or not, he felt he had very inaccurate data to rely upon. He, therefore, most earnestly begged the hon. Gentleman who represented the Government of India to grant what he was sure would satisfy his hon. Friend the Member for Central Hull, some inquiry into the matter. All that was desired was that justice should be done. The hon. Gentleman who Moved the Resolution did not desire to impose an additional burden of £20,000 or of £1,000 needlessly upon the taxpayers of India, neither did he desire that a body of deserving servants of the public should end their days grumbling and dissatisfied. Let the matter be cleared up once for all, and let everybody be satisfied. If hon.

Members of the House felt that their wisdom was equal to settling the matter straight off, they must feel themselves very much wiser than he felt himself to be. He was satisfied there was a case for inquiry; but that that House ought not to try by off-hand action to settle the rates of pension for these servants. He very strongly urged the Government to grant an inquiry, in whatever form they might think best, which would satisfy the hon. Member for Central Hull and, he was sure, the House.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, that the hon. Member for Central Hull (Mr. King), in support of his case, went upon the unprecedented discontent and alarm which he said pervaded the Uncovenanted Service of India. He (Mr. Pickersgill) admitted both the discontent and the alarm, but he hoped the House would not believe that they were due solely to the grievances which the hon. Member put before them that night with such expressive eloquence. There was another cause for that discontent and alarm. During recent years we had adopted the policy of calling upon the Natives of India to fill Offices in the State from which they had previously been excluded, and the Uncovenanted Service, which acted as a sort of buffer between the Covenanted Service and the Native Indian officials, was the first to feel the pressure of the new competition, and hence the discontent which, he believed with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. King), was unprecedented. The hon. Member was not quite unaware that there was a good deal in what he had just said. It was, he found, about a year ago that the hon. Gentleman asked the Under Secretary of State for India, whether his attention had been called to the expression of alarm in the Indian Press and amongst the Anglo-Indian community, at the course being pursued by the Government of India, owing to which very important changes were contemplated in the organization and conditions of Service, especially in the direction of a large admission of Natives to the important positions of the Service. In that Question he could not perceive any sympathy on the part of the hon. Member with the new policy on which we had embarked. He (Mr. Pickersgill) rejoiced that we had begun to allow the Natives of India to take more important positions in the Service of their own country, and he hoped that the new policy would be steadily and vigorously and rapidly pursued. As an old Civil Servant, he (Mr. Pickersgill) should not be without sympathy for the grievances of the class of which, for a good many years, he was a Member. He assured the hon. Gentleman (Mr. King) that he sympathized to a large extent with those grievances which he very eloquently put before the House a little while ago; but, although he sympathized with the Civil Servants, he had, he felt, another duty to perform. As Members of the House of Commons they all had to guard with peculiar jealousy the interests of that large Indian population which was not directly represented in the House. Personally, he was very anxious to hold the balance even between the Civil Servants on the one hand and the poor taxpayers on the other hand. Their symyathy had been invited for the Civil Servants. But why should they not, with at least equal reason, bestow their pity upon the taxpayers of India? As regarded the Uncovenanted Servants, they had got, at all events, what they bargained for; he believed that that was admitted even by their own advocates. But they had got something more than they bargained for; because he found that only last year a very considerable concession was made to members belonging to this body. He found that up to last year, members of the Uncovenanted Service, leaving that Service after from 10 to 15 years' service, were entitled only to a gratuity. Since last year, the Government had made a concession, and Uncovenanted Servants were now, under the same circumstances, entitled to receive pensions of one-sixth to one-fourth of the salaries they were receiving at the time of leaving. That, he thought, was not an inconsiderable concession, and he mentioned it to show that the Government were not indisposed to listen in no unfriendly spirit to the grievances of the Uncovenanted Servants.

MR. KING said, he was sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but he was bound to point out that that concession was only extended to the Telegraph and Public Works Departments.

MR. PICKERSGILL said, that, at all events, the servants in those Departments were portions of the Uncovenanted Service of India, and the granting of the concession supported the argument that a portion of the Uncovenanted Servants of the Crown had received more than they bargained for. Now, hon. Members upon the Opposition Benches frequently complained of the vast expenditure involved in the administration of our Indian Empire. There was scarcely a writer of authority upon Indian finance who had not pointed with grave distrust and alarm to the enormous cost of the Non-Effective Service of India in particular—a cost which is drawn from India, and which was spent in England. The late Mr. Henry Fawcett, the best friend that India ever had in the House of Commons, said, that taking the figures of the actual expenditure in 1876-7, the latest year for which the figures were available, it appeared that no less an amount than £2,800,000 of the Revenues of India had annually been paid in England in pensions, and he added—

> "The real significance of that drain upon the resources of the country will be understood when it is remembered that the entire net or available revenue is not more than £38,000,000."

Well, 10 years had elapsed since those words were used by Mr. Fawcett, and he (Mr. Pickersgill) had lately been going through the home accounts of the Indian Government, in order to ascertain how we stood now, taking the figures parallel to those quoted in 1879 by Mr. Fawcett. Mr. Fawcett said that in 1879 £2,800,000 drawn from India was paid in England for the purpose of pension allowances, but the sum was now £3,787,124—that was to say, in the course of 10 years the amount of Indian Revenue paid in England had been increased by something very nearly approaching to £1,000,000 sterling. Well, under these circumstances, he hoped the House would not hastily take a step which would have the effect of increasing the burden upon the Indian people. In the course of this very week, when it was proposed that this House should interfere with the Government of India, the objection was raised—which, he confessed, he thought in that case frivolous—that we were about to interfere by applying a principle which was independent of local considerations, or to institute a change which was not of local application. But here, that night, they had a very different case before them—a very intricate and a very difficult case, and he sincerely hoped that the House would not, upon an *ex parte* statement, or, at the best, upon any insufficient information, take a step which would add to the burdens of the already heavily taxed people of India.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) said, he rose with pleasure to support the proposal of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Hull (Mr. King), and to add his voice to that of the hon. Member for Hampstead (Mr. Hoare), in asking the Government to grant them at least a Committee to inquire into this undoubted case of hardship. He supported his hon. Friend's Motion with all the more pleasure, because the hon. Gentleman had declared so clearly that the Motion was intended as no disparagement in any way to those other glorious Services of India—the Covenanted Service and the Military Service—which had done so much for the traditions of the British name in India. But they did, in this Motion, protest against what was merely the survival of the ancient privileges of the Covenanted bureaucracy in India, in so far as they pressed heavily on the Uncovenanted Body. They wished to see an end put to these privileges only in so far as they pressed heavily on the Uncovenanted Body. At that late hour of the evening (11-50 p.m.) he would content himself with dealing with one or two of the points which were raised by his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst). That hon. Gentleman called the attention of the House to the fact—or what he said was the fact—that the Natives of India were desirous of, and were capable of, filling many of the appointments now held by English Uncovenanted Servants. Well, to that he would answer at once, that so far as they were able and were qualified to hold those appointments, and were willing to do so, the Government was bound to admit them. Therefore, the Motion of his hon. Friend did not touch that point at all. And, in addition to that, he might say that so far as the pensions of the Native Members of the Uncovenanted Service were concerned, being paid in India, they were at the rate which the Natives had been led to expect, and the same statement, of course, applied to European officers who elected to reside in India after the expiration of their period of service. These officers got their rupees—and the House was perfectly well aware that in India the rupee had not lost its purchasing power. That was the whole point at issue—that the rupee in India had retained its old purchasing power; but that when it was sent home, it had lost it to the extent of something like 30 per cent or more. Further, with regard to the objection of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India, that the Natives might receive these appointments, he would call the hon. Gentleman's attention to the definition that the Government of India itself had laid down as to Uncovenanted appointments now specially referred to. In a despatch which had already been quoted in this debate—the despatch of 4th October, 1870—the Government of India thus described the Service of which they were speaking—

> "It has been established that many important offices cannot ordinarily be filled either by Natives of India or by the officers of the Civil Service or by the Staff Corps."

That was the Service of which he was speaking. These appointments could not be filled, as the Government of India told them, by the Natives of India. These Uncovenanted Civil Servants were men holding offices of a nature that could not ordinarily be filled even by Covenanted civilians. If these offices the House were dealing with could have been filled by Covenanted civilians, the difficulty would not have arisen. Take only two Departments out of the number mentioned by the hon. Gentleman—take the Department of Public Works, the Engineers—or take the State Professors in the Government Colleges connected with the Education Department there. Surely, they could not send a Covenanted civilian, who had simply passed a competitive examination here on the general results of a liberal education, to build bridges or set up barracks, nor could they be expected, able as they were, to enter the Public Service to lecture to undergraduates of the Calcutta University on the lunar theory or other high subjects of learning. These, he ventured to state, were typical of the services of those for whom they were pleading that evening. These gentlemen were specialists. They fulfilled special duties which could not be fulfilled by any other class of public servants. That was the answer to what he might call the academic objection of his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India, when he told them that the Covenanted civilians had their privileges, because they had passed a very difficult examination, whereas these Uncovenanted Servants of whom he spoke had not passed this examination. Of course, these Uncovenanted Servants passed no examination; and why? Because examination would be no test whatever of the particular qualifications required in these Uncovenanted Servants. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary would take his (Sir Roper Lethbridge's) word for it that he knew the Education Department of Bengal thoroughly, and that he could say that there were 38 officers of that Department, of whom no less than 20 were first-class graduates of either Oxford or Dublin, or wranglers of Cambridge. Five of those gentlemen in the Calcutta University alone were Fellows of the Colleges of Cambridge. Take the Professors of Mathematics in the Calcutta University. There was, first, Professor Clarke, who was third wrangler at Cambridge in the very year preceding that in which the Under Secretary of State for India took the same distinguished academical position. Then there was the Professor of Literature in that University, Mr. Dawnay, who was a senior classic and Fellow of Trinity College in the same year as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan). These, then, were the men — these were the specialists. He now passed to another objection raised by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary. He had told them that the pension of the Covenanted Civil Service was very much larger than the highest pension awarded to the Uncovenanted Servants, because a portion of the money annually paid to them in gold had been contributed by them as deductions from their pay; but surely all pensions were of the nature of deductions from pay, and these deductions were simply deferred pay. Large deductions were made in the case of the Covenanted civilians; but large additions had been made to the pay in the first instance, so that the deductions made to increase the pensions could well be borne. The remedies for the grievances which had been so eloquently expressed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Hull were not far to seek, and he felt sure that if a small Committee composed of impartial Members of the House were to inquire into the subject they would readily find the remedies. The first step which then should be taken, as had been frequently stated, should be to provide that there should always be on the Viceroy's Council at Simla, a representative of the Uncovenanted Civil Service. There were at present there, representatives not only of the aggregate Covenanted Civil Service, but of almost every local branch of it. If the Madras Covenanted Civil Service was not represented, it was because it did not think that it should be, or did not care to be, and so with all the other branches; and when they had this great and important Uncovenanted Civil Service absolutely unrepresented, it was idle to expect from the Secretary of State or the Under Secretary adequate treatment for it. He did trust that Her Majesty's Government would make some concession to the eloquent demands of his hon. Friend the Member for Central Hull. He could assure them that the greatest dissatisfaction had already arisen in India on account of the meagre results which had flowed from the Public Service Commission, of which the Under Secretary had spoken to-night. He (Sir Roper Lethbridge) confessed that, for himself, he expected no very great results from that Commission, for on it there were an enormous preponderance of officials representing the Covenanted Service, whilst there was hardly a single member on it representing the Uncovenanted Service. The greatest discontent existed in the Service—a fact which in any but an extremely loyal service would be a most serious matter. He asked for no generous treatment for the Uncovenanted Civil Servants in India, but simply asked that their claims might be dealt with in a spirit of justice and equity.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he thought it would be discourteous to several hon. Members who had asked questions of the Government since the reply of the Under Secretary of State for India, if some response were not made from that Bench; but after the long discussion which had taken place, he could assure the House that he would not trespass on its attention for more than a few minutes. He thought that the main question which had been brought before the House that evening was this—whether the fall in the rupee entitled the members of the Uncovenanted Service to be paid their pensions in sterling, instead of in Indian currency. That was a subject upon which the arguments on both sides had been so clearly stated, that no inquiry before a Select Committee could throw further light upon it. It was a question in which there were two conflicting considerations — one was sympathy with the Uncovenanted Civil Servants who had suffered grievously through the fall in the rupee; and the other was, the most grave consideration whether in regard to this one particular class of officials they ought, without the consent of the Indian Government, and against the views of its representatives, to lay it down that pensions should be paid in sterling at the expense of the Indian taxpayer. That was the simple question which, he thought, was before the House. There were other grievances which had been mentioned, but a special debate had been raised in order to secure what the hon. Member for Central Hull did not call a legal claim, but what he called justice in the matter of the payment of these pensions to the Uncovenanted Civil Servants. With regard to the general position, he thought the hon. Gentleman who spoke earlier in the debate was not correct in saying that the Covenanted and Uncovenanted Servants had entered under similar circumstances. The hon. Member had represented one class as under the patronage of the Home Government, and the other as under the patronage of the Indian Government.

MR. MACNEILL said, he did not say that. What he said was that in the Uncovenanted Service there were two sources of patronage; the source at home, where the objects were under specially favourable conditions; and the source in India, where they were under favourable conditions. He had said that both classes had really entered for precisely the same duties, and that the different circumstances were very galling.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, the Covenanted Service stood in a different position from the Uncovenanted, the former being qualified by an expensive education. There was no patronage. He accepted the explanation of the hon. Gentleman, but did not want it to go forth that there was any special privilege enjoyed by Covenanted Servants. The House had been appealed to on behalf of the Uncovenanted Servants as if they were its servants, and as if the Indian Government had great wealth at its disposal to be generous with to them. They had been asked why they should exact their claims as Shylock's; but he would remind the House, as the Under Secretary had shown in his most clear and convincing speech, that what they were asked to do was at the expense of the Indian taxpayer. No doubt, the fact of being paid in Indian currency was a grievance which was shared by a vast number of the servants of the Indian Government. If to relieve the Civil Servants of India from the loss they suffered in consequence of the depreciation of the rupee, they were to pay them in sterling, they would have to pay a vast amount of other salaries in sterling also. That was an argument used by the Under Secretary, and no reply had as yet been made to it. The Government did not resist this proposal from any want of sympathy with the Uncovenanted Civil Servants, who, like a great number of other most meritorious Servants of the Indian Government, suffered great hardship from the fall in the value of the rupee. But he ventured to hope the House would not take its stand on the principle that this loss should be met in the case of one particular class, when it was clear that it would be impossible to stop at that class, and that the effect would be that, without consultation with the representatives of India, at a time when the burdens of the Indian Government were very heavy, they would make a very large increase to those burdens.

Mr. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, he was not satisfied with either the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) or that of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen). ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen cheered too soon—he was not quite satisfied with those speeches, because they left out an argument which appeared to him more cogent for their case than any they had used. He felt the force of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he might have made it still more convincing. The hon. Member for North Kensington (Sir Roper Lethbridge) said that Uncovenanted Servants serving in India had suffered no loss whatever; they were paid in rupees, and rupees had suffered no depreciation in India; consequently these Civil Servants commanded the same resources they ever expected to command. But then the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke of the "grievous hardship" suffered by members of the Uncovenanted Service who, residing in England, had their pensions paid in the equivalent for rupees in English pounds sterling. Now, he demurred altogether to this assumption. It was admitted by the hon. Member for North Kensington that Uncovenanted Servants residing in India were receiving just as much as they expected to receive. In England their rupees did not command the same amount in pounds sterling as they would have done 20 years ago; but did the same amount in pounds sterling command more or less of the commodities of life in England than they did 20 years ago? He would not say that precisely the same cause as produced the depreciation in the value of rupees depreciated the value of other commodities, but it was an undoubted fact that, concurrently with the depreciation of rupees, there had been a depreciation in other commodities, so that a man who expected for his 5,000 rupees £500, and now only received £400, had with the latter sum very nearly as much command over the requirements of life as £500 would have given him 20 years ago. Therefore, the annuitant who received his pay in England had suffered no more damage than if he received it in India, for though he did not receive the same amount of pounds sterling, the purchasing power of the pound having increased, had a greater command over the resources and means of life than it had 20 years ago. Admitting this—and it could not but be admitted the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer should take up this as stronger ground, or he would find it difficult to defend the Indian Exchequer against the demands of annuitants at home. He must take his stand on the ground that there was a fall in the value of other commodities beside rupees; and though there had been a nominal reduction in the income of the annuitant, he had as much command over the means of life as his larger receipts in India commanded.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 166; Noes 55: Majority 111.—(Div. List, No. 135.)

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ARMY (INDIA)—GRIEVANCES OF THE OFFICERS ON THE GENERAL LIST.

OBSERVATIONS.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) said, as he was precluded by the Rules of Debate from actually making the Motion of which he had given Notice, he would content himself with very briefly putting before the House a statement of the case of those officers on the General List of the Indian Army whose cause he wished to plead. He trusted the House would not be withheld from the consideration of this question by its undoubted technical character, and still less by the fact that it was for a comparatively small number of persons he asked consideration. It should be remembered that the number of men would have been very much larger if the body of General List officers had not been engaged for well nigh 30 years past in serving their Queen and country in a fiery climate, under a burning sun, and thereby considerably lessened their numbers. If he had to apologize to the House for the technical character of the subject he had the honour to submit to the House, he would beg leave to remind hon. Members that it was not the officers on the General List who had made the subject technical, nor was it the Indian Government, but it was the India Office who had sheltered themselves behind a technical objection to the claims that had been urged upon them. There were two points in the case which made it unique among cases of Indian grievances. The first point was one which, he was sure, the House would regard as one of very great importance—indeed, a point to which he very earnestly asked the attention of the House, and that was, that the Government of India, the Commander-in-Chief in India, and all the Indian Military Departments, strongly urged the redress of this monstrous injustice. It was only—and he was sure his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) would not contradict this statement—only the Secretary of State and his Council who refused that justice for which he was pleading. The India Office just now had in the House of Commons a Representative who was undoubtedly unrivalled for his abilities; and, therefore, it was to be feared that the Office had of late been tempted to brazen out injustices which otherwise they would not dare to defend. He would appeal to his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India to treat this question as if he were the Representative directly of the Government of India and the Commander-in-Chief in India, and not of the Secretary of State and the Indian Council in London; and he would appeal to the House not to allow any lack of skill on his part, in laying the case before them, to prejudice the cause of those for whom he was pleading. The second point he would submit to the consideration of the House as important in this connection was, that this grievance was the last of a long series of grievances that ensued on the amalgamation of the Indian with the British Army after the Mutiny. Many Members would remember the burning dissatisfaction that arose throughout India by reason of the measures taken at the time of that amalgamation. Every one of the objections then taken in India to those measures, every grievance that had been alleged, had been in turn examined and redressed by the Secretary of State, with the exception of this one. This was the last, and he did hope that the Secretary of State and the India Office would now at last be pleased to give way to the wishes of the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, and would consent to the redress of this grievance. No doubt, there was some Members of the House who would be in some doubt as to who precisely are the officers on the General List of the Indian Army. A very high authority at the India Office—of course, a layman—told him not long ago that, in his opinion, officers on the General List must mean "general officers" of the Indian

Army. Well, they were not; they were officers of a much lower rank. They were officers who were presented to cadetships by the Directors of the old East India Company, just as all the old local officers of the Indian Army were presented; but in the case of those for whom he was now speaking, there was this peculiarity, that between the time of their nomination and the time when they would have been gazetted to their regiments in India, the rule of the East India Company had come to an end. In many cases the regiments to which they would have been appointed a year or two previously had meantime mutinied, and the result was there were no regiments to appoint them to when they arrived in India. From February, 1859, to December, 1861, these officers were allowed by the Secretary of State a certain option to which he would presently refer, and, with the special permission of the Secretary of State, they elected to remain local officers. At the present moment, they were only 162 in number. Their contention was that, being allowed to remain local officers, so also ought they to be allowed to retain the privileges that then attached and still belong to local officers. Of these local officers, he claimed that these General List officers were the last survivors. The privileges they asked for properly belonged to the old Local Service, and were large and valuable, so far as pensions were concerned, and they had always been looked forward to by these officers for a series of years, until they discovered that they had been living in a "fool's paradise." They expected to get these terms until, in 1882, they found themselves placed in a different category and in a different position to their colleagues, who had preceded them only by a year in the Local Service. They were not even allowed the advantages which were granted to members of their own body who, in 1861, had elected to join the Staff Corps. Nor was it any consolation to them that junior members of the Staff Corps, who joined after 1861, were cut down to the same level as themselves, for it was felt that the level was both for juniors and General List officers a very hard and inadequate measure. This hard measure was meted out to officers of the General List in defiance of the most solemn and specific pledge made in 1864. In the Royal Warrant of June 16, 1864, occurred these words—

> "The general promotion of Indian officers will be accelerated, and to every officer, including cadets who entered as late as December, 1861, his promotion to every grade, with the pay thereto belonging, as if the whole Native Army of India had been kept up, is assured, and his right to an Indian pension is maintained."

These were Her Majesty's words in the Royal Warrant to those whose cause he was pleading on the present occasion; and he asked that the Secretary of State and Council would consent to allow the Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief to do what they wished to do, and maintain intact the promises of Her Most Gracious Majesty. Of course, at the time of which he was speaking—1864—the question of pensions had not arisen; but by the statement he had read from the terms of the Royal Warrant, it was perfectly clear that it was understood by those who framed the Warrant that officers were guaranteed in all the privileges of all local officers, including, of course, that of pensions. It was not until 1867 that the first blow was struck at the privileges of these officers. In that year, their promotion had grown somewhat rapidly, because a considerable number of their body had left for the Staff Corps, and the Government at once seized on this fact—promotion, they said, was growing too rapidly—and they issued a General Order, on September 6, 1867, summarily stopping all promotion above the rank of captain to be gazetted in future by the fixed rate of service as in the Staff Corps. But it was in 1882 that the final crushing blow was delivered against the rights of these officers—the particular blow against which he was inveighing, and that was the grievance for which he sought redress. This new Order gave officers on the General List, in some cases—in many cases—not much more than half the pensions they would have been entitled to if they had been allowed to retain the old privileges of the Local Service to which they belonged. From the ranks of that Local Service they were only separated by the mere accident of the transfer of the government from the East India Company to the Crown just at the moment of their appointment, and he trusted the House would consider this accident was not sufficient ground for depriving a large and meritorious body of officers of their just rights. This, on the face of it, seemed to be a direct breach of faith. What had the Government to say in reply? He trusted the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State would not condescend to use the only argument that it seemed to him had ever yet been put forward on behalf of the Secretary of State's ruling—an argument that, it must be confessed, had some strictly legal force, though in somewhat of that Shylock spirit of which the House had heard. At all events it had a force that these officers could not resist. The Secretary of State took his stand upon the declaration of these officers made when boys entering the Service, by writing "Yes" upon the document, declaring they would submit to any changes the Government might choose to impose on their conditions of service. In honour, these gentlemen were bound by this declaration of their boyhood, and they would manfully abide by it; but they said it was hard to be held to this declaration to such an extent as that to which the Government drove them, by depriving them of nearly half their pensions. If it be held that a Secretary of State was bound on sound principles to demand his "pound of flesh" in this matter, then he would say most distinctly the declaration of these boys when they entered the Service was most distinctly barred by the ruling of the Secretary of State in the General Order 966 of October, 1861, in which the option to elect which Service they would choose, and which was taken from them, was directly restored to them. The Secretary of State ruled that "option may be given them"—that was the General List officers—"in common with other young officers, to volunteer for the General or Local Service or for the Staff Corps. They were permitted, by special order of the Secretary of State—for this was a correction in answer to a question addressed to the India Office, a correction which was in the handwriting of the Secretary of State literally under his hand—allowing the option. If this was permitted, they should also have the privileges of that Service they chose to elect for, and as if to explain and confirm this order, the Warrant he quoted earlier, issued in 1864, declared that their rights would be maintained just as if the whole Native Army had been kept up, and especially that their rights to an Indian pension would be maintained. He ventured to ask the Government to allow the Government of India to carry out this promise. These men had been serving their country all these years in India, some of them had attained to the highest distinctions, some had been engaged in most perilous and creditable enterprizes in Central Asia; and, in various ways, all had deserved well of their country, for which they had toiled in a dangerous climate. He trusted their claims would be deemed worthy of consideration, and the Secretary of State for India would do, not a generous, but a just thing, if he entertained those claims favourably.

.THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) said, this was a grievance which hardly anybody understood, and which it was very difficult for anybody to qualify himself to make a speech upon; and he was afraid it would be quite impossible for him, in the short time before the House suspended its proceedings, to do full justice to the importance of the subject. It was one of those cases of which there were many which lay at the India Office for the recreation of successive Under Secretaries of State. They all had been considered; they had been decided over and over again; but so sure as a fresh Government came into Office and a fresh Secretary of State took up his position in Downing Street, these cases cropped up again, and then there had to be another inquiry, and yet another decision. He believed the last formal decision was pronounced by Lord Kimberley, and probably his hon. Friend opposite (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) would be prepared to support the ruling of his former Chief. If the House would allow him, in a summary way, to describe this case, he would say that these officers on the General List were an extremely fortunate body of men. They were men who, under special circumstances, had been promised commissions in the Indian Army, but, before they were gazetted, that Army had ceased to exist. He was invited by the hon. Member for North Kensington (Sir Roper Lethbridge) to "brazen it out," and he could only brazen it out by giving the House the benefit of the advice he had received from his technical advisers, for he could not presume to enter into a contest with hon. and gallant Gentlemen on military matters, or venture to rely on his own opinion in support of the conclusion at which he had arrived. These officers on the General List were promised appointments in the Indian Army, which, however, had ceased to exist before they were gazetted. In these circumstances it was decided to place them upon what was called the General List of the Indian Army. The present question did not permanently affect all the officers on the General List, but only some of them. Some of its officers volunteered for general service, went into the Queen's regiments, were scattered over the face of the globe, and ceased to be Indian officers; others went into the Indian Staff Corps, and it was only the residuum remaining on the General List that this grievance affected. These officers on the General List did duty in the local Service along with the previously existing local officers of the Indian Army; but they were never gazetted with them; they were kept on the General List, and it was especially stated that they were liable to such alterations in the conditions of their service as might thereafter be decided on. Of course, they expected to be treated fairly and liberally, and fairly and liberally he was informed they had been treated. They had all the privileges and rights of promotion and prospects of succession to what were called colonel's allowances as they had when they first went to India. But it happened that in 1866 it was discovered that the old officers of the local Indian Army had been subjected, by the formation of the Staff Corps, to an infringement of the Parliamentary Guarantee, which had been given them under the "Henley" Clause, before any officer of the General List had been gazetted to the Army. The officers of the old Indian Army had had reserved to them at the time when the Act for the Government of India—the original Act of 1858—was passed, very special privileges by a clause in that Act that went by the name of the "Henley" Clause. That clause, in general terms, guaranteed to the officers of the Indian Army, at the time when the Government of India was changed, all the rights, privileges, promotion, and so on, they at that time possessed—it was a sort of guarantee of the vested interests of officers of the old Indian Army. But it was found in 1866 that the terms of this clause had been broken; and thereupon, on the Report of a Royal Commission, there was given to the officers of the local Army, but not to those on the General List — who, as explained before, did not fall under the same category—a certain number of privileges and advantages which he would not now trouble the House by enumerating in consideration of the breach of the "Henley" Clause. But these were given to officers of the local Indian Army, and not to officers on the General List, because only the first-mentioned were entitled to them. The General List officers were not entitled to the operation of the "Henley" Clause, because they joined the Army after the Government of India Act containing that Act had been passed. Shortly stated, the grievance of these officers was that they did not in 1866 share in the special privileges given to Indian local officers, for a special reason—namely, that they were entitled to the protection of the "Henley" Clause, and to a re-adjustment of their position in accordance with the views of the Royal Commission. But, as regards the officers on the General List, he was informed there was no grievance whatsoever arising out of what was done in 1866 for a quite distinct body of officers, and there was no reason why the present Secretary of State should take the position of a Court of Appeal against his Predecessors, and reverse the decision which had invariably been arrived at whenever this question came up for consideration.

Mr. WHITBREAD (Bedford) said, he agreed that this was a question difficult to understand; and even the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India—who could usually put a case clearly—had failed to do so in this instance. He (Mr. Whitbread) had that day had the duty of presenting a Petition from a constituent who was one of the officers whose claims had been urged. He joined directly after the Mutiny, and he was made to sign a paper to say that he submitted to all the alterations that might be made in the Service. He was compelled to sign the document; he could not have got his commission without it; but that paper was understood at the time by this officer, and it was to be presumed by every officer who signed, to refer to any Regulations the Government might make on taking over the Indian Army, and amalgamating it with the British Army; but it could hardly be thought by the officer to whom he referred, or any of those who joined with him, that long years after a Minute would be issued that so materially altered those Regulations. This was the case of his friend. He joined, he signed the paper, and was prepared to accept any conditions laid down at the time. When the Warrant was issued in 1864, their Magna Charta, as it was called, declaring that all rights and privileges should remain as if the Indian Army had been maintained in its strength—this was the substance, though not the exact words—then these officers felt themselves in a secure position; and it was not until long after they found out that promotion was to be regulated by the speed of promotion in the Staff Corps, while they were not to share in any advantages the Staff Corps had. That was one of their grievances, and the main one. He was aware that this question had been discussed before, and he did not expect the House would re-open the question, which had been decided by previous Secretaries of State; but, undoubtedly, there was good ground of complaint that the Order issued by the India Office was not clear, and officers were buoyed up through long service in India by hopes that, in the end, they found were not to be realized. It was much to be regretted that public servants, who spent the best part of their lives in India, should at the end of their term leave the Service with this sore rankling in their minds. The Order referred to, read by any ordinary man, would lead to the belief that these officers had a real and substantial grievance. He was not complaining of the amount of pension ultimately awarded to them; but he thought they had a right to complain of being misled by the Order issued.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine) said, from his Indian experience, as head of the military finance, and as a Member of the Commission engaged in the drawing-up of the amalgamation scheme, he had no hesitation in saying that the misunderstanding as to the position of the Officers on the General List arose entirely from the vague and indefinite Orders emanating from the Directors and Secretary of State and subsequent action of the India Office. When the Bengal Mutiny led to that Army being deprived of Regiments, a large number of young officers went out to India, and they were required to sign the declaration referred to, because it was felt that the Governor General should be free to make such arrangements for the posting as the work of the Commission might render necessary for carrying out the amalgamation. But in the Orders of 1861 forming the Staff Corps, the India Office failed to define the rights of these young officers. He had no hesitation in saying that, whatever conditions were attached to General List officers, they ought to have equal advantages to those retained on the Staff Corps. Any fault, any grievance there was, arose from the action of the India Office.

Main Question, by leave, *withdrawn*.

WAYS AND MEANS—Committee upon *Monday* next.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1882—SCHEMES OF THE COMMISSIONERS.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. H. F. H. ELLIOT (Ayrshire, N.) said, he had given Notice of a Motion in favour of appointing a Select Committee to consider such schemes of the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Commissioners as might be laid upon the Table of the House, but it would be absurd for him to attempt to introduce the subject at that time of night. He begged to withdraw the motion for the present.

NATIONAL DEFENCE [REMUNERATION, &c.].—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he wished to ask whether the Government really proposed to press the Motion for going into Committee, and to take an important Resolution at such a time—within a few minutes of 1 o'clock? The ominous visage of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer betokened a keen desire to dispose of his Resolution in regard to the duty on bottled wines. For himself, he confessed he took a great interest in bottled wines; but that interest was not sufficient to enable him to enter on the discussion now. If the Motion that the Speaker leave the Chair were persisted in he should take a Division against it.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he would remind the hon. and learned Member that this was but the preliminary stage. There would then be the Report of the Resolution of the Committee, which should be taken at a time to allow of discussion, and then there would be the second reading of the clause.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The duty is too high.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he was most anxious to have the matter settled, and he had hoped for an extension of the courtesy that had allowed similar formal Resolutions to pass yesterday.

Committee *deferred* till *Monday* next.

MOTION.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 13) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Long, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to the Borough of Wolverhampton, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Ritchie.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 287.]

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (SPECIAL REPORT).

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report.

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY accordingly *reported* from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures: Mr. Henry Chaplin, Sir Edward Clarke, Mr. Goschen, and Mr. Hanbury; and had appointed in substitution: Colonel Eyre, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Tomlinson, and Sir Richard Webster.

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY further *reported;* That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures, in respect of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill [*Lords*], and the Railway and Canal Companies' Charges Bill: Mr. Barnes; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Hingley.

Sir JOHN MOWBRAY further *reported* from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure: Mr. Tomlinson and Sir Richard Webster; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Edward Clarke and Mr. Milvain.

Report to lie upon the Table.

It being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put till *Monday* next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 11*th June*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Sat First in Parliament—The Lord De Tabley, after the death of his father.

Select Committee—Elections, *appointed.*

Public Bills — *Select Committee* — Pharmacy Act (Ireland), 1875, Amendment* (112), *nominated.*

Third Reading—Suffragans' Act Amendment* (83), and *passed.*

Provisional Order Bills — *First Reading*— Local Government (No. 3)* (139); Local Government (No. 4)* (140); Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 6)* (141); Local Government (Gas)* (142); Tramways (No. 1)* (143); Oyster and Mussel Fisheries (West Loch Tarbert)* (145).

*Committee—Report—*Local Government* (113); Local Government (No. 2)* (114); Local Government (Poor Law)* (115); Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 2)* (116); Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 3)* (117); Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough, &c.)* (104); Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse)* (105).

ELECTIONS (INTERVENTION OF PEERS, &c.)

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

The Earl of MILLTOWN, in rising to move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed 'to consider the Sessional Order with reference to the intervention of Peers and Prelates in Parliamentary elections,'"

said, that at the beginning of last Session the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) moved that the usual Sessional Order passed annually by the House of Commons with regard to the interference of Peers at elections should be discontinued, on the ground that it was never enforced, and was therefore useless. That Motion was not agreed to; but the matter was referred to a Select Committee, presided over by the Postmaster General. In their Report the Committee stated—

> "That the Sessional Order appears to be a declaration by the House of Commons of its privileges, as well as of what, in the opinion of the House, is the Common Law of the land; that such declaration was first made in 1641, and since 1700 has been renewed annually in almost identical terms; that, so far as can be ascertained, this declaration of the Common Law has never been controverted by the House of Lords or any judicial tribunal; that it has been recognized by the Courts as a declaration of the law; and that, although a rescission of the order would not alter the Common Law, it would be calculated to give rise to an idea that the law had been incorrectly stated, or had become obsolete. The Committee therefore recommend that the Sessional Order be continued."

He feared that if their Lordships kept silent after the publication of this Report they would be held to accept the conclusions arrived at by the Committee. This, in his opinion, they ought not to do, because the conclusions were not only not in accordance with the evidence that was given, but in direct conflict with it. The Sessional Order of the House of Commons declared that it was an infringement of the liberties of that House for a Peer to concern himself in the election of a Member, and this the Report stated to be a declaration of the Common Law, and so recognized by the Courts. To those statements he demurred. He did not deny that for a Peer to vote had been declared to be illegal, but he absolutely denied that for a Peer to "concern" himself in an election had been so declared. To this word "concern" he took great exception, because its significance was so very wide. In the present day it behoved the Peers to take care to retain any rights and privileges connected with Parliamentary Elections which they might possess. The House of Commons had never been backward in arrogating rights to itself. It had arrogated to itself the sole right to tax the nation, and the sole right to make and unmake Ministries; and not a year passed but it solemnly, and without reprimand from the Speaker, debated the question whether their Lordships' House should or should not continue to exist as a part of the Constitution, a question which he took the liberty of telling them that they had no more right to discuss than that of the existence of the Monarchy. This being the attitude of the House of Commons, they ought not to part lightly with any of the rights which were left to them. If the Commons Sessional Order was a declaration of the Common Law, it must be consistent with immemorial custom; but it was not so. Ever since we had had any history of Parliament it abounded in instances of the interference of Peers at elections. And the interferences were not such as might have occurred at modern elections, but they were interferences *vi et armis*, Peers being attended by soldiers and retainers, and interfering in a forcible way with the elections. Up to 1586 disputed elections to the House of Commons were tried not by the Commons, but by the King, the Chancellor, or the House of Lords, and for 100 years afterwards the practice was not settled as to who was or who was not the proper authority to try them; nor was it till the Revolution that it was finally conceded by their Lordships' House that the House of Commons had the exclusive right to settle their own disputed elections. It would be allowed that this was a tolerable amount of interference with the elections to the other House. But there was a stronger custom still. It was customary for the return to the Writs to be signed not by a Sheriff, but by the great Lords, or by their attorneys in their names. Many examples of such return will be found in Prynne's Parliamentary Writs. What was more remarkable was that if this interference of Peers was inconsistent with the Common Law, there was no instance of any Peer having suffered on account of the practice, nor was there any record of its having been declared illegal by a Court of Law. If it was not contrary to the Common Law, was it contrary to Statute Law? The only Statute bearing upon the question was 3 *Edward* I., c. 5, which was directed against interference by force of arms or menace with freedom of election; and which is to this effect—"The King commandeth upon great forfeiture that no nobleman or other (*nul haut homme n'autre*) by force of arms, or malice, or menacing, shall disturb any to make free election." And by no process of reasoning could it be made to apply specifically to Peers alone. No Statute could be cited that had any bearing upon the question of the legitimate interference of Peers at Parliamentary Elections. As to the instances of a Sessional Order of similar character on which the Committee founded their Report, the first occurred by the Long Parliament, in 1641, and it could hardly be cited as a Constitutional precedent. And the Resolution passed was not the least in point, because it was directed against the practice of Peers sending letters to the constituencies to nominate Members, not merely to recommend them. Froude gave an instance of what these letters were, and it is not to be wondered at that the Commons protested against such a practice; its existence, however, proves the custom of the Peers to interfere most seriously at elections. The only case in which the House of Commons succeeded in inflicting a certain amount of injury was the case of the Bishop of Worcester and Mr. Lloyd, his son, who was not a Peer. Sir John Packington complained, among other things, that the Bishop solicited his clergy to vote against him; and the Resolution which was passed by the House of Commons was to the following effect:—

> "That it appears to this House that the conduct of the Bishop of Worcester and his son, in order to the hindering of the election of a Member for the County of Worcester, was malicious, un-Christian, and arbitrary, and was a high violation of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of England."

There was nothing in the Resolution referring to improper interference by the Bishop as a Peer. A Petition was presented to Queen Anne, asking that the Bishop might be dismissed; and the Queen, having expressed her sorrow at what had happened, ordered that the Bishop should no longer hold the office of Almoner. The House of Commons thus succeeded in depriving the Bishop of a certain portion of his income. The charge against the Bishop, however, was not that he had acted improperly as a Peer. The noble Earl, having referred to other cases mentioned in the Report, in which Peers were charged with interfering at elections, but where no action was taken in consequence, although the interference was proved, quoted the opinions of Lord Brougham, Lord Campbell, and Sir Robert Peel upon the subject. The noble Earl, having also quoted the opinions expressed in 1848 in connection with the Stamford election Petition by Mr. Page Wood, Mr. Joseph Hume, and Lord John Russell, in favour of the just and legitimate influence which Peers might fairly exercise, went on to remark that it was now for their Lordships to decide what action they should take on that subject. For himself, he had come to the conviction that their duty was clear. He thought it was their duty to take up the challenge which had been thrown down by the House of Commons, and to ascertain by a strict examination what their rights were. If the contention of the House of Commons was correct, and if their Lordships were to take no part whatever in the political contests which were surging on all sides around them, and on the result of which the fate of this country and of the Empire depended—if they were bound to look on, as it were, with the serene indifference with which from their Olympian heights the gods of Epicurus gazed on the struggles and misfortunes of mankind, without having any influence whatever upon their issue, then they would bow to the inevitable, and submit with what grace they could to their singular destiny. But if, as he thought, they could show that that arrogant assumption of the Lower House was a vain and foolish thing, fondly imagined, warranted by no just principle, sanctified by no precedent, encouraged by no law, then their Lordships could, with a clear conscience and a firm hand, inscribe on their Journals their confident and earnest repudiation of so audacious a claim. The noble Earl concluded by making the Motion standing in his name.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed 'To consider the Sessional Order with reference to the intervention of Peers and Prelates in Parliamentary Elections' which has been communicated to this House."—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salisbury): My Lords, I have listened with great interest to the remarks of my noble

Friend, but I do not propose to follow him into the contentious portion of his observations. It is not necessary at this stage that we should deal with them. The question is rather what are we to do with the Resolution of the House of Commons which was passed last year, and which has been communicated to your Lordships, and whose existence we cannot pass over. The Sessional Order of the House of Commons, to which reference has been made, is an Order which has existed for a great many years without having exerted any perceptible influence on the proceedings of the House, and had it been left in that position I should have much preferred it. It is an interesting piece of archæology; it refers to a state of things which no longer exists, and is directed against abuses which in their day were very real, but which are prevented in our day by the action of the new police. If the House of Commons think it right to continue a historical protest against evils from which they suffered in earlier times, no one can object to it. The proceedings of both Houses are full of these strange antiquarian relics, which are interesting and not noxious. At the beginning of every Parliament we solemnly and formally constitute a Committee of your Lordships' House to hear appeals from Guienne. I do not know that that Resolution has ever done any harm. But if we were to found upon it the doctrine that, as the French Government has taken no notice of it for 400 years, it has acquiesced in it, and that, therefore, Bordeaux is placed under the English Crown, I think we should very soon receive from the French Government a diplomatic communication on the subject. We are in some such position as this. A Committee of the House of Commons has put on record that we have not challenged the fact that that Sessional Order is good law, and that, therefore, we must be taken to have tacitly assented to the fact that it is good law. Now, I think we can speak for ourselves, and must not allow others to speak for us. When they have said that we have admitted a particular formula as good law, I think we shall do well to ascertain what that formula is, and what is the meaning of the admission that we are taken to have made. What decision the Committee which your Lordships may appoint will come to I do not attempt to forecast. All I can say is that I think it would not be consistent with the practice of this House, or with the respect which is due to the other House, to pass this Report over in entire silence; and, therefore, without expressing any opinion on the contentious matter to which the noble Earl has alluded, I would advise your Lordships to accede to the suggestion he has made, and to appoint a Committee to consider the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons.

Motion *agreed to.*

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—LEGISLATION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord ABERDARE said, he rose to ask Her Majesty's Government, When the promised Bill amending the Acts dealing with reformatory and industrial schools will be introduced? He trusted that he should not be considered as needlessly occupying the time of the House if he prefaced his Question with a few explanatory remarks. On March 1, 1882, a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the condition of the certified reformatories, industrial schools, and day industrial schools of the United Kingdom. Of that Commission he had the honour to be Chairman. It included in its numbers, besides many persons of political eminence and of special experience in the question, the present Secretary of War, the President of the Board of Trade, and Lord Norton. It visited many parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, examined many witnesses, and inspected many institutions, and sent in its Report in the autumn of 1883, nearly five years ago. The inquiry had been strongly urged, not by the adversaries, but by the earliest and best friends of these institutions, who alleged that abuses had crept into them which were impairing their usefulness, and would before long damage their credit and imperil their existence. It was impossible to doubt that these institutions had played a very large part in producing that extraordinary decrease of grave crime which had been so frequently remarked upon of late. This must be apparent from the comparative number of juvenile committals in England and Wales between the years 1856 and 1882, the date of their inquiry. These commitments in 1856 amounted to 13,981; in 1882 they had fallen to 5,700, in spite of the enormous increase of population. Their Lordships would probably expect to hear of some corresponding reduction in the number of those institutions and their inmates. But that was far from being the case. The number of reformatories, indeed, in Great Britain had decreased from 62 to 61, while the number of children committed to reformatories, which had attained its highest number in 1887—namely, 1,896—had in 1881 decreased to 1,508. In 1864 there were 4,286 inmates in reformatories. In 1882 the number had increased to 6,601. The number of industrial schools at the time of their inquiry was 120, with every prospect of a rapid increase. In 1864 the number of inmates was 1,668; in 1882 it was 17,614—a more than tenfold increase. Looking at the increase of cost, they found that in 1864 the cost of the reformatories was £96,883; in 1882, £134,204. In the same time the cost of industrial schools had increased from £58,000 to £338,000. He would first deal with the case of reformatories. He had shown the immense decrease in the number of juvenile commitments; and evidence was given by experienced persons, not only of the decrease in numbers, but of the altered character of the youthful offenders—those now committed being, as a rule, of a far less hardened and violent character than formerly. Those committed in recent years, being less deeply steeped in crime and criminal association, were found far more tractable and amenable to discipline and instruction. Yet the numbers committed showed no very sensible diminution, and the Commissioners found themselves compelled to confirm the prevailing impression—that a very large proportion of those committed might have been either treated with slight punishments not involving imprisonment, or, at the worst, committed, when of fitting age, to industrial schools. Among their recommendations would be found the measures they had suggested for securing this object, which he did not think it expedient to enter into at that moment. Turning now to industrial schools, the Commissioners found that the enormous increase in the numbers of those admitted was mainly due to two causes—first, lax administration of the law; secondly, the Elementary Education Act of 1870, which authorized the committal to industrial schools of obstinate truants. That the administration of the law was not only lax but uneven was strikingly shown by the state of things in England and Scotland. While in England the proportion of the population in industrial schools was one in 7,975, in Scotland it was one in 3,757. No possible reason was averred, or could be averred, why twice as many children should be committed to these schools in Scotland as compared with England. They were informed by numerous witnesses that in Scotland children were admitted simply because their parents were in straitened circumstances; and some of these witnesses expressed themselves as being alarmed at the facility with which parents divested themselves of the care of their children and got them into industrial schools. He did not wish to convey the impression that, because Scotland was the greater offender in this case, England was altogether free from the same mischievous weakness. He now turned to the effect of the Education Act of 1870. In the year 1869 the number of those in industrial schools was 6,974. The numbers steadily and rapidly increased until, in 1882, they reached 17,614—an increase largely due to the committal of truants, who, for this, were frequently condemned to five years' detention in industrial schools, where they were supported almost entirely at the public expense. No doubt it was better for the children, and possibly for the State, that they should be so confined rather than be allowed to run wildly about the streets, subjected to every sort of evil influence. But the question was whether the same objects might not be attained by some form of punishment less disproportioned to the offence and equally efficacious. In the opinion of the Commission, these effects had been attained by the establishment of truants schools, which were established under the Elementary Education Act of 1876. At these schools there was no solitary confinement, but a temporary deprivation of liberty, subjection to regular hours, daily school, much drill, some industrial occupation, and very little play. They were, consequently, intensely disliked. In the excellent truant school established at Upton House by the London School Board the average detention of each boy was 10 weeks and two days, and it was found that when these boys were released such had been the effect of this brief and stern discipline that their attendance at school became far more regular than that of other boys. He might add that the managers had the power of releasing such boys upon licence after the detention of only one month. Only six such schools had been established at the date of the Commissioners' inquiry. The results were not in all of them equally good, but they came to the conclusion that, in the great majority of cases, they offered a far better form of reformation than the industrial school. Another useful substitute for long detention in industrial schools was provided by the same Act of 1876, which authorized the establishment of day industrial schools, of which there were 10 in England and two in Scotland at the time of the Commissioners' inquiry. In these the detention was longer than in the truant schools, but the discipline was far less severe. The children were fed and instructed; they were detained from an early hour in the morning to 6 p.m., when they returned home; and the Commission were of the opinion expressed by one of the witnesses that that must be a very bad home which was no better than no home at all. The limitation to the usefulness of these schools was, of course, that they were only applicable to large cities, where the population was near at hand. This objection did not apply to truant schools, where the children were lodged. He might enlarge upon the various substitutes which had been suggested and which were, indeed, partly acted upon at the present moment, and which might be extended with promising results, such as the boarding-out system, which largely prevailed in Scotland, emigration far away from former vicious associations and haunts, training ships by which street Arabs were being converted into young sailors. He might insist upon the great attention given by the Commission to the best means of compelling parents to contribute to the support of their children while detained, fed, and educated in these institutions; but he thought he had said enough to convince their Lordships of the pressing necessity for early legislation in the interests of good government, economy, and public morality.

Lord NORTON asked, if any Bill to be introduced by Her Majesty's Government on the subject of reformatory and industrial schools would be proceeded with this Session in good time, so that the judgment of Parliament might not be anticipated as to the desirability of a continued separation of such schools from the Education Department by any new arrangement of local government? The separation of these schools under the Home Office as matters of police, distinct from other schools, was seriously counteracting the great good which, nevertheless, they have done, and which any care of neglected children must do. With respect to industrial Schools for neglected children no reason could be given for their separation from the School Department. If after due punishment had been inflicted for any crime committed by children, the education in Reformatories was so given that the whole term of education was treated as a police detention, the main object of this very costly rescue from criminal life, in obliterating all criminal association and freely opening employment in industry, was frustrated. The child grew up as a criminal, and even the State threw away and wasted the training which it had been giving at great cost. In 1882 a Royal Commission was urged by Government to look into the working of these Home Office schools, on account of the abuse and waste they were incurring. For four years the Report, so pressed for, had lain neglected, while its object had become more pressing than ever. The Report recommended a transfer to the Education Department of the inspection and aid of these schools. It deprecated the great disadvantages the teachers laboured under in consequence of their detachment from the Education Department. It suggested that only a few special reformatories were wanted for serious juvenile criminality, and that industrial schools should be wholly free from criminal taint. The Managers of these schools seemed inclined to suffer this injury to their work to continue, because they feared the too literary kind of education of the Education Department, and many of them, therefore, would put up with separation from it to keep the schools in their own management. It was curious that at the same time the Education Department was turning to the more industrial and technical sort of education given in these schools. Surely it were wiser to make the School Department suitable for all publicly supported schools than to separate some of the more important schools from the Department as unsuitable for them. Let schools be schools, and prisons prisons, and complete the amended treatment of reformatory and industrial schools, in the Bill proposed, before stereotyping their separation from the School Department by placing them under the new Councils.

EARL BROWNLOW said, the Government were fully alive to the vast importance of the subject which had been brought before the House by his noble Friends. At the end of last Session the Government had undertaken to deal with the subject, and with that view two Bills had been prepared which would be introduced before long. He could assure his noble Friend that he need have no fear of the judgment of Parliament being anticipated on this matter by any provision of the Local Government Bill, and he could promise that the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Bills would be introduced in time to enable any necessary Amendments to be moved in order to make the two Bills coincide. While not able authoritatively to make an announcement on the point, he might say that unless some financial considerations rendered it necessary that the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Bills should be introduced in "another place," looking at the state of Business in the House of Commons, he thought it probable that they would be brought forward in their Lordships' House.

METROPOLIS — INSPECTION OF THEATRES AND MUSIC HALLS.

OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF STRAFFORD, in rising to call attention to recent proposals for the better inspection of theatres and other places of amusement in the Metropolis, and to put a Question on the subject, said, that as there were 50 theatres, 473 music halls, and 35 concert and other halls in London, in which a capital of £4,000,000 was invested, he thought that all would agree that adequate supervision over them was necessary. In the early part of the present Session the Metropolitan Board of Works brought in a Bill asking for further powers with regard to the inspection of such places of amusement, but that Bill was rejected by 115 to 17 votes. Afterwards the hon. Member for the Uxbridge Division of Middlesex (Mr. Dixon Hartland), who had also introduced a bill on this subject, attended at the Home Office with a deputation in which many members of the theatrical profession took part. The proposal of that deputation was that the Home Office should undertake a proper official inspection of theatres and music halls in the Metropolis, and he had been informed by the hon. Member for the Uxbridge Division that the Government more or less promised, if he did not persevere with his Bill, that they would introduce a measure on the subject. He now wished to be informed whether Her Majesty's Government were going to bring forward such a Bill; whether they would give the hon. Member for the Uxbridge Division of Middlesex facilities for proceeding with his Bill; and whether they thought it advisable that the inspection of theatres and other places of amusement in the Metropolis should be postponed until they could be placed under the new County Council?

EARL BROWNLOW said, that the question raised by the noble Earl was undoubtedly a very difficult and complicated one, because the machinery for the inspection of theatres was under several over-lapping and occasionally conflicting jurisdictions. The responsibility for their regulation was divided between the Lord Chamberlain, the Justices, the Metropolitan Board of Works, and the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and no doubt it was advisable that the various powers now exercised by those different authorities should be concentrated. The present state of affairs was most unsatisfactory, and some change would have to be made. The noble Earl had referred to two Bills on this subject—one which had been introduced by the Metropolitan Board of Works had been thrown out on its second reading, and another Bill, which was now in the other House, was awaiting consideration. The principle of the latter Bill was to throw the work of supervision on the Secretary of State for the Home Department. They were aware, however, that great changes were contemplated in Local

Authorities, which, if constituted with great powers and the confidence of the people, might be asked to undertake the duty. He very much doubted whether it would be desirable to at once throw the duty upon them. At the same time, he could not help feeling with Her Majesty's Government that the time might come, and before very long, when it would be desirable that these Local Authorities should undertake the duty of supervising and regulating theatres.

IMPERIAL DEFENCES—DEFENCES AT VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.

OBSERVATIONS.

LORD SUDELEY: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the position and defences of our naval head-quarters and coaling station at Esquimault, in Vancouver's Island, and the superior advantage of Burrand Inlet. This coaling station is of immense importance to us; as your Lordships are aware, it is the only naval station and the only coaling station which we possess in the Pacific Ocean. On the whole of that very large area this is actually the only place where our ships can go for coal, for shelter, and for repair. Its strategic value has of late been increased tenfold. Within the last two or three years Western Canada has been developed at a very considerable rate, and a great railway has been thrown right across from end to end of Canada with its terminus at Burrand's Inlet, inside Vancouver's Island, creating simultaneously a large mercantile traffic, which bids fair year by year to steadily increase. This commercial progress has multiplied our responsibilities, and unfortunately this development has not been with us alone. Russia has slowly but steadily increased her great resources at Vladivostock, and has now a powerful naval arsenal, and a harbour which is described as one of the finest in the world. From this place, if a war were to arise, there could not be the slightest doubt that our great mercantile fleet in the Pacific Ocean would be in the utmost peril, and our naval yard at Esquimault would be the object of immediate attack. The Canadian Pacific Railway is now complete, and, besides its great commercial importance, is our alternative route to India in the event of the Suez Canal becoming blocked; and, if for no other reason, it is of the most urgent Imperial importance that there should be a proper and satisfactory defence of its terminus. Esquimault is the harbour of Victoria, the capital town of the Island of Vancouver. It is land-locked, and a good harbour for a small number of ships. A naval arsenal was established there by us during the Crimean War, when the French and English ships joined there for the purpose of making the disastrous attack on Petropaulovski. Since that time the naval yard has grown, and it is now in a most unsuitable and exposed place. One old gun is to be found on what is called Brothers' Island, and I believe there are a few other guns in front; but I do not think that anyone would venture to declare that this is any security whatever. At the present moment it is, for all practical purposes, absolutely undefended. Any vessel could completely destroy it from the outside. If my noble Friend argues—as undoubtedly he will—that provided we had a large Fleet and good torpedo boats we could prevent vessels from entering the Straits, and that the place is, therefore, practically secure, I would venture to assert that, to whatever extent our Fleet might be increased in time of war, it would be impossible to keep sufficient ships tied down to look after the defences of that coaling station and dockyard. It would be necessary for them to be scattered about, convoying and looking after merchant ships, and the other interests which, on this station, are so terribly scattered. I would also point out that, whatever we might do in that way in time of war, our Fleet is extremely small, and that the speed of the ships composing the Fleet is very inadequate. The so-called dockyard buildings are at present only sheds; and up to this time very little money has been spent upon them. Recently, however, a dock has been made by the Colonial Authorities jointly with our Government, and this seems to be the only reason in favour of keeping the dockyard where it now is. In Vancouver's Island, about 50 miles further up the Straits, are the coal mines of Nanaimo, which it is of the very utmost importance should be guarded, as from it, in case of war, we should have entirely to depend for our coal supplies, not only for the Pacific, but also for the China Station. Immediately opposite the coal fields at

Nanaimo is Burrand Inlet. It is a great natural harbour, 20 miles in length, perfectly land-locked, in which there would be room for the whole Navy of Great Britain; and it is here that I venture to think that our Naval Establishment ought undoubtedly to be. It is here that the Canadian and Pacific Railway has got its terminus. The entrance to it is only a few hundred yards wide, and could be easily defended. With two or three torpedo boats in the Straits, the position would be absolutely impregnable. If a naval station was being selected, no naval man and no engineer would dream of placing the naval dock and arsenal at Esquimault, but would at once make it at Burrand Inlet. In face of the necessity of having the best possible base for our Navy, we ought at once, I think, to move our arsenal, notwithstanding the cost that might be thereby entailed. It may be said that the present harbour of Esquimault is capable of being defended by proper batteries being erected, and by proper torpedo boats being kept in position; that it is in a better position for ships coming and going, being only six hours from the sea; whereas, if they had to come to Burrand Inlet, they would have very difficult Straits to go through, and the distance from the sea would be a great disadvantage. It may also be urged that, having already expended a considerable sum on the dock, it would be foolish to go elsewhere; and there is also the argument that, if war with America at any time were to arise, Burrand Inlet would at once be captured, and that our ships would be taken like rabbits in a hole, as it is so close to the ninth parallel of latitude. In answer to the first argument, I venture to doubt whether, with all deference to the high authorities who may have been consulted, it is possible, without an immense and needless outlay, to defend this place, and even then I do not see anything to prevent men being landed on the East side of Vancouver's Island, and being marched across and taking the harbour in the rear. In regard to the second argument, it must be remembered that Esquimault was only selected when sails were the principal motive power, and that now, with steam power, the case is entirely altered. Nor do I think that the distance of Burrand Inlet from the sea is a very strong argument, having regard to the fact that it was proposed to make this the starting point for our mail fleet. With regard to the argument of expense, I do not think it worth consideration, in face of the tremendous importance of the question. A war with America would be a fratricidal contest, and is so improbable as not to come within practical politics; but if such a war were to arise, I apprehend that Esquimault Harbour Dockyard could be as easily taken as Burrand Inlet, and a filibustering expedition could be very easily drawn across the mainland, so that the harbour would be very difficult to defend. These are the considerations which are thought by many very great authorities strong reasons why our naval base of operations should be established at Burrand Inlet. But I wish to ask Her Majesty's Government this question—If you decide on remaining where we are, how are you going to defend Esquimault? Have you done anything whatever there? Some years ago certain plans were drawn up, and arrangements entered into for properly defending the harbour, the work to be done partly by the Colonial Government and partly by ourselves; but, as far as I can ascertain, nothing whatever has been done, and the defences consist of two old-fashioned torpedo boats, which were purchased from the Chilians, and are entirely out of date. This subject has been dealt with on previous occasions by Sir John Colomb, who has written many able papers upon it, and by Major General Lawrie, late Deputy Adjutant General of Canada, who, in 1883, read a most able paper before the Royal United Service Institution upon it. In the last few months the following weighty words had been written on the subject by the author of *Greater Britain*, a gentleman who was well known to their Lordships, and who had given very great attention to this subject:—

> "It is vital to us that we should have a coaling station and a base of operations within reach of Vladivostock and the Amoor at the beginning of a war, as a guardhouse for the protection of our China trade, and for the prevention of a sudden descent upon our Colonies, ultimately as the head station for our Canadian Pacific Railroad trade, and at all times, and especially in the later stages of the war, as an offensive station for our main attack on Russia. But it must be, of course, a defended station, and not one to which our Fleet would be tied for the purpose of its defence. Englishmen are

> hardly aware of the strength of Russia in the Pacific, where, if we are to attack at all, we must inevitably fight her, and where, if we are to adopt the hopeless policy of remaining only on the defensive, we shall still have to meet her for the protection of our own Possessions. While talking about their European Fleets, the Russians are paying no real attention to them, and are more and more concentrating their strength in the North Pacific."

Then we have the views of Admiral Sir Leopold M'Clintock, who is another very considerable authority upon this subject. He says—

> "I think we can hardly over-estimate the importance of this subject. We know the extreme importance of fortifying the Canadian Railway terminus on the Pacific, by means of which war material could be brought for our forces on that shore in about 14 days, instead of going by sea and occupying four months in its passage. But what I wish to bring prominently before you is the absolute necessity of having our one coal depôt in the Pacific Ocean defended. We have but this one, and on it our Fleet would be dependent for supplies, and also our trading steamers, in time of war. If we lose it we must relinquish our trade in the North Pacific, and if we lose our trade in that sea we lose just so much of our daily bread. I wish to emphasize the vital importance of fortifying our coal depôt out there, and of having our naval position, now at Esquimault, capable of resisting an attack. We may at times temporarily lose the command of that sea, and if such an event should happen Esquimault would be exposed to attack. I presume it is the intention of the Government, in the event of war, to at once withdraw from Esquimault; and I fully agree as to the great importance of having a fortified naval station at Burrand Inlet."

Well, my Lords, I could read other quotations; but I think that what I have read shows the very strong feeling that exists upon this subject amongst the greatest naval authorities. Undoubtedly, on an important question like this it is quite possible that there may be a difference of opinion as regards whether I am right or not in saying that our naval station ought to be at Burrand Inlet instead of Esquimault; but of this I am certain—that all are agreed as regards our coaling station and naval station, wherever it is—whether it is at Esquimault or at Burrand Inlet—that it ought to be defended. There must be a proper system of fortifications; and, above all, you must have some first-class torpedo boats ready to defend the Strait. You must remember that in time of war your ships would be required elsewhere. There is no doubt that in the present day wars are very short. They come upon you suddenly; and you must bear in mind that your Naval Fleet out there is naturally a very small one; unfortunately, too, I am afraid that it will be found that the speed of those vessels is very inadequate. But, however that may be, of this I am quite confident—that long before you would be able to strengthen that Fleet largely you would have your naval station, your coaling station, and the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway taken away, or, at any rate, placed in a position of very great jeopardy. Some years ago I spent two years myself on that station, and although we had orders to go and meet the Admiral's ship, for certain reasons, during the whole of those two years we were away from the Admiral, and we came home without ever having seen the Admiral; and that shows you how scattered our Fleet is on that station. My Lords, this is no impossible question. Your Lordships are, no doubt, aware that a few years ago, when there was a scare of war with Russia, a squadron of Russian ships assembled at San Francisco, and their intention, undoubtedly, was to make an attack upon Esquimault. What is there to prevent this squadron of Russian ships, being only three and a-half days from Vancouver's Island, from starting off immediately they hear the declaration of war, and at once capturing Esquimault Harbour, our coal stores at Nanaimo, and the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway? Supposing there was a declaration of war, you might possibly have one or two ships; but, with that exception, the harbour is absolutely open and absolutely undefended. Perhaps I ought to mention that there are two old Chilian torpedo boats; but I apprehend that my noble and gallant Friend would not place much reliance upon them. My Lords, I shall not take up your Lordships' time any longer; but I am sure that when you consider the great interests we have there, and when you remember the vast and increasing arsenals of Russia, and when you reflect how important a naval and coaling station is, I am sure you will agree with me that if Her Majesty's Government neglects in some form or other to fortify this station they will have incurred very serious responsibility.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY: My Lords, I wish to join with my noble and gallant Friend in impressing upon

Her Majesty's Government the great importance of this question. It was, perhaps, a misfortune that Burrand Inlet had not been originally selected as a naval and coaling station; but, whether that place or Esquimault is to be made the permanent naval station, no time should be lost in putting it into a proper state of defence. It is really deplorable to see the defenceless condition of our naval station in the Pacific. My noble and gallant Friend has not said too much upon this question, which is of the greatest importance; and I hope that, whatever decision Her Majesty's Government may come to, they will take steps at once to provide a safe harbour of refuge there.

LORD ELPHINSTONE: My Lords, this question as to the condition of the naval station in the Pacific is one to which attention has been from time to time directed, and more particularly since the completion of the great Canadian Pacific Railway, and it is a question about which there is a great difference of opinion among officers of high standing in both Services. On the one hand, you will get officers of both Services, officers of high standing, whose great experience carries great weight—and justly carries great weight—who will tell you that Burrand Inlet is the proper place for a naval station; while, on the other hand, you will get officers of equal standing who will tell you that Esquimault is the only place fit for a naval station, and that Burrand Inlet in the case of a war would be little better than a rat-trap. The noble and gallant Lord (Lord Sudeley), who introduced this question, appears to have been struck with the superior advantages of Burrand Inlet as a naval station; but the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Huntly), who has recently seen the country for himself, is not so decided in favour of one station or the other. And the two noble Lords who were out with me last Autumn were greatly struck with the advantages, as it appeared to them, of Burrand Inlet; and I know that they entertain that opinion strongly at the present moment. It will be my business to show—and I think I shall be able to show—that Burrand Inlet is not a desirable place for a naval station, and that Esquimault in every respect is superior. I visited Burrand Inlet last Autumn, and I remained the greater part of two days in Esquimault; and the impression which I formed during my visit was that in some respects Burrand Inlet was superior to Esquimault—first, because of the railway communication; secondly, on account of the expense of sending stores from the terminus of the railway to Esquimault in the event of our trade routes being interfered with in the case of war; thirdly, on account of the magnificent site for a naval station at Port Moody, 11 miles up the Inlet, and safe from the fire of an enemy's ship; and, lastly, because in the event of Burrand Inlet being threatened from the West, the whole military strength of Canada could be brought by the railway for its protection. However, since this question has been put down upon the Notice Paper, I have gone more thoroughly into the matter, and I have come to the conclusion that it is not desirable to transfer our naval station from one place to the other. The noble and gallant Lord described the position of the two places; but, although I have no desire to detain your Lordships, I cannot make my point good without entering a little more minutely into the situation of the two places, and I shall, therefore, endeavour to give an explanation of their relative positions and characteristics for the information of such of your Lordships as may not be acquainted with that district. To begin with Burrand Inlet. Burrand Inlet is an arm of the sea at the South-Western extremity of British Columbia, within 20 miles of the boundary line of the United States. It is 12 miles in length—not 20 as the noble Lord thought—and its average breadth is two miles. It has good anchorage, along the whole length of the Inlet, and its entrance is about a quarter of a mile wide. When once you are inside it is perfect. I say, "When once you are inside," because the harbour has this drawback, that the tide runs so strongly in the narrow entrance—from eight to nine knots an hour—that sometimes it is a matter of difficulty to attempt to enter with a large ship, except at certain states of the tide. I think my noble and gallant Friend will understand what I mean by "attempt to enter," when he recollects that the entrance to the harbour is only a quarter of a mile wide, and that with a 9-knot tide running the slightest touch of the helm would be sufficient to run a ship ashore; so that, except at certain states of the tide, it is not safe to enter. Along the Southern shore of this Inlet runs the Canadian Pacific Railway, having its terminus near the sea at Vancouver. I think the City of Vancouver is, perhaps, the most marvellous city in the world, the small pioneer town having been destroyed by fire two years ago. Now, the forest has been cleared away and a granite city has sprung up upon the ruins of the former wooden village. The Railway Company have covered several acres of ground with warehouses, workshops, and other buildings, and a large trade is being carried on with China and Japan. Steamers are running North to Alascar and South to San Francisco; and I hope that in a short time there will be another line of steamers running from there to Australia and New Zealand. Opposite the harbour, 35 miles distant on Vancouver's Island, is the coaling station of Nanaimo; and with these advantages Vancouver has already become a place of great and rapidly increasing commercial importance, with a population of 7,000 inhabitants and Burrand Inlet, a harbour of no less importance. Steaming to the South, 70 miles through the channel between the Island and the Mainland, you reach the Port of Victoria. Victoria is the capital of British Columbia, with a harbour small and shallow; and two miles further West is the Port of Esquimault. And here we have a naval station, naval stores, hospital, and magazine; and joining the naval station is the dry dock, built by the Dominion Government at a cost of £230,000, of which £50,000 was contributed by the Imperial Government. Beyond Esquimault is the Juan de Fuca Strait, a long arm of the sea, 60 miles long and 10 miles wide. That Strait leads into the Pacific Ocean. That is a short description of the geographical position of the district. From Esquimault there is also railway communication with the coal fields at Nanaimo, our only coaling station in war time. The Committee on Colonial Defence have set forth in their Report their reasons for preferring Esquimault to Burrand Inlet as our naval headquarters. As is stated by Admiral Sir Cooper Key, and concurred in by the other Members of the Committee, Esquimault is better situated and better adapted for naval purposes, and the Admiralty have expended a large sum of money there on permanent improvements and docks. It is also observed that the defence of Esquimault would so enhance the security of the whole sea-board of British Columbia that no separate defence of Burrand Inlet or Esquimault would appear, for the present, at any rate, to be required. Well, now, my Lords, passing from the recommendations of the Colonial Defence Committee to some of the other reasons that appear to render the retention of Esquimault absolutely necessary. In the first place, the entrance to Esquimault can be defended by mines, whereas the entrance to Burrand Inlet, on account of the strong tides, could not be so defended. Then, again, Esquimault is accessible at all time, either by day or by night, and situated as it is at the entrance to the inner waters, its strategic position is of the greatest importance, because no ship would attempt to pass Esquimault (supposing our Fleet to be in existence), for the purpose of attacking Burrand Inlet or Nanaimo, leaving a fortified place in their rear. Were we to make Burrand Inlet our naval station instead of Esquimault, Esquimault would be made the base of operations against us. Our ships would in all probability be blocked in Burrand Inlet, and Vancouver's Island be lost to us. Then in the event of war with the United States—we must take into consideration the possibility of such a war, though I hope it is a bare possibility—but in the event of war with the United States, what would happen? The great value of Burrand Inlet is the existence of the railway; the very first thing the Americans would do would be to cut that railway; and then what would be the value of the Burrand Inlet? Burrand Inlet and our naval station would in a very short time fall into the hands of the enemy. A few men would be quite sufficient to cut that communication. We could not successfully defend Burrand Inlet in case of a war with America, but we could successfully defend Esquimault. The very fact of it being on an island is to us, as a Naval Power, most important, as it is on the sea that our strength lies. We must endeavour to meet our enemy in the Juan de Fuca Strait. It is from there the enemy must be stopped by our Naval Forces blockading the Strait. If war broke out to-morrow the Naval and Military Authorities would not go to Burrand Inlet. Esquimault is accessible at all times, either by day or by night. The noble and gallant Lord said that four days after a declaration of war with Russia the Russians might seize Esquimault; but I do not see how that could be done, because in the Pacific Squadron we have seven ships, whilst I see that the Pacific Squadron of Russia is *nil.* There is no ship there at all. We have also 17 ships on the China Station, while Russia has 12; so that how the Russians could take Esquimault on the first declaration of war I confess I do not see. As I have said, we have at Esquimault a dock, and if it be found necessary for mercantile purposes as trade increases, another dock, no doubt, will be made at Burrand Inlet. The plans for the defence of Esquimault are all completed. They are cut and dry, so to speak, and most of the guns are ready to be sent out to-morrow. I think these are all the points that were referred to by the noble and gallant Lord.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: I just wish to say a few words upon this question. In the first place, I wish to express my thanks to my noble and gallant Friend (Lord Sudeley) for having brought this question forward. I think he has done a useful service in bringing it forward, and in having it discussed. But, as regards the reply of my noble and gallant Friend (Lord Elphinstone) on behalf of the Government, I cannot say that I am altogether satisfied with it. He has told us what ought to be, what might be, and what ought not to be, defended; but I failed to gather from what fell from the noble and gallant Lord whether any fort of any sort or kind, whether at Esquimault or any other place in that district, is at this present time defended, and I would like to ask for some information on that point from my noble and gallant Friend, because the object of my noble and gallant Friend (Lord Sudeley) in bringing forward this matter was not to show whether this or that spot should be defended, but that, at any rate, there should be some defence for the great interests of this country in that quarter of the world. Then the noble and gallant Lord talked about the number of ships in the Pacific. I would like to point out that those ships might be employed, when the occasion arose, in defending our commerce, rather than in defending places which ought to be capable of defending themselves. Perhaps the noble and gallant Lord would say whether it is intended in any case to defend our naval and coaling stations; and whether it is the intention of the Government to put Esquimault in a sufficient state of defence?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Lord HARRIS): I think, my Lords, that if the noble Earl (the Earl of Wemyss) had listened to my noble and gallant Friend, and had not been carrying on a conversation with his noble Friends behind him when he was speaking, he would have heard that plans were actually cut and dry, and that some of the guns were ready to be sent out to-morrow.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: Yes; but that is not the question. The question is whether at the present moment we have got any guns there?

LORD HARRIS: Yes; there are some guns there, but they are not of a modern type; and there are some batteries there ready for the guns to be placed in them. But the noble Earl will understand that the Royal Commission on Coaling Stations did not in the original instance select the North Pacific Coast as one of the stations to be defended. It was not until 1885 that it was decided to defend this point. The reason why Esquimault has been preferred over any other has been fully shown by my noble and gallant Friend, I think, who answered the question of the noble and gallant Lord; and it only remains for me to say what the armament is to be. The armament has been slightly altered from that fixed in 1885, which included four 9-inch guns. The armament will now consist of six 6-inch guns of 5,000 yards range, four 9-inch guns for high angle fire of 7,000 yards range, two quick-firing guns, six 16 pounders for general use, and six rifle machine guns. The Imperial Government are prepared to spend £31,000 upon the armament, £10,000 upon submarine stores, and about £10,000 upon submarine buildings. The works, as in the case of all the coaling stations, had been undertaken by the Colonies. The guns, as my noble and gallant Friend has said, are nearly all ready to be sent out to-morrow; and there will be sent out with them a suitable supply of ammunition, and I believe that the real question at the present moment between the Imperial and the Colonial Government is the question of garrison. I should like to refer to one point mentioned by my noble and gallant Friend opposite with respect to the land defence in Esquimault. This whole question of the defence of the naval station upon that particular shore was considered most carefully by the Colonial Defence Committee, and by the Inspector General of Fortifications, at that time Sir Andrew Clarke. I do not question in any way whatever the advisability of any noble Lord asking a question for information upon a subject so important as this; but I venture to deprecate, very humbly, the calling in question the opinion of experts upon questions of this kind, because I do not see how we are to depend upon the opinion of anyone else except experts. These cases were carefully considered by experts to whom they were referred, and suggestions were made to them by officers of the Royal Engineers and the Royal Artillery who were on the spot. The advice of these officers was considered, and ultimately they came to their decision. If the decision is to be called in question by persons who would not put themselves forward as experts on questions of that kind, then all I can say is that the same questions might be raised with regard to all our other coaling stations. The Royal Commission must depend upon the opinions of experts in dealing with every one of these questions; and for that reason, I think, for good or ill—and I hope it is for good—it would be wise to rely upon the opinions given to the Royal Commission and adopted by them.

Lord SUDELEY: My Lords, I hope I may be allowed to explain one matter to which the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Elphinstone) has referred. The noble and gallant Lord was, no doubt, technically right in saying that Russia has no Fleet in the Pacific Ocean, but it is absurd to say that Russia could not send a Fleet there. When a few years ago there was a Russian scare, a large Russian Fleet, as I have already said, came up at once and concentrated at San Francisco for the purpose of taking action.

RULES OF DEBATE IN THIS HOUSE—PRECEDENCE OF SPEAKERS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Earl GRANVILLE, who was very indistinctly heard, was understood to ask the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack a Question as to a statement which had appeared in the *Spectator*, representing that on the occasion of two noble Lords rising at the same moment to address the House, and neither of them giving way, the Lord Chancellor had called upon one of them to speak. Having himself been for 40 years a constant attendant in that House, he must say he had never seen that done, either by the present occupant of the Woolsack or by any of his Predecessors. The practice which he had always seen followed in the case supposed was that the House itself decided which of the two Lords rising at the same time should be heard. As the matter appeared to be one which exercised some people's minds, he had been requested to put a Question to the noble and learned Lord as to the facts.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury) said, that the noble Earl had justly anticipated his reply, which was that, so far as he was concerned, nothing had happened in regard to the matter which the most perverted or the most perverse imagination could present in the light in which the writer, not in *The Spectator*, but in *The Saturday Review*, had presented it. He wished that he could suppose that the way in which the statement was made arose from simple misapprehension of something that had taken place. But the subtlety of it was in the phrase used by the writer, which referred to no one in particular, but only to the office. Yet no one reading that statement would doubt that it referred to the present occupant of the Woolsack, though it was cited as a recent example. He had a suspicion that if he contradicted the statement the writer of the article would probably say—"Oh, the noble Earl and the Lord Chancellor are very ignorant, because over 40 years ago an incident of that sort did take place." That was in 1846, in the discussion on the Corn Laws. He dared say that the writer would defend himself, if called upon to justify his statement, in that way; but certainly, as far as he himself was concerned, the writer's statement was utterly and entirely without foundation.

OYSTER AND MUSSEL FISHERIES (WEST LOCH TARBERT) ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm an order made by the Secretary for Scotland under the Sea Fisheries Act, 1868, relating to the West Loch Tarbert Oyster and Mussel Fisheries—Was *presented* by The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos (for the Lord Ker [*M. Lothian*]): Then it was moved that the Sessional Order of the 6th of March last, "That no Bill originating in this House confirming any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate shall be read a first time after Friday the 11th day of May next," be dispensed with in respect of the said Bill, and that the Bill be now read 1^a; *agreed to*: Bill read 1^a accordingly, and *referred* to the Examiners. (No. 145.

PHARMACY ACT (IRELAND), 1875, AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

Select Committee on: The Lords following were named of the Committee:

E. Milltown.	L. Chaworth (*E. Meath*).
L. de Ros.	L. Lingen.
L. Foxford (*E. Limerick*).	L. Basing.

The Committee to meet *To-morrow*, at half-past Three o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, till to-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 11*th June*, 1888.

MINUTES.]—Private Bill (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Liverpool Overhead Railway.

Public Bills—*First Reading*—Tithe Rentcharge* [288]; Tithe Rentcharge Recovery and Variation* [289]; Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances)* [290].

Select Committee—Burgh Police and Health (Scotland)* [118], Mr. Vernon *added*.

Committee—Local Government (England and Wales) [182] [*Second Night*]—R.P.

Committee—Report—National Debt (Supplemental) [264]; Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment [233].

Provisional Order Bill—*First Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) (Dublin Markets)* [291].

QUESTIONS.

UNITED STATES—THE INTER-STATE COMMERCE COMMISSIONERS.

Sir RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he will be good enough to ascertain and inform the House whether the Chairman or any of the Inter-State Commerce Commissioners of the United States of America, appointed under Act of Congress, No. 41, of February, 1887, possess specialist qualifications, either of a legal or judicial character, or as being experts in railway management, or otherwise?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): An inquiry with reference to my hon. Friend's Question has been addressed to Her Majesty's Minister at Washington, and his reply has not yet been received; but from inquiries which I have been able to make in this country, I have reason to believe that in making such appointments special attention is paid to the legal and technical qualifications of the candidates.

WAR OFFICE—SALE OF WHITWORTH'S STEEL INGOTS TO FRANCE.

Captain COTTON (Cheshire, Wirral) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the fact that the steel ingots now in course of manufacture by Messrs. Whitworth are being purchased by private firms in France; and, whether it is also the fact that the forgings referred to are supplied for the manufacture of steel B.L. guns for the French or some other Foreign Navy?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I have heard that certain steel ingots are being manufactured by Messrs. Whitworth for a private firm. They have a large trade in steel forgings. Messrs. Whitworth inform me that they are not intended, directly or indirectly, for the French Government; but I am not able to explain further the business transactions of private firms. I may add, in justice to Messrs. Whitworth, that the manufacture of steel ingots will not, in the least degree, interfere with the progress of the guns which they are making for our Government.

Captain COTTON asked, if the forgings referred to were supplied for the manufacture of steel guns for some other Foreign Navy?

MR. E. STANHOPE could not say—he only knew that they were not for the French.

DEFENCES OF THE EMPIRE — THE ARMAMENT OF THE SPITHEAD FORTS.

CAPTAIN COTTON (Cheshire, Wirral) asked the Secretary of State for War, How many heavy armour piercing B.L. guns are the Spithead Forts intended to carry; how many of such guns are actually in position; how long will it take to provide the entire armament; how long is it since the forts were completed; and, what has been the cost of their construction?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Before the issue of the Army Estimates it was decided, after very careful consultation with my Military Advisers, that details as to the Spithead Forts ought not, in the interests of the country, to be made public. I am afraid, therefore, that I cannot answer all my hon. and gallant Friend's Questions. The forts referred to were constructed at a cost of £1,151,000, and were completed nine years ago. At that time the employment of heavy breech-loading guns was not contemplated. The present armament is, therefore, a comparatively recent arrangement.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—THE PICCADILLY CIRCUS.

MR. F. W. MACLEAN (Oxford, Woodstock) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether the Metropolitan Board of Works have arrived at any, and, if so, what, decision as to filling or otherwise making use of the vacant spaces at Piccadilly Circus; whether the architect of the Board has not suggested that such spaces might be advantageously decorated by pieces of statuary; whether the Board see any objection to such suggestion; and, whether the Board would afford facilities for pieces of statuary being placed on such spaces temporarily to give the public an opportunity of judging of the effect and desirability of their being so used?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): The Board has not yet arrived at any decision as to filling, or otherwise making use of, the vacant spaces at Piccadilly Circus. The Board's architect has not suggested that such spaces might be advantageously decorated by pieces of statuary; but his predecessor in office did make some such suggestion. The Board would probably have no objection to suitable pieces of statuary being erected, although the Board itself is not empowered to expend public money for this purpose. In reply to the Question whether the Board would afford facilities for placing pieces of statuary temporarily on the sites referred to, so that the public may have an opportunity of judging of them, I can only say that I feel sure that any request made to the Board for this purpose would receive due consideration.

MERCANTILE MARINE—THE "BEN CRUACHEN" AT SUNDERLAND.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Sunderland Echo* of May 28, wherein it is alleged that in the case of a wage dispute between the captain of the *Ben Cruachen* and the seamen belonging to the port of Sunderland, the Board of Trade officer at Hull brought a crew, most of whom were foreigners, and all more or less intoxicated, and shipped them on board the vessel; and, if so, will he state whether it is part of the duty of a Board of Trade officer to act as a labour agent to shipowners?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): My attention has been called to the statement in the newspaper referred to, and a Report on the subject has been obtained from the Superintendents of the Mercantile Marine Offices at Sunderland and Hull. The Reports show that there is no dispute at Sunderland about wages; but that the master of the vessel, finding that he could not obtain in Sunderland sufficient foreign-going seamen to make up a crew for his ship, went himself to Hull, and, being there, engaged a Hull crew. Having engaged them in the Mercantile Marine office at Hull, they were sent to Sunderland in charge of a messenger attached to the Hull office. In this case the Superintendents of the Mercantile Marine offices, and the other officers of the two Local Marine Boards, were performing duties thrown on them by Statute. There is nothing in the law to prevent any master of a British ship from engaging foreigners to serve on board his ship; and I am distinctly informed that the men were not in a disgraceful condition through drink. They all went to sea in the ship except two, of whom one was a British seaman and one a foreigner.

HORSEBREEDING, &c. (IRELAND)—THE GRANT OF £5,000

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is intended to propose a renewal of the grant for the improvement of the breeds of horses and cattle in Ireland; and, if so, whether he will favourably consider the claims of the North East Agricultural Association of Ireland meeting in Belfast to a share of this grant?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I would beg to refer the hon. Member to my reply of April 20 on the general subject as to the renewal of the grant. With regard to the concluding portion of the Question, I apprehend that were the grant renewed its administration would be again entrusted to the Royal Dublin Society, who would, of course, have due regard to the claims of all parts of the country.

WORKING CLASSES—SELF-CONTAINED "INDUSTRIAL DWELLINGS."

MR. DIXON (Birmingham, Edgbaston) (for Sir JOHN LUBBOCK) (London University) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether there is any statutory authority or description of what is meant by "self-contained" industrial dwellings; whether he is aware that, in the case of the "Yorkshire Life and Fire Insurance Company *v.* Clayton," the Master of the Rolls, in giving judgment, held that—

> "The word 'tenement is what is in law a house, although it is at the same time part of a house;"

and, again—

> "I understand the word 'tenement' in this collocation to mean a legal house, as distinguished from an ordinary house;"

and that—

> "Separate legal houses, let separately, held at separate rents, were within the principle of the exemption;"

and, whether, under that decision, all tenements, although they may be parts of houses let to separate tenants at rents showing the value to be under the annual value of £20, are exempt from House Duty?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): There is no statutory definition of "what is meant by self-contained industrial dwellings," there being no special legal provision as to Inhabited House Duty on such dwellings. I have read the case of the "Yorkshire Life and Fire Insurance Company *v.* Clayton," to which the hon. Member refers. It does not bear directly upon this particular question, but on the exemption of business premises from House Duty. So far as it has any relevance to the present Question, it seems to me to lead to a conclusion diametrically opposite to that which the hon. Member seeks to draw from it. That was a case where exemption from Inhabited House Duty was claimed for part of an inhabited house, because such part was separately let and used solely for business purposes. The Judges held that, though the two parts of the house were separately let and were separate tenements, yet this was not sufficient to entitle the business portion to exemption. It was not enough that part of a house should be separately let—it must be physically divided in some clear and unmistakable manner; it must be structurally separate in order to entitle it to exemption. That is precisely the distinction which the Government has always maintained with regard to industrial dwellings.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—VISITING COMMITTEE OF THE DERRY PRISON.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Londonderry, City) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that there is not a single Catholic Justice on the Visiting Committee of the Derry Prison?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): There is no official record of the matter referred to in this Question; and, therefore, I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Gentleman the answer he desires.

WAR OFFICE—DISCLOSURE OF OFFICIAL SECRETS — JOHN HYLAND, MILITARY STAFF CLERK, WOOLWICH.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether John Hyland, Military Staff Clerk, Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, was suddenly dismissed on April 19, 1887, on the ground that he had conveyed copies of minutes of proceedings outside the arsenal; whether there was any Court Martial or Court of Inquiry held, or legal proceedings taken in the case; whether John Hyland positively denied the charge; whether John Hyland received, on his discharge, the allowances of a Brigade Quartermaster Sergeant, and whether the discharge certificate of the said John Hyland describes his character as "very good;" whether the spare copies of the minutes of proceedings referred to were shown to have been thrown into a corner of the office and used as waste paper; and, if he can explain how the discharge of John Hyland, without any formal inquiry for alleged disgraceful conduct in revealing secrets, is compatible with the official character "very good" afterwards recorded?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The answer to the first Question is, Yes; and to the second, No. To the third Question the reply is, that Hyland made no direct denial of the charge, but merely said that he did not know what it meant; to the fourth, that he received the usual allowances on discharge, as no forfeiture had been decreed by sentence of a Court Martial. To the fifth I can only say that I am not aware that spare copies have been "shown" to have been so treated; but probably there have been superfluous copies. This, however, does not diminish the man's offence in selling them. I was absolutely satisfied of this man's guilt; but as he had not been convicted by any Court, it was not possible, in accordance with the Regulations of the Service, to withhold his general character as shown in his records of service up to that date.

WAR OFFICE—DISCLOSURE OF OFFICIAL SECRETS — JOHN CHAPMAN, MASTER GUNNER, CEYLON.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether John Chapman, master gunner, stationed at Ceylon, was, without any Court Martial or Court of Inquiry, dismissed for revealing official secrets; whether any request was made by the General Commanding that John Chapman should be tried by Court Martial; whether this was refused; whether John Chapman denies the charge, and has petitioned for a Court of Inquiry or Court Martial; what answer has been given by the War Office; whether John Chapman has, since his dismissal, received a good conduct medal and deferred pay; and if he can explain how it happened that a man dismissed for disgraceful conduct in revealing official secrets received a good conduct medal; and, whether the name of John Chapman was announced in Regimental Orders, as is usual in the case of recipients of good conduct medals; and, if not, can he explain why it was omitted?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): In this Question there are seven separate items. My answer to the first is, Yes; and to the second, No; which also disposes of the third. As regards the fourth point, Chapman denied the general charge; but admitted that he had, on one occasion, copied and given copies of official papers to one of the parties implicated, though without receiving or expecting any payment. There is no record of his having petitioned for a Court Martial. To the sixth Question the answer is that the cause of Chapman's discharge having been recorded on his discharge certificate as "on account of his services being no longer required" there was no legal power to withhold his deferred pay, or to forfeit his good conduct medal, which had been given him in 1886.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —PRIVATE TELEPHONE.

Mr. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked the Postmaster General, Whether on May 1 an application was made to the Post Office, by Messrs. C. H. Cousens and Co., asking to be supplied with a private telephone between their chambers and their warehouses in Leman Street, Whitechapel; whether on May 7, the Post Office Authorities replied that, subject to way-leaves being granted, no time would be lost in supplying the telephonic communication; whether, on May 30, another letter was sent to Messrs. Cousens and Co., stating that everything was in order, but that the Post Office Authorities could not obtain the consent of the Police Authorities to pass the wire over the police station opposite the warehouses in Leman Street; whether, on June 6, a further communication was sent from the Post Office, stating their inability to supply the telephone, as the one Government Office was entirely distinct from the other; and, whether he can arrange that way-leaves can be obtained over Government and other property in the same manner and under the same conditions as now obtain with regard to the supply of telephones by the United Telephone Company?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I cannot find that any letter was written stating that the Post Office was unable to supply a telephone to Messrs. Cousens and Co. It was verbally explained to a representative of the firm that the work could not be proceeded with until permission was received for the attachment of the wire to the police station at Leman Street. That permission has now been received, and the work is in progress.

WAR OFFICE—THE CANTEEN.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there is a canteen at the War Office; whether, if so, spirituous liquors are sold there; what are the conditions under which the establishment is carried on; and how the profits are distributed?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. Brodrick) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: There is no regular canteen at the War Office; but the members of the Office have formed among themselves a Co-operative Society for the provision of luncheons, and among their arrangements is a luncheon bar, at which, among other things, liquors are sold. There are not intended to be any profits, and any which incidentally arise are applied in reduction of prices.

CRIMINAL LAW — SENTENCE ON ALICE DURRANT AT LIVERPOOL.

Mr. NEVILLE (Liverpool, Exchange) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether any further steps have been taken with regard to the sentence passed on Alice Durrant at the last Liverpool Assizes?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have received a Report from the Judge and from the Liverpool Police Authorities as to this case. It appears that this woman was an habitual receiver of stolen property. Besides the articles in respect of which she was convicted, and which were the proceeds of a burglary, there were various other articles found at her house which were identified as having been stolen from other houses at different times; but the indictments in respect of them were not proceeded with. I am informed that the woman had for several years been leading an immoral life, and had also at one time kept a brothel. I see nothing in the circumstances of the case which would justify my interference with the sentence.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—WIDENING OF BOND STREET.

Mr. COCHRANE-BAILLIE (St. Pancras, N.) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether, previous to the recent rebuilding of Long's Hotel, the Metropolitan Board of Works took the opportunity of endeavouring to secure the much needed widening of Bond Street?

Mr. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the Board did not take any steps with a view to the widening of Bond Street before the rebuilding of Long's Hotel. If, when a building is pulled down for the purpose of being rebuilt, the Local Authority is of opinion that the opportunity should be taken to set the building back, and thus widen the street, the practice is for the Authority to make a representation to that effect to the Board, and to ask the Board to contribute half the cost of the ground to be given up. No such representation was made to the Board in the case referred to in the Question.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—ACCESS TO HYDE PARK.

Mr. COCHRANE-BAILLIE (St. Pancras, N.) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether, in consequence of the increasing block of traffic near to Albert Gate, the Metropolitan Board of Works will make representations to the First Commissioner of Works as to the desirability of having another entrance made into Hyde Park between Knightsbridge Barracks and Albert Gate?

Mr. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): I have no reason to think that the Board will make representations to the First Commissioner of Works as to the desirability of having another entrance made into Hyde Park between Knightsbridge Barracks and Albert Gate. I may, perhaps, be allowed to say that the First Commissioner is probably quite as well able as the Board to judge of the need of another entrance into Hyde Park; and if the hon. Member brings the matter under the notice of the First Commissioner, he will, doubtless, give it due consideration.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—LOUGH CORRIB.

Mr. PINKERTON (Galway) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that several communications have been sent from the occupiers of flooded lands bordering on Lough Corrib to the Board of Works, pointing out the defective nature of the drainage and the neglect of the Trustees to maintain the main drains in proper order; whether complaints have reached him as to the way in which the engineer sent down in September last discharged his duty as Inspector; whether he is aware that formal objections have been sent by the taxpayers to the Board of Works complaining that the inspection was imperfect, as the Inspector had passed down the main river in a boat, paying no attention to the siltage in the river or examining the flooded state of the crops, and that since October 24, when a letter was received from the Secretary promising to submit the matter to the consideration of the Board, no other communication has been received, nor have any steps been taken to remove the grievance; and, if, under these circumstances, he will see his way to include Lough Corrib district in the drainage scheme he is about to introduce?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: In consequence of complaints as to the state of the drainage works an inspection was ordered, and was carefully carried out, after consultation with the petitioners, by an experienced officer. Complaints of the mode of inspection have been examined, and found to be groundless. As the result of the inspection the Trustees of the district were served with a notice calling upon them to execute the needful works before the 21st of July next, and the works are now in progress.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — SWINFORD BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Swinford Union being now under the management of Vice Guardians, What provision is being made by the Government to pay off the cheques issued by the late Guardians to contractors who supplied goods at the time of the relief works in 1886, in view of the loss and injury which will be caused to traders in that district if payment be much longer delayed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Vice Guardians of Swinford Union are not in a position to meet all the cheques issued by the late Board of Guardians in respect of debts incurred under the Poor Relief Act, 1886. The Government have not any measure in view for the purpose of providing funds to discharge these debts.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN asked, were the holders of those cheques to lose their money for the goods they had supplied?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that if the late Board could not discharge their debts he presumed their creditors would suffer.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—PROCEEDINGS AT A SPECIAL COURT, LANESBOROUGH.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to a report in *The Freeman's Journal* of June 6, of the proceedings of a special Court held at Lanesborough, under the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, for the trial of prisoners on a charge of intimidation, in which evidence was given by a sergeant of police that he saw the local band drumming before the gate of a Mr. Russell, which was a sign that he was Boycotted; whether it is true, as stated in the report, that Mr. Hill, one of the Resident Magistrates who composed the Court, threatened the prisoners and everyone listening to him that if there were any more drumming at these places, or at evictions, or at Courts, he would have their drums smashed, and every man present sent to gaol for six months; in making use of this threat from the Bench, was Mr. Hill acting in his judicial capacity as a magistrate, or as an agent of the Executive Government; and, is Mr. Hill one of the Resident Magistrates who have been in attendance on the Chief Secretary in Dublin Castle?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he was sorry that he had not got the information necessary to enable him to answer the Question. It might arrive this afternoon; but, if not, perhaps the hon. Gentleman would repeat the Question to-morrow?

PUBLIC PETITIONS—SIGNATURES.

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) asked the Chairman of the Select Committee on Public Petitions, Whether it is regular to obtain signatures to a Petition by payment at so much per signature; and, whether a Petition, for which signatures have been thus collected, when presented, is passed by the Committee?

Sir CHARLES FORSTER (Walsall): The practice of obtaining signatures to Petitions by the payment of so much per head is a most reprehensible one, detracting from the value of the Petition, and leading to such frauds and scandals as those with which the House had to deal in the last Session; but, except on the ground of informality, the Committee on Public Petitions are not empowered to reject Petitions which have been received by the House. This could only be done by the House itself. I may remind my hon. Friend, as bearing on his Question, that whenever it appears to the Committee that a large proportion of the signatures are in the same handwriting such fact is always noticed in their Reports. Beyond that they cannot go.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND) — EVICTION OF JAMES KILMARTIN AT BALLINASLOE.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it true that, at an early hour on Friday morning last, Mr. Gilman, District Inspector, Ballinasloe, with a force of 60 police, assisted the Sheriff's bailiffs in taking possession of Mr. James Kilmartin's holding, Shralea, Ballinasloe; whether it is a fact that Mrs. Kilmartin had to rise from her sick bed, and go out in the cold drenching rain with her little children, while in the state of health described in the following certificate:—

> "This is to certify that Mrs. Kilmartin, Shralea, has been under my treatment for some weeks, suffering from severe mammary abscess. In addition, she is on the eve of being confined, and, in my opinion, eviction from her home in her present condition may seriously imperil her life.
>
> "(Signed)
> "J. T. De La Hunt, L.R.C.S. and P. Ed.
> "Ballinasloe, 1st June, 1888."

And, is it a fact that, while this eviction was being carried out, the husband of this woman (Mr. James Kilmartin) was in Galway Gaol, suffering three months' imprisonment under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, for language used at a public meeting; and, if so, will the Government state what they purpose to do with regard to this case?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Inspector General of Constabulary reports that this eviction was carried out by the Sub-Sheriff, who was protected by the police, a breach of the peace having been anticipated. The tenant is reported to have been offered very reasonable terms to come to a settlement; but he declined to accept them. The landlord does not appear to have had any knowledge of the medical certificate alluded to until after the eviction took place. Kilmartin was at the time undergoing sentence of imprisonment.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—THE EDUCATION ESTIMATES.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether he can say when he will be able to make his statement in connection with the Education Estimates; and, whether he will afford suitable opportunities for the discussion of the various points inquired into by the Royal Commission, which were excluded from discussion last Session, because the Commission was then still sitting, and especially the grievances complained of by the teachers in our elementary schools?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir William Hart Dyke) (Kent, Dartford): The Education Estimates will be taken in their place in Class IV. in the usual order, when I hope ample opportunities for discussion will be forthcoming.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL—ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, in forming a Commission under the Universities (Scotland) Bill, regard has been had to the necessity of appointing some gentleman having a practical knowledge of the modern requirements of the teaching of sciences and of the specific circumstances of the University of Aberdeen?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The formation of such a Commission involves very varied and difficult considerations. It is, of course, desirable not to have too many Members on a Commission, and this increases the difficulty of representing special interests as fully and directly as some might desire. The aim hitherto has been to form a Commission of unbiassed and practical men, who would be capable of giving impartial consideration to all general and local questions and interests. It was not intended, in announcing the names already made public, to indicate any definite closing of the list. Whether other names should be added is a question which has been, and still is, under consideration.

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND)—TRAINS TO THE SOUTH.

Mr. M'LAGAN (Linlithgow) asked the Postmaster General, If he is now prepared to state whether he has made, or is about to make, any arrangements by which some, at any rate, of the facilities hitherto afforded by the 6 a.m. train from Edinburgh and Glasgow to the South may be restored?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I beg to state that I have not yet seen my way to make any arrangements for restoring the early morning despatch from Edinburgh and Glasgow to the South; but the matter shall not be lost sight of. I understand that there is a question of the Irish post, which is of some importance, and which has not been put before me until very recently; and I am examining that part of the question with the special view of seeing what can be done.

POST OFFICE CONTRACTS—THE DOWN LONDON MAIL TRAIN.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he intends to arrange for an acceleration of the down London day mail in the new contract with the Highland Railway Company?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): If an acceleration of the down London day mail can be effected without additional expense, I shall be willing to assent to it. There would be no sufficient grounds for expending further sums of public money in effecting further postal improvement in a district already so well provided.

Dr. CLARK asked, if it was the case that the Caithness contract expired in a month or two; and if, in the new contract, the right hon. Gentleman intended to allow letters to remain three hours at one station and another hour at Inverness?

Mr. RAIKES said, that in making the new contract he should endeavour to effect any improvement he could in the public service.

INDIA (BENGAL)—OUT-STILLS IN THE HOOGHLY AND HOWRAH DISTRICTS.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been drawn to the following statements in a recent despatch from the Secretary to the Indian Association, at Calcutta, to the

Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal:—

> "The Committee have recently made inquiries into the working of the out-still system in some of the chief places in the Hooghly and the Howrah districts where out-stills have been opened. . . . From almost everywhere the same tale is heard, of persons lying dead drunk on the roads in the vicinity of the out-still, of attempted outrages on the passers by, of quarrels and fights, and of the general increase of crime. The liquor has been cheapened by nearly three-fourths. A bottle of liquor which formerly cost a rupee may now be had for four annas;"

and, whether he can state what answer has been given thereto by the Government of Bengal?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of the Indian Association at Calcutta has not informed the Secretary of State of his recent letter to the Government of Bengal, nor of the answer given thereto by the Government of Bengal. A correspondence between a Local Governor and an Association established in Calcutta would be conducted in India, without reference to the India Office.

WAR OFFICE (AUXILIARY FORCES)—REMOUNTS OF YEOMANRY REGIMENTS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Since the establishment of the new Remount Committee, how many Yeomanry Regiments have been visited by remount agents with a view to purchasing horses; how many bought; how many purchased from private individuals; and how many from dealers who exclusively supplied them under the old system?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Twenty-six Yeomanry Regiments have been visited by remount agents with a view of purchasing horses within the last six weeks. Ten horses have been purchased from the Yeomanry, 86 from private individuals, and 991 from dealers, from the majority of whom purchases have been made for the first time.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

SIR GUYER HUNTER (Hackney, Central) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, When a reply to the deputation of the Association of Members of the Royal College of Surgeons, received by the Lord President of the Council on November 11, 1887, may be looked for?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): Since the Lord President received the deputation on November 11 he has fully considered the statement submitted by them. All Petitions and statements on the subject were referred to a Committee of the Privy Council; and, as no legal questions were involved, it did not appear necessary to hear counsel. In consequence of the circumstances brought forward, the Supplemental Charter, as submitted by the College, has been considerably modified.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — BOROUGHS WITH 50,000 INHABITANTS.

SIR HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked the President of the Local Government Board, What form of proceeding should be taken on behalf of a borough not numbering 50,000 inhabitants at the last Census, but now claiming that number, to entitle it to the privilege, under the Local Government Bill, of becoming, for the purposes of that Bill, a county in itself?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The course which I would suggest would be that any such borough should forward to the Local Government Board the best evidence that they can adduce as to the increase in the population of the borough since the Census of 1881. Probably the best means of making an estimate of the increase of population would be a calculation on the basis of the number of inhabited houses as appearing in the Rate Book in April, 1881, and at the present time.

PUBLIC MEETINGS—SPEECH OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY AT BATTERSEA.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to his speech at Battersea on May 16, relative to imprisonment for selling copies of Irish newspapers, If it is true that numbers of young lads in the City of Cork were prevented by the local police from selling copies of *The Cork Herald* and *The Cork Examiner* in the public street, and that some old women, who get their livelihood by the same newspapers in the suburbs of Cork, were likewise prevented by the police from selling the papers; and, whether some young lads were arrested and taken to the doors of the local Bridewell, though not actually imprisoned, in order to prevent them from carrying on the sale of *The Cork Herald*, *The Cork Examiner*, or *United Ireland* in the streets of the city?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Sir, it appears that there is no truth whatever in the report to which the hon. Gentleman refers.

MR. FLYNN: Arising out of the answer which the right hon. Gentleman has given, might I ask him if he is aware that large numbers of young lads in the City of Cork have been arrested by the police, and taken to the Bridewell, on the charge of selling copies of certain newspapers; and, furthermore, is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a large number of lads and one old man have been arrested by the police, taken to the Bridewell, and detained there some time on a charge of refusing to sell a copy or copies of certain papers to the police?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If I understand rightly this Question, which the hon. Gentleman says arises out of the Question on the Paper, it is really the same Question in a somewhat different form, and I can, therefore, only repeat the answer I gave before, that there is no truth whatever in the statement to which he refers.

MR. FLYNN: Will the right hon. Gentleman tell me, if I furnish him with the names of the lads in question; and, furthermore, if I furnish him with the names of the police, will he take steps to prosecute inquiries?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, if the hon. Gentleman will give me any information which will lead me to suppose that the answer I have given him is in any particular incorrect, I will make further inquiries; but to give the names of the boys seems a small step in the direction.

MR. FLYNN: I will give the names not only of the boys, but the names of the police who arrested them.

EVICTIONS (SCOTLAND)—CAITHNESS-SHIRE.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the case that correspondence has taken place between the Secretary for Scotland and several Inspectors of Poor in Caithness regarding the relation between evictions and pauperism; and, whether a copy of the correspondence will be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): No, Sir; I am informed that there has been no such correspondence.

DR. CLARK repeated his Question.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I have given the answer supplied to me, and I have no information on the subject.

DR. CLARK asked if the Lord Advocate would make inquiries on the subject, as a number of Inspectors of Poor had received letters purporting to be from the Marquess of Lothian, and must be disgusted unless this was some mistake.

[No reply.]

WAR OFFICE—HYPOTHETICAL INVASION OF THIS COUNTRY—TRANSPORT FOR 100,000 MEN.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he has noticed certain statements publicly made regarding his Estimate of 480,000 tons of shipping for the conveyance of 100,000 men from France to England; whether he adheres to that Estimate; whether he can give the average of tonnage per man and horse from Bombay for the Expeditions to Abyssinia and Cyprus; and, whether the average for a man is less on a short voyage, as compared with a long one, while the average per horse remains without material difference?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Perhaps, considering the importance of the Question and the interest which is taken in the subject, the House will allow me to extend my answer beyond the usual limits of an answer to a Question. The figures which I gave the other day as to the transport necessary to enable 100,000 men to land and seize London by surprise, took into consideration the only conditions under which such a feat comes within the range of possibility—first, that the disembarkation of the Army from the ships conveying them was simultaneous; second, that the Army so disembarked was capable of rapid movement. The Estimate of 480,000 gross tons required for the invading force was on the assumption that the force would be equivalent to three Army Corps constituted, as regards Cavalry and Artillery, &c., as laid down at page 198 of *The Soldier's Pocket Book;* and the 480,000 gross tons estimated to be required is equivalent to 312,000 tons net, which is at the rate of 1½ ton per man, and 4 tons per horse. In *The Soldier's Pocket Book,* at pages 197 to 202, minute calculations are made of the tonnage necessary to convey troops —(1.) on short voyages, such as crossing the Irish and English Channels; (2.) for voyages not exceeding a week; and (3.) for long voyages. According to these tables, the estimate per man and horse, on the first supposition, is 1½ and 2½ tons respectively; and on these data the transport of three Army Corps would take, in gross tonnage, 399,330 tons, as against my Estimate of 480,000. But the details contained in *The Soldier's Pocket Book,* as regards the requirements for sea transport, were furnished by the Transport Department 13 years ago. Since that time the Department has had greatly extended experience of the capacity of steamers, especially of the modern type; and although the estimate then made holds good for long and medium voyages, it has been found that modern steamships do not afford deck space, free from deck-houses, steam-winches, and hatchways, sufficient to allow of standing horses, with only room enough for them to be fed and watered, on an average net tonnage of 2½ tons per horse; and, therefore, the more accurate estimate of 4 tons per horse was substituted for that of 2½ tons. I further find that the problem represented by Supposition No. 1 in the *The Soldier's Pocket Book* was not for moving a force to a hostile country, but from an English port to one friendly port across the Channel, in which case it would be insured that the troops and horses could be disembarked at once. Moreover, it assumes that no opposition from a hostile fleet need be taken into consideration. In the case now under consideration the embarkations would have to be distributed amongst ports hundreds of miles apart—it could not be effected in less than six hours; and, judging from the experience of Eupatoria—where, notwithstanding the aid of 350 boats from the men-of-war, it took 11 hours to land 30,000 men and 24 guns—it is not likely that the disembarkation of 100,000 men could be effected in a day. The problem, therefore, much more closely assimilates to Supposition No. 2—namely, a voyage of under a week, than Supposition No. 1 —namely, a voyage of a few hours; and the Transport Department is satisfied that the tonnage has not been overestimated, if the force referred to be three complete Army Corps capable of rapid movement. Assuming, however, that instead of three Army Corps we have to consider the force which Napoleon contemplated despatching in 1805 —namely, 155,000 men, 14,600 horses, with 432 guns—the tonnage required, according to *The Soldier's Pocket Book,* would be under Supposition 1, 926,000 tons net, 411,570 tons gross; under Supposition 2, 397,600 tons net, 608,328 tons gross; or, according to the expectation of the Transport Department, 290,900 tons net, equal to 445,077 tons gross. My figures are based on the practical data of daily experience and ascertained facts, and upon the knowledge that difference between gross and net tonnage is yearly increasing, owing to the greater space and power of the engines and boilers and coal bunkerage of modern passenger ships; and I adhere to them as correct. The information respecting the Expeditions from India to Abyssinia and Malta (for Cyprus) cannot be furnished at once in a form available for comparison. A greater proportionate reduction on short voyages can be made for men than can be for horses—which occupy the same standing room in all cases—while men require to lie down to sleep on long voyages.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): Considering the great interest of the statement which the noble Lord has made, will he have any objection to lay some Papers on the Table, so that the public may have the facts placed before us given to them in some more authoritative way than in a newspaper report?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I quite accept the correctness of the data given in *The Soldier's Pocket Book.*

Mr. CHILDERS: The figures given by the noble Lord are of great interest, and deserve careful criticism and confirmation or refutation. I therefore desire to ask him whether there is any objection, in the interests of the House and the public, to having his statement presented in a more authoritative form than a mere report in the newspapers?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I will consider the point and see what can be done.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston): May I ask whether beyond *The Soldier's Pocket Book* there has been any joint or formal consultation between the Admiralty and the War Office on this most important question?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes; 13 years ago certain data were drawn up, and these are the data contained in *The Soldier's Pocket Book;* but the data I have just given to the House are based on the result of more modern experience.

Mr. HANBURY: But has there been any consultation between the two Departments?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: The Memoranda on which the data in *The Soldier's Pocket Book* are based were the result of a joint conference.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.): Will the noble Lord add a statement showing how the conditions would be affected by the fact of an army being conveyed in two, three, or four successive stages, the ordinary voyage not occupying more than two or three hours?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: That entirely destroys the theory of a sudden surprise.

Sir JOHN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): Will the noble Lord also consider whether he could not add to the statement particulars as to the water area of ports between Dunkirk and Brest, and the wharfage accommodation actually existing at those ports?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: That is not a question that comes officially within my province; but, if it is the wish of the House, I will try to draw up further information, and lay it before the House in a more authoritative way than an answer reported in the newspapers.

SCOTCH UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION—SELECTION OF THE MEMBERS.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Government, in selecting the members of the Scotch Universities Commission, had regard to the question whether these noblemen and gentlemen had been educated at any of the Scotch Universities, or otherwise possessed a practical acquaintance with the Scotch University system; and, whether he will be prepared, on the second reading of the Universities (Scotland) Bill, to state to the House the qualifications of the proposed Commissioners in this respect?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Those responsible for the names already placed upon the Paper for the Commission believe that those nominated are, as a body, well acquainted with the Scottish University system, and that they take a deep interest in it, and most of them have received their education under it. I hope the hon. Member will see that it would be impossible to enter into personal detail on such matters.

THE FRANCHISE ACT (IRELAND) 1884—DUTIES OF THE POOR'S RATE COLLECTORS.

Mr. MARUM (Kilkenny, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the very onerous duties of the poor's rate collectors of Ireland in reference to the Franchise Act, especially the preparation of the large number of franchise forms necessary, and the service of the same involving much time and labour, and for which they allege the remuneration at present given is wholly inadequate; and, whether he will make inquiry in reference thereto with a view of equitable adjustment of their claims?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): As I have already explained, in reply to a similar Question, it is impossible for me to add anything to the answer given on this subject upon the 12th of March last.

TOWNS IMPROVEMENT (IRELAND) ACT—TULLAMORE.

Dr. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government intend to appoint a magistrate at Tullamore for the purposes of the Towns Improvement Act?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The matter referred to in this Question would, under the Statute indicated, be one for the consideration of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, upon the Town Commissioners carrying out the statutable requirements.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — BOARD OF GUARDIANS—BALLYMENA UNION—THOMAS DUFFIN.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that Thomas Duffin, a relieving officer and rate collector in the Ballymena Union, was called upon to resign the first named position by a majority of the Board of Guardians in the said Union; if he refused to do so, what were the reasons for which he was called upon to resign; whether he still holds the position; whether he has been obliged to relinquish the position of rate collector; and, for what reasons; and, whether the Government will institute a sworn inquiry into the circumstances of the case?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he was sorry to say he had not yet received the information which would enable him to answer the Question.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—HOSPITALS ON BOARD PASSENGER STEAMSHIPS.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether hospitals on board passenger steamships of the Mercantile Marine, and of Transatlantic liners in particular, are kept solely for the accommodation of the sick among the passengers and crew; whether they are ever permitted to be used by ships' officers and engineers who have let their state rooms to passengers for remuneration; whether they are ever used as surgeries; whether the regulation medicine chest, as ordered by the Board of Trade, is usually or ever kept in the hospital; whether the plates bearing the several inscriptions, Male and Female Hospital respectively, are ever removed after the Board of Trade officers have made their inspection at Liverpool or Queenstown, and the accommodation utilised for cabin or intermediate passengers; and, by what means can the Government prevent or detect such breaches of the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Trade?

The PRESIDENT (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) (Bristol, W.): I have caused inquiry to be made, and am assured that the irregularities suggested by the hon. Member's Question do not occur in vessels coming under the Passengers Acts. The hospitals are kept solely for the sick, and are not used for any other purpose except in case of emergency. Sometimes the medicine chest is kept in the hospital, but usually in the surgeon's room; and, in many instances, separate dispensaries are fitted up. The Board of Trade officers at the several emigration ports report that the plates indicating the different hospitals have never, to their knowledge, been removed; and that they have every reason to believe that the Acts and Regulations are generally complied with. I should not hesitate to order a prosecution in any case in which evidence of a contravention was shown. I am informed, also, that it is a part of the inspection by Government officials in Canada and the United States to see that the ship's hospital accommodation is satisfactory; and that the strictness with which this inspection is carried out, coupled with the vigilance of the officials in this country, renders evasion of the law in Transatlantic vessels extremely difficult, if not impossible. When a ship carries "cabin" passengers only, and no emigrant passengers, the Board are given to understand that in some lines the space that would be required for hospitals if emigrants were carried is sometimes used for cabin passenger accommodation; but this is not a contravention of the Passengers Acts.

Dr. TANNER wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman, in the interests of common humanity, when he stated these irregularities did not occur in vessels coming under the Passengers Acts, was he to understand from the right hon. Gentleman that the larger Cunard vessels, which merely carried cabin passengers, gave up their hospital accommodation, when necessary, for the benefit of such passengers; and might he ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it was a fact that the ships to which he alluded were some of the largest ships in the Atlantic trade, and absolutely had separate surgeries detached from the hospital; and might he also ask whether it was in the spirit and according to the letter of the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Trade that the unfortunate poor steerage passengers—people who could not afford to pay more than the bare passage across—should be subject to the noxious fumes of medicines in closely confined hospital cabins while crossing the Atlantic—might he ask the right hon. Gentleman—["Order!"]—Well, he was merely asking these Questions in the interests of humanity, and he was sure his hon. Friends around him would support him—might he ask the right hon. Gentleman whether an arrangement could be entered into with the officials on the other side of the water—the American agents and officials—which would satisfactorily help to protect these unfortunate creatures from being mercilessly ill-treated by the officials on board ships, in order that more money might be squeezed out of——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he did not think the hon. Member had any right to make such a charge unless he had some proof. He had already told the hon. Member that if he could give any evidence to show that the laws had been violated, he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) would order a prosecution to be undertaken, if the evidence was sufficient to justify a prosecution.

DR. TANNER: Though I presume I am asking the right hon. Gentleman too much, may I ask him this—Is he aware that if the medical officers on board ship ventured to give such evidence as the right hon. Gentleman demands, they would be immediately sent about their business, and be deprived of the means of earning their daily bread?——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

ARMY (IRELAND)—REFUSING TO BILLET SOLDIERS.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that several people were fined at the Macroom Petty Sessions on the 16th instant for being unable to provide accommodation for the Hussars which were billeted upon them on Sunday, April 8; who was responsible for the selection of the individuals upon whom the soldiers were billeted; and, whether it is correctly stated that one of the individuals fined was occupier of a small house, and that the house accommodation was fully taken up by his family, 18 in number?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, that the Deputy Inspector General of Constabulary reported that it was not the case that several people were fined for being unable to provide accommodation for soldiers on the occasion referred to. Two publicans, however, were fined for absolutely refusing accommodation to two soldiers billeted on each of them. In neither of these cases was the house a small one, nor had either of the individuals fined a family of 18 persons. The billets were issued by the local police.

DR. TANNER asked, if it was not a fact that one of the men had to provide for a family of 17, and that all the rooms in his house were occupied?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was informed that the largest household consisted of 10 persons, including the servants.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—CONVICTIONS FOR CONSPIRACY—THE EVIDENCE.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will lay upon the Table Copies of the Evidence on which convictions have been obtained in Ireland under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," for conspiracy to compel or induce any person not to deal with or work for any other person in the ordinary course of trade, business, or occupation?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I do not think any public advantage would be gained by adopting the very unusual course suggested by the right hon. Gentleman. The ends of justice seem to be amply secured by the existing right to have a case stated before the Superior Court; while the horrors of Boycotting, which many of these prosecutions are intended to mitigate, would be aggravated by the publicity of a Return such as that suggested.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co.,N.) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would guarantee to the House that persons who might apply to have a case stated should not be opposed by the Crown counsel?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It does not rest with the Crown counsel. It does not even rest with the magistrates to determine whether a case shall be stated or not. That is compulsory.

Mr. CLANCY: Then perhaps the Chief Secretary will state who instructed the Crown counsel to oppose the case stated on behalf of Sullivan, in Kerry?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Will the right hon. Gentleman, in view of his determination not to grant the Return asked for, at any rate give the House the assurance that in all cases when there is a charge of this nature evidence shall be taken, not merely of the persons subpœnaed in any individual case of exclusive dealing, but specifically on the question of conspiracy in combination with other persons?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Question of the right hon. Gentleman seems to require a knowledge of the practice of the Criminal Law, upon which I should be sorry to give an opinion without Notice; but I shall be most happy to answer his Question if he will be kind enough to put it on the Paper.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—REFUSAL TO GIVE EVIDENCE.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that on Monday, June 4, five men residing at Falcarragh, Donegal, were brought up from prison before Mr. Hamilton, R.M., at Letterkenny, and were committed a third time to imprisonment for refusing to give evidence; and, if so, do the Government intend in any way to deal with these repeated imprisonments for what was practically the same offence?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I believe the facts are as stated in the first part of the Question. I should have no title to interfere in the matter, even supposing I desired to do so. Nor should I describe the action of the magistrate as that of giving repeated sentences of imprisonment for the same offence. It would, I think, be more accurate to say that on a repetition of the fault there was a repetition of the punishment.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I beg to give Notice that I shall take an early opportunity of raising this question in the House.

AFRICA — CAPE COAST — MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS, &c.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any, and what, steps have been taken to comply with the request of the inhabitants of Cape Coast for municipal institutions and a Board of Health; whether the Letter and Draft Scheme submitted by them to Colonel White, at his request, in July last, have been brought to the notice of the Colonial Office; and, if so, what, if any, instructions have been sent out to the Local Government regarding the same; and, whether he will consider the expediency of authorising trial by jury in civil causes, especially in land cases, in which, owing to the peculiar Native Law of descent and tenure, great injustice is frequently done?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Baron Henry de Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In answer to the hon. Member, I have to state that the Letter and Draft Scheme referred to were duly sent home by Colonel White; but that the scheme was not one which could be sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government. In accordance with the instructions of the Secretary of State a Draft Ordinance for the establishment of Municipalities was prepared at the Gold Coast and sent home, and, with certain slight amendments, has been approved. The Governor has been directed to introduce it formally into the Legislative Council, and then to publish it for general information before its enactment. In answer to the third paragraph of the Question, I must observe that the objections to trial by jury in civil cases at the Gold Coast are very great, principally on account of the ignorance and illiterate character of the people from whom the juries must be drawn, and also the tribal feuds and jealousies which exist. The Governor will, however, be directed to obtain Reports on the subject from the Judicial and Legal Authorities of the Colony.

INDIA—THIBET—THE "FORWARD" POLICY.

Mr. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is the intention of the Indian Government to carry out, with regard to Thibet, the policy of aggression advocated by various Anglo-Indian journals under the name of the "forward" policy?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): I can assure the hon. Member that the Government of India have no intention of pursuing a policy of aggression towards Thibet.

ADMIRALTY—GRATUITIES TO FAMILY OF JOHN M'CARTHY.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, with reference to the case of the widow and child of John M'Carthy, chief boatman of the Coastguard Station at Portmuck, Islandmagee, Whether he is aware that John M'Carthy was in active service up to December 29, 1887, when he was made a pensioner, and that he died two days afterwards; whether the doctor's certificate stated that he died of bronchial catarrh, from which he had been suffering for seven days previously, and during the time he was in active service; and, whether, considering the peculiar circumstances of this case, he will advise an increase of the gratuity to the widow and child of the deceased Coastguard?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The facts are as stated in the Question of the hon. Member. The doctor's certificate was to the effect that death resulted from cerebral hemorrhage. Some weeks before M'Carthy was pensioned he was suffering from bronchial catarrh. As I stated, in reply to a previous Question, there are no funds at the disposal of the Admiralty out of which the man's widow can be further assisted.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPLICATIONS FOR FAIR RENTS, COUNTY ANTRIM.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can state how many applications to fix fair rent in the County of Antrim were remaining unheard on the 1st instant; how many of these applications are from the Poor Law Union of Ballycastle; when a sitting was last held to hear applications from this Union; on what date, and in what town, the first stting of a Sub-Commission will be held for the County of Antrim; and, whether he can give the names of the gentlemen who will constitute this Sub-Commission?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners inform me that 2,057 cases remain unheard on the 1st instant, in County Antrim, of which 378 were from the Union of Ballycastle. The date of the last sitting at which cases from the Ballycastle Union were heard was July, 1887. The Commissioners are not in a position to state the date at which the next sitting for cases from the Ballycastle Union will be held; nor can they at present say the names of the gentlemen who will constitute the Sub-Commission. The place of sitting will be Ballycastle.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—CASE OF MRS. DAVIES, A PRISONER FOR CONTEMPT, AND OTHERS.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has read the Judgments delivered in the Queen's Bench Division in the case of Mrs. Davies, as reported in *The Times* of the 6th instant, lately imprisoned for contempt of Court, in the course of which Mr. Justice Mathew said—

> "It is not deemed right for a Judge in a Criminal Court, compelled to sentence a prisoner, to direct that his imprisonment shall continue until some condition is complied with, and the prisoner is entitled, when he has undergone his punishment, to unconditional release. Further, we have the assistance of the opinion of the Legislature against indefinite imprisonment for contempt, an opinion expressed in Acts of Parliament, and Rules of Court made with Parliamentary sanction;"

whether there are at present imprisoned

in Irish gaols for indefinite terms five prisoners for contempt of Court—namely, Cornelius Brien, James Quigley, Thomas Moroney, Nicholas Grace, and Mary Brien; whether he is aware that, in the case of a prisoner named Thomas Moroney, his mind is giving way; and that in another case, that of Mary Brien, the prisoner is reported "aged and infirm;" and, whether, inasmuch as three out of the said five prisoners have already been imprisoned for more than 12 months (the term to which by "The Debtor's Act, 1869," "even in a case of grievous delinquency the imprisonment is restricted"), he will consider the propriety of advising Her Majesty to exercise her Prerogative of Mercy, and direct the release of these prisoners?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): My attention has been called by the Question to the observations of the learned Judge. Without going into the facts of the case referred to, I may observe that there appears to be nothing in those observations inconsistent with the principles laid down by the Court in the Judgment delivered by Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, from which I quoted in reply to a previous Question of the hon. Member. I have already answered the remaining paragraphs of the Question.

MR. CONYBEARE: What I want to know is, why equal justice should not be applied to prisoners for contempt in Ireland and in England?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand the same principles are applied.

MR. CONYBEARE: Seeing that the Legislature has pronounced against indefinite imprisonment for contempt, why should not the benefit of it be given to these five prisoners in Ireland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand the action of the Irish Courts is in exact conformity with the principles laid down by Lord Chief Justice Coleridge in this very case.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE LATE REGISTRAR OF THE WOLVERHAMPTON COUNTY COURT.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the examination of the accounts of the late Registrar of the Wolverhampton County Court after his decease showed a sum of £7,000, or what other sum, to be due from the Registrar to the County Court Department; on what account the said sum was so due, and how long any part of it had been outstanding; whether moneys held on balance by Registrars of County Courts often amount to many thousands of pounds; whether such balances are kept apart in official accounts at the local bankers, or are paid to the Registrar's private banking account; and, whether the County Court Department receives any interest which may be paid by the banker to the Registrar on current balances?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): As to the first paragraph, the accounts of the Registrar did not show a sum of £7,000 to be due from the Registrar. They showed that £1,126 0*s.* 7*d.* was due from the estate of the late Registrar, and that there was due to such estate £497 9*s.* 8*d.* The executors paid the balance, £628 10*s.* 11*d.*, into the Bank of England in March, 1875, four months after death. Moneys held on balance by Registrars of County Courts never amount to many thousands of pounds. In Courts in which the entry of plaints exceed £2,000 in a year, Registrars keep separate official accounts. The County Court Department does receive the interest paid by the banker to the Registrar on current balances.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE LATE REGISTRAR OF THE DUDLEY COUNTY COURT.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the accounts of the deceased Registrar of the Dudley County Court have been made up and examined since his decease; what sum is shown, or otherwise known, to be due from the Registrar; and, on what account, and how long, any part therof has been outstanding?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): The accounts of the Dudley County Court for the quarter ended the 31st of March, 1888, showed that there was due to the Treasury, outstanding since the commencement of the quarter, £941 13*s.* 11*d.*, and that there was due to the Registrar £654 16*s.* 9*d.*, leaving a balance due to the Treasury at the bank of £276 17*s.* 2*d.* The balance at the bank was £397 13*s.* 7*d.* The Registrar not having drawn the whole of the salary due to him by £96 1*s.* 3*d.*, the accounts for the current quarter will be audited next month.

FOOD SUPPLY—SALE OF FOREIGN MEAT AS ENGLISH.

Colonel EYRE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been called to the case of "Thomas Yoxall and John Yoxall *v.* William Coggan," butcher, at the Police Court, Westminster, on the 5th of June, in which evidence appears to have been given that butchers are in the habit of selling foreign meat as English; and, whether the selling meat as English which the butcher was well aware was foreign, and consequently of less market value, could be made the subject of criminal prosecution?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): In reply to the hon. and gallant Member, my attention has not been called to the case in question. Whether the selling of meat as English which the butcher knew to be foreign can be made the subject of criminal proceedings would depend entirely upon the circumstances under which the meat was sold.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE AND EXECUTOR—LEGISLATION.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the Bill for the appointment of a Public Trustee and Executor proposed to be brought in by the Government is now ready, and when it will be introduced?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said: Until further progress has been made with Public Business, especially with reference to Bills already sent down from the House of Lords, it is impossible to say when the Government will be able to introduce the Trustee Bill in that House.

In reply to Mr. Hanbury (Preston) and Mr. Shaw Lefevre (Bradford, Central),

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that he hoped it would not be necessary to interrupt the progress of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill this week in order to take the Army Estimates or other Votes in Supply. He would, however, state positively the course the Government would take to-morrow.

PUBLIC BUSINESS—THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—SUSPENSION OF THE STANDING ORDERS.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Solicitor General spoke on behalf of the Government, when he stated, as he is reported by the *Morning Advertiser* to have done, on June 6—

> "That after to-morrow the Local Government Bill would be taken diligently, and, if necessary, the Standing Orders would be suspended to pass it;"

and, whether there is really any intention on the part of the Government to take these exceptional means for promoting the Bill?

Mr. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I wish to ask whether there is any foundation for the statement which appeared in *The Standard* and other newspapers, to the effect that the Government have determined to drop for the present Session the Licensing Clauses?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I think the hon. Gentleman who has asked me the last Question has probably attached an interpretation to the paragraph which appeared in *The Standard* which accords with his own views; but I have the satisfaction of telling him that, as far as I read those paragraphs, they did not convey the interpretation which he has made. The Government have not come to any determination of the kind of which he speaks. In answer to the Question of the hon. Baronet, I have not seen the report in *The Morning Advertiser* alluded to; but I have no hesitation in assuring him that the Local Government Bill will be taken as often as the state of Business will permit, and that the Government will use all the means in their power, and compatible with the Rules and Regulations of the House, to push the Bill forward. I have said so repeatedly. My hon. and learned Friend (the Solicitor General) tells me that his statement has not been accurately reported. I have not seen that report myself; but it appears to me extraordinary that the hon. Baronet should have asked me whether we were really in earnest in pressing the Bill forward.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: What I want to know is, what is intended by the expression, "The Standing Orders would be suspended?"

MR. W. H. SMITH: My hon. and learned Friend said he did not use that expression. Certainly his statement did not mean anything more than what would be in accordance with the usages of Parliament. In an emergency it would be the duty of the Government fairly and reasonably to press this measure forward.

Subsequently,

MR. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked: When will the right hon. Gentleman tell us whether he is going to go on with the clauses dealing with the Licensing Question in the Local Government Bill?

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: May I ask if the Government are deferring answering that Question until after the Ayr Election?

MR. W. H. SMITH: It may amuse the hon. Baronet to make any statement he may think fit with regard to the Ayr Election. In answer to the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Caine), I have to repeat that the Government have not come to any decision of the kind mentioned in his Question. Should there be any necessity for taking a different course to that proposed, the Government would make a statement as soon as the decision was come to; but at present I am unable to say.

MR. CAINE: Are we to understand, then, in the meanwhile, that the Government have decided to go on with the Licensing Clauses?

MR. W. H. SMITH: Certainly, Sir.

MR. CAINE: Thank you.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE AFFRAY AT MITCHELSTOWN IN SEPTEMBER LAST.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is able to give the answer he kindly promised to a Question I put to him the other day with reference to laying information on the Table as to the three men who were unhappily shot at Mitchelstown.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am not allowing that matter to sleep; but I am not in possession of full information at present.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—[BILL 182.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

[THIRD NIGHT.]

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 8th June*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

COUNTY COUNCILS.

PART I.

Clause 2 (Composition and election of Council and position of chairman).

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne), in moving, at the end of line 18, to insert—

> "Provided that all Members of Parliament for any division of a county, or any borough within the county, shall be qualified to be a councillor,"

said, he thought that all Members of Parliament ought to be *ex officio* members of the Council for the division of a county which they represented or any borough within the county. He wished to make it clear that Members of Parliament were not to be excluded from the opportunity of representing the counties on the County Council as well as in Parliament. Though they might not possess the qualification of ownership of property, it was well known that many Members of Parliament would not be qualified as owners of property to represent the county for which they stood; but, considering that they were considered fit to represent the great and material interests of the constituency in the House of Commons, he thought they ought to be qualified to represent the same interests in the County Councils. It was with that object that he had placed the Amendment on the Paper. As he had explained, it was a very simple matter, and he trusted the Government would see their way to accept the Amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the Amendment was put down as a Proviso, and must be moved as a separate Sub-section.

MR. CONYBEARE said, he had no objection to move it in that way.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 18, to insert the words—"All Members of Parliament for any division of a county, or any borough within the county, shall be qualified to be a councillor.—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, he did not complain of the hon. Member for moving the Amendment; but he would express a hope that there should be some finality in regard to Motions of this kind. Members of Parliament would, of course, be eligible if they possessed the necessary qualifications; but the Government could not accept the proposal of the hon. Member.

MR. CONYBEARE maintained that he was perfectly justified in having placed the Amendment on the Paper.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) complained that the definition of the qualification for councillors was extremely narrow and grudging.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he thought the Amendment was useful, because it accentuated the fact that the Government Bill was a most illiberal measure. Here they had the positive fact that a Gentleman who was deemed fit to sit for a particular constituency in the House of Commons, yet, by this Bill, would not be allowed to sit on the County Council for the very constituency he represented in Parliament.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, all the clause asked was that Members of Parliament should not have further powers than other individuals who resided in the county. He failed to see why they should have further powers. If they did their duty properly, they would be in London for six or seven months in the year, and from that fact alone they would not be very well qualified to perform local duties in their own districts.

Question put, and *negatived.*

THE CHAIRMAN said, he wished to call attention to the fact that the next Amendment which took precedence on the Paper involved two questions—namely, whether all the councillors should be elective councillors, and whether there should be no aldermen. It might be a question whether those two points ought not to be raised separately. The hon. Member for North Kensington (Sir Roper Lethbridge) had given Notice of his intention to omit the word "elective."

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) said, he had no desire to do anything that would be contrary to the directions of the Chair, but it seemed to him that the objection which had been raised might be met by an addition to the Amendment now upon the Paper to provide that there should be no selected councillors or aldermen.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that there would still be two questions raised, and each of them ought to be discussed and voted upon accordingly.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE said, that if that was the ruling of the Chair, he would withdraw his Amendment.

MR. STANSFELD (Halifax) in moving in line 19, leave out paragraph (a) which provided that—

> "The councillors elected by the council shall be called selected councillors in lieu of aldermen, and the other councillors shall be called elective councillors,"

in order to insert—

> "All the councillors shall be elective councillors, and there shall be no aldermen,"

said, he proposed to give certain reasons why this was a matter in regard to which he entertained some hope that the Government would assent to the proposal. In the first place, he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, and to the House, that his Amendment was consistent with the introductory speech of the right hon. Gentleman, whereas the present drafting of the Bill was not consistent with that speech. There was, indeed, nothing more remarkable in the able speech of the right hon. Gentleman than the sturdy way in which he declared, on behalf of the Government and their supporters, that they were determined to trust the people, and to place the County Councils in future by direct election and not by indirect and secondary election in contact with the people of the county.

Therefore, he thought, the right hon. Gentleman would admit that the Amendment was more consistent with his introductory speech and the principles he intended to lay down, than the provisions of the Bill in their present shape. The right hon. Gentleman had told them candidly that he had followed the precedent of the Municipal Corporations Act. What was now proposed would make that admission a more intelligible, reasonable, and sensible proceeding on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. It was, no doubt, difficult enough to pass any measure of so complex a character as the present Bill, and, in his opinion, the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly justified in relying upon the precedent of the Municipal Corporations Act passed some years ago, but it was quite a different question when Amendments were proposed in that House, whether the right hon. Gentlemen or the Government should accept those Amendments or not. It was one thing to say that the Government were wise in having drafted the Bill on the lines of the Municipal Corporations Act, and quite another thing to say that in no respect would they depart from those lines to suit the views and desires of hon. Members in any part of the House. As a matter of fact, however, the right hon. Gentleman had already, in two instances, departed from the lines of the Municipal Corporations Act. He had accepted two Amendments and he was now simply asked to accept a third. The first Amendment related to the admission as members in the County Councils of clerks in Holy Orders, and the second made eligible an owner of property who was not resident in the county. He now asked the right hon. Gentleman to accept an Amendment which would establish a third difference between this Bill and the Municipal Corporations Act by getting rid of selected members, on the ground that to do so would be more consistent with his own declaration of principle than the present drafting of the Bill. If they went back for a moment to the reasons why the Municipal Corporations Act was passed, it might be said, although it was hardly pertinent to the subject, that the Liberal Party were not responsible for the creation of aldermen under that Act. He laid no stress upon that historical fact, because a great many years had passed since then, and a great many things had happened, and he did not see why hon. Members on either side of the House should be bound by what was done under very different circumstances. What was done at the time of the passing of the Municipal Reform Act, so far as boroughs were concerned, was well known, and he was ready to admit that there were two sides to the question. On the one hand, it was said that certain advantages had resulted from the provisions they had made, and that it enabled the Municipal Corporations to secure the service of men of experience, position, weight, and authority who might be induced to serve for a period of years, but would decline to go before the constituency for election. He believed there was something in that argument as far as the boroughs were concerned. On the other hand, there was another argument which was equally well known and understood—namely, that the election of aldermen at the first institution of a Town Council had, in many instances, absolutely modified the constitution of those Bodies, and that that modification had continued in a sense opposed to the popular opinion of the town at that particular time from that day down to the present moment. He did not know how the right hon. Gentleman, consistently with the large and liberal principles he had laid down during the second reading of the measure, was justified in deliberately proposing an arrangement which undoubtedly was calculated to produce this consequence—that in a certain number of cases the County Councils would not, at certain times, reflect the complete public opinion of the county. The argument in its favour had already been stated that it gave an element of stability to the Body itself, and enabled it to resist outward pressure, and too rapid changes of opinion. He had read the other day that its object was to put some check on the effect of passion at the moment; but he could hardly conceive the idea of passion attaching to the question of the future election of county councillors. When he considered the limited class from whom it would be able to choose, his only apprehension was, that they would find a difficulty in getting together a sufficient number of persons, having the public interests at heart who would be prepared to serve, having regard to the fact that the County Councils would meet at a considerable distance from certain parts of the county, and that eligible persons might neither have the necessary leisure, nor the means to accept a position which would render their services useful. He would go a little further in this matter, and would submit to the right hon. Gentleman that he was not bound to introduce this principle into the County Councils. Reasons might exist in the boroughs which did not exist in the counties. The class of people eligible for County Councils were a limited class, and it would be extremely difficult to secure the services of men of experience. Some local men might desire to get upon a District Council, but it would not suit them to stand for the division of the county in which they resided, nor would they be able to bear the expense. After all, the question of expense might be far less important to such men than the loss of time by being taken away from the management of their business. No doubt, this would not apply to the landed gentry; but below that class there were small farmers and shop keepers who could not afford to leave their business, and go away from time to time in order to attend to the meetings of the County Councils. Then, again, the selected councillors were to be appointed for a period twice as long as that for which the ordinary councillor was elected. What was the reason for that? It was all based on an analogy of borough life, which was not, to him, an exact analogy, because county life could not become so concentrated. Above all there was this difference, that in the boroughs the whole government of the borough was in the hands of the councillors, whereas in the counties it was very different. He, therefore, did not see, even from the point of view of good administration, that any advantage would be derived from making the county system the same as that in the boroughs. He failed to see any necessity for it, and he did not see why the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board should be bound to his present proposal seeing that he had accepted two Amendments already which altered the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act. Therefore, without detaining the House longer, and trusting that the Government would not meet his proposal with a hasty refusal, he begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 19, to leave out paragraph (A), and insert, "All the councillors shall be elected councillors, and there shall be no aldermen."—(*Mr. Stansfeld.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon) said, he thought it was of importance to consider the question principally from an administrative point of view. He thought they were in great danger of making a mistake if they refused to consider the matter from an administrative point of view. He agreed with his right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) in some of the points he had laid down. Unless they took great care he did not think they would get in the County Councils a sufficient variety of Gentlemen of the various parties they required in the new Administrative Body, nor did he think they should be tied down to one single form of election if that did not give them the best chance of securing the best talent of the county. What they required was men of experience, and not men who would be ready to undertake offices of honour, and then neglect the duties attached to them. That was certainly the case now. Take the county magistrates themselves. A large number of gentlemen, qualified as county magistrates, never took any part in the work at all. In this case it would be considered an honorary office, and there was a danger that a number of persons would be ready to assume the office who would never perform the duties. If that occurred, what would happen? The work of the County Councils was not as likely to be as light as might be supposed. Upon the County Councils was to be laid not only the duties it was proposed to transfer to them, but the whole organization of a new scheme of Local Government. If hon. Members would look through the Bill as he had looked through it, they would see that at present it was merely a skeleton of a Bill, and before it could be placed in a position in which the public could understand it, its provisions must be extremely modified and extended by the County Councils themselves. That made it of the highest importance that they should throw into the County Councils the whole strength of the county, and he asked the Committee to consider whether the Bill, as it stood now, would do that? He was certainly not enamoured of the form which was adopted for constituting the different Councils, and he had placed on the Paper what he thought would be a better form upon which the councillors might be elected by the whole county, and not by districts. His Amendment was, in line 19, to leave out "the councillors elected by the council," and insert—

> "The members of the council, who, if the council were the council of a borough, would be the aldermen, shall, until district councils are constituted in pursuance of this Act, be elected by the county council, and afterwards shall be elected by the district councils of the county. The apportionment of the councillors to be elected by the district councils shall be such as the Local Government Board may determine. A councillor elected by a district council shall be, at the time of his election to the county council, an elective councillor of the district council, and may hold both offices together. The councillors elected by district councils."

Under the Bill as it stood, each councillor would have to be elected by a small district, and each district would only have the power of selecting one councillor. There was almost sure to be in the district some good man—very likely a useful man—whom it would be of great advantage to put on the County Council, but it would probably be the case that the man who would be returned would be elected because he represented some special local idea or some special idea of his own. Their object should be to obtain the services of men for the management of county business who had ample leisure and adequate experience to enable them to undertake the responsible duties which would be imposed upon them. There must, therefore, be some plan beyond the mere election of councillors, one by each local district, and some attempt must be made to secure upon the County Councils the most experienced and most leisured men of the county. His right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax had declared that the election of Aldermen by the votes of Aldermen had led to very great abuses, and that he (Mr. Rathbone) admitted was a matter which must absolutely be remedied. He had no doubt that the Government would be ready to remedy it; but the cause of the discredit which attached to the election of Aldermen was the fact that, under the present law, Aldermen could vote for Aldermen, and, consequently, when the majority in a town who elected the majority of the councillors changed their opinion, and wished to carry out their views, their determination was upset by the aldermen voting with the minority, and thus converting it into a majority. That was a monstrous system, which was never intended to prevail. He had placed an Amendment on the Paper with a view of putting an end to those abuses, and he hoped that it would be accepted by the Government. If they did accept it, it would, he thought, entirely remove the principal objection which his right hon. Friend made to the selection of Aldermen, and would leave the advantage which had resulted in the boroughs from the selection of members who had proved their qualification for carrying on Local Government, and whose services it was desirable to secure. Although his right hon. Friend did not appear to consider that the difficulty of selecting extended to the Councils, as the Bill was now drawn, it was of great importance that some form of electing the councillors for a longer period—who would represent not so much separate localities as the opinion of the whole county—should be adopted. He had got together all the information he could as to the working of these institutions in other places. They were now constituting the Local Government system on a democratic basis; and taking the experience gained by America, where a similar system existed in some places, it would appear that it frequently resulted in keeping the best men out of office and producing very bad management. Judging from the experience of America, it was desirable to have a wider method of election than single elected members. In Brooklyn, Philadelphia, and, in a lesser degree, in Boston and New York, means had been taken to modify the system. In one place, where there were 19 members on the Board of Aldermen, 12 were elected by three districts—four to each ward—and it was required that seven out of the 19 should be elected by the whole city. He trusted that, either in that form or some other, a change would be made in the method of electing the County Councils under the Bill, and that the Government would maintain the system of selecting a portion of the County Council on some broader basis than that of single member election in a small district. If they did not adopt some such provision, he was afraid they would find that their experience would be very similar to that of America, and that men would be elected from some local or selfish motive; so that, instead of getting the best men who were known in the counties and boroughs, the work would fall into the hands of more selfish men. Anyone who had watched the course of Local Government in this country would see that it occasionally happened that men who took the most active interests in the work were influenced by selfish motives.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Arfon Division of Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) seemed to fear that the electors of the county would not know who were the best men to govern them and be their representatives on the County Council. If that were likely to be the case, and if the opinion of the hon. Member was correct, then he contended the whole of the Bill was one gigantic mistake. They were told, when the Bill was introduced, that the principle of the Bill was to trust to the people, and that principle he, for one, had accepted in its fullest extent. He thought the electors of the county were to be trusted thoroughly in the choice of their representatives, and he believed the Government thought so to. If this principle were not accepted, he thought it would be better for the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board if a millstone had been placed round his neck and he had been thrown into the sea, rather than present such a Bill as the present. He was of opinion, however, that the Members of Her Majesty's Government believed what they said, and that they did trust the people, and accordingly he appealed to them to accept the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld). If there were to be any selected councillors, then, in his opinion, and in the opinion, he believed, of a great number of other persons who knew something of local administration, the result would be that the best men in every division would stand aside. They would refuse to undergo the turmoil, annoyance, and worry of a contested election, and they would stand aside, expecting that the elected councillors would naturally look to them and those without as the selected members. On the other hand, he thought it quite reasonable that the electors themselves, knowing that, after they had performed their functions and elected a certain number of gentlemen to rule over them, there would be a further election, and that other gentlemen would be brought in to join with them, would be chary about voting for those men who they regarded as the most suitable to conduct their affairs. For this reason they would say, "I want my vote for A, B, or C. It is quite certain that X is admittedly the best man of all. He will, therefore, be selected hereafter by co-option." Therefore, the electors themselves would vote for A, B, or C, but not for X, the best man. By "best" he meant not at all the richest or the highest in rank, but simply the man who was the best qualified to perform the function of ruling in the County Council. The views he ventured to submit to the Committee referred more especially to London, but he could not help thinking that, to a certain extent, they would cover the rest of the country. He would, therefore, press upon Her Majesty's Government and his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board the propriety of accepting the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax.

Mr. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) said, he hoped that the right. hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would not accept the Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that he had brought in the Bill upon the old municipal lines, and he, for one, would be much disappointed if the right hon. Gentleman gave up the old Conservative principle which had been embodied in this Bill. He also thought that if the Government accepted this Amendment, they would not only recede from the principle they had laid down, but would introduce a system altogether opposed to the lines of the existing Municipal Corporations Act, of which they had heard so much. Remarks had been made about "lubricating" the Bill, but the necessary effect would be, if they were to carry the process of lubricating much further, that very little of the original Bill would be left. Personally, he was strongly in favour of the dual system, for they must remember that in electing the new Councils they were not merely transferring the work of the present magistracy to the new Bodies, but they were creating a new institution which was to do totally different and more important work. Unless they established a dual system, it would be impossible to give the County Councils much more extensive powers than the magistracy now possessed. The municipal constitution established by the Municipal Reform Act had been a great success. In our Imperial Constitution we had gone on a system of opposition, check upon check, and he maintained that in electing a new Council that system of checks, which had already worked so well, ought to be followed. There were many people who said that they could trust the people, but in doing so use was made rather of a "fetching" cry than of an argument that appealed to the mind and to the conscience. For his own part, he thought no one ought to put unlimited trust in anybody, whether it was an individual or a corporate body. In laying the foundation of a new system of Local Government, the Committee ought to remember that if they built upon a narrow foundation they could afterwards widen it, and, therefore, it would be foolish in these democratic days to lay down the widest possible principle. They had been told by the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) that in America, where municipalities were originally laid down on the widest bases, occasion had already arisen for modifying them. The hon. Member for North Kensington (Sir Roper Lethbridge) seemed to think that by the dual system many gentlemen would court selection, thinking thereby to avoid the risk and turmoil of a contested election; but he was inclined to think that the members of the Council, who had themselves undergone the worry of contested elections, would hardly be likely to vote for those who had stood aloof from the turmoil of an election contest, and would be much more likely to appoint persons from their own ranks who had borne the heat and burden of the day. Therefore the prospect would be diminished of such persons being selected unless they had first undergone an election in the county. For these reasons he hoped the Government would not accept the Amendment, and that they would not run away from the Conservative principle embodied in the Municipal Corporations Act.

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, the last speaker had not been very fair to his hon. Friend the Member for Canarvonshire, who had shown a thorough knowledge of the subject. The real difficulty was to get the best men to stand an election for the County Council. Under the Municipal Corporations Act it was laid down that Aldermen should be elected, not only from the inside Council, but from those who were outside; and it was understood, no doubt, by that provision that persons who were not willing to put themselves forward in order to be elected as Councillors might, if they were desirable, be elected as Aldermen. But the practice had come to be this—that the Council invariably elected men from their own body, and really good men were to a large extent put aside. In the counties allusion had been made to men of business, farmers, and others who did not care to occupy a prominent position, and who would not allow themselves to be put forward as candidates if they were to undergo contested elections. No doubt that was so, and there were a great many men in the county whose business was so extensive that they would not allow themselves to be put forward as candidates; but he ventured to say that those were the very men whom the County Councils would be glad to obtain, and he did not see how their services were to be obtained unless some other method of election were provided except direct election. In saying this, it must not be supposed that he entertained any distrust of the principle of election. At most elections the candidates were brought forward on one line or another. Should those who were elected find themselves in a majority of two on the first election they would be able to get the management of the whole of the business in their own hands by returning the whole of the Aldermen, thus transferring that which was merely a nominal majority of two into a majority of one-third of the entire body. He hoped the Government would take into consideration the other Amendments which stood on the Paper, in order that the constitution of the County Council might be made as perfect as possible.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, there was one matter which he should like his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board to make clear. Supposing that an Amendment of this kind were carried, how would it affect the election of Councils in the large boroughs which in the future were to become counties in themselves? He did not think that that point was made quite clear, even in the Bill when it was drawn, and when it was the intention of the right hon. Gentleman only to make Quarter Sessions boroughs counties in themselves. Since then that provision had been largely extended, and he desired to have the matter decided once and for ever. He would remind his right hon. Friend of this difficulty—that if Amendments of this kind were not to extend to elections to Corporations, or to boroughs which were in future to become counties, they would have two systems of counties throughout the country. If that were not the case, they would be reduced to the other alternative—that if they were to allow Amendments of this kind to affect the elections to Corporations they were practically amending the Municipal Corporations Act. He wished to hear from his right hon. Friend which of these two systems would be adopted.

MR. RITCHIE said, that his hon. Friend had asked a question which really went to the root of one of the objections which the Government had to the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax. His hon. Friend asked whether, if the Amendment were carried, it would affect the election of Councils of boroughs which were to be placed in the Schedule as counties in themselves? They did not propose anything in the Bill which would in any way affect the mode of election in boroughs which were to be made counties in themselves. His hon. Friend stated very properly that if the Government were to see their way to accept the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman, this anomaly—and he thought it would be an indefensible anomaly—would be created—that whereas the larger area of the county, and for many purposes the more important Councils, would be elected without any selected members at all, the smaller area made up of Councils of the boroughs which were to be made counties would have selected members. Looking to the fact that they were largely and properly extending the number of the boroughs to be included in the Schedule, the anomaly would thus be greatly accentuated; and, practically speaking, there would be in the small boroughs of 50,000 inhabitants selected Councillors, while the great counties proper would have Councils elected for their particular fitness. That was one reason why the Government could not recommend the Committee to accept the Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman, in his argument in favour of the Amendment, said that, if adopted, it would be more in accordance with the principle which he had laid down in the speech he had made in introducing the Bill to the House, when he said that its great principle was trust in the people. He adhered to what he had said. If the provision proposed by the Government were retained, the Bill would still embody the principle of trust in the people. There would be no element whatever within the County Councils which did not proceed from the people, because, as the right hon. Gentleman well knew, they were replacing a non-representative Body by a Body which was representative in the broadest sense that the Town Council of a borough was representative. The fact of the aldermanic element being introduced into the Bill did not show any distrust of the people, because all the appointments would practically be in the hands of the people and their representatives. If the Government had suggested any system of delegation or appointment for these new selected Councillors, then he thought there would have been a good deal of force in what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax; but, as it was, he maintained that the argument of the right hon. Gentleman had no force whatever. Another argument used by the right hon. Gentleman in favour of his Amendment was that although the Government had framed the Bill on the lines of the Municipal Corporations Act, and had brought that forward as an argument in its favour, yet, as a matter of fact, they had on two occasions departed from the principle of that Act. That he at once frankly admitted; but he was sure that the right hon. Gentleman would not wish them to take their stand rigidly upon any provisions of that Act which they might have considered not to have worked well and to be incapable of Amendment. What they had done was altogether on all-fours with the object of maintaining the principles of the Municipal Corporations Act. The principle of the Government had been to consider any Amendment which did not depart from the principle of the Municipal Corporations Act, but which yet removed some complaint in regard to the working of some of its provisions. It was in that spirit that the Government had accepted the Amendment with regard to the qualification of clergymen to sit as members of the Council. He thought it unwise to exclude from the Council ministers of any denomination if they were otherwise qualified; and he had, therefore, considered it unwise to adhere to that principle, notwithstanding the provision which existed in the Municipal Corporations Act. With reference to the argument of the right hon. Gentleman that the Liberal Party were not responsible for the aldermanic element in the Municipal Corporations Act, he would point out that if they had not been responsible for the original Act, they had certainly been responsible for that of 1882, which again re-enacted the obnoxious principle of selected members. Although he was prepared to admit that it was only a consolidating Act, yet it was allowed to pass with that element in it. The House of Parliament had assented to the retention of the automatic element with reference to the election of Town Councillors. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax said that might be all very well in the towns, but did not suit for the counties; and he had based that statement upon the argument that the duties which would devolve upon the County Councils would not be of so important a character in some degree as that which devolved upon Town Councils. The hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone)—than whom there was no man in that House who had a larger, better, or wider experience of the operations of the Municipal Corporations Act—on the other hand, told them that as far as his study of the Bill went, and his knowledge of the work of Town Councils, he believed that the duties of the new Councils would be as important as those which now fell on Town Councils. That was also the view of the Government. They thought that at the present moment it would not, perhaps, be wise or desirable to overlay the County Council at the outset with a great number of new powers; yet they believed that in the Council, as set up by the Bill, Parliament was establishing a Body which might, at a future time, be entrusted with powers very much larger and more extensive than those conferred by the Bill, extensive as they were. He therefore maintained that the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, that in retaining this provision of the Municipal Corporations Act they were showing distrust of the people, was not justified by what would ultimately turn out to be the fact. It was not at all on account of distrust in the people that the Government suggested to the Committee to adopt the principles of the Municipal Corporations Act with reference to selected members. The hon. Member for North Kensington (Sir Roper Lethbridge) seemed to imply that the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire was of opinion that the proposal showed distrust of the people. Now, he had not gathered that that was the argument of the hon. Gentleman, but rather that it was the desire of the hon. Member that they should be able to get Councillors out of the ranks of those who might be pre-eminently fitted for the work, but who could only with difficulty be got to stand an election.

Mr. RATHBONE said, his argument was that in some form or other it was desirable to have provided, in addition to the small area of the District Council, a wider area, and that the whole county should choose a certain portion of the members of the Council. He had said that the form proposed by the right hon. Gentleman did not directly accomplish that object, but it did indirectly, and he ventured to say that it did not show any distrust whatever of the people.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he was endeavouring to show from the argument of the hon. Member that the proposal of the Government did not show the smallest distrust of the people, and he was going on to say that he gathered from the hon. Gentleman's speech, and also from the speeches of others, that their desire was to maintain a system under which they would be able to get selected Councillors out of the ranks of men who were pre-eminently fitted for the work, but whom it would be very difficult to induce to stand an election. That was one of the arguments by which he had ventured to impress upon the Committee how desirable it was that there should be some other means than that of simple election by which they might select from outside the best men to be placed on the Council. Those were the reasons, along with that of continuity, which was also of great importance, which had induced the Government to adhere to what it considered to be the very beneficial provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act. It was said that by means of this provision in the Bill they might possibly maintain a perpetual majority in opposition to a majority of elected Councillors. He was bound to say that there was a good deal of force in the arguments which had been used in regard to the question. He did not think it was a wise or prudent thing that they should establish a system by which a perpetual majority one way might be obtained in the Council, while the elected majority might be of another way of thinking altogether. That was exactly one of the points to which he had alluded at the commencement of his remarks as one in which the Government did not intend to adhere rigidly to the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act; and he hoped the Committee would consider favourably the Amendment which would come on for discussion at a later period, by which the remaining selected Councillors should not vote for the new selected Councilors who were to be chosen. That, he thought, would do away with the objections which had been urged with reference to this point. These were the arguments by which the Government hoped the Committee would be influenced in the retention of the aldermanic element, subject, of course, to the modification he had mentioned.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he quite shared in the hope and belief of the right hon. Gentleman that the functions which would devolve upon the new County Councils would be as important as those which devolved upon the existing Town Councils; and it was because he desired to see the most competent and best qualified persons elected that he supported the objection of his right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) to the application of the provision of the Municipal Corporations Act, which had not been found to work satisfactorily in the boroughs. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board himself admitted at the close of his speech that he was not satisfied with the provisions in that Act in one most important respect, and that he was prepared to alter them. He felt bound to enter a protest against the statement that the Liberal Party were responsible for the retention of the aldermanic element in the Act of 1882. As a matter of fact, there were many Members in the House of Commons who wished to raise this very question at that time. But the Government made use of the argument that it was only a consolidating Bill, and that it was not the practice to introduce Amendments into a consolidating Bill. The consequence was that in the Bill of 1882 a great many provisions were included which ought not to have been re-enacted. He contended that the Liberal Party were not responsible for what was done in the Act of 1882. The provision of the original Bill was certainly not introduced by Lord John Russell, but was introduced in the House of Lords by Lord Lyndhurst. A compromise was accepted by Sir Robert Peel, and instead of an Alderman being elected for life, as the proposal originally was, it was agreed to adopt the term of six years. He had had some considerable experience in the working of the Municipal Corporations Act before he had a seat in that House, and he knew something of the working of the aldermanic principle. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman opposite that, though he was correct in the theory, the practice was not what he believed it to be. Now, the theory which, no doubt, would justify the aldermanic element was that they got the services of men who would not go through the worry and turmoil of popular election, but who were very valuable public servants, whom it was desirable to secure on the Town Councils. But, as a matter of fact, they did not get the services of distinguished men who would not go through a popular election. He would not say there was no exception; but his experience had extended over a good many years, and he did not know an instance of an Alderman having been elected who had not previously been a Town Councillor. That was invariably made a basis of promotion. As a matter of fact, the Town Councillors did not elect outside men, but men who had already done good work in the Council, who understood the nature of the business, and who were, no doubt, competent to discharge the business. The danger which arose, and which the right hon. Gentleman was willing to take some steps to guard against, was that the elections of Aldermen were made Party questions. The dominant Party for the moment put aside great qualifications when it saw a chance of perpetuating its own policy for a considerable number of years. The temptation to human nature was so strong that they yielded to it, and the practical result was that, notably in Liverpool and Bristol and other places, a particular political Party obtained predominance, and kept it by means of the system of automatic elections. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he wished to confer on the counties a power similar to that which existed in the boroughs. Now, they had already considerable differences between the County and Municipal Councils. The County Councillor had a different qualification from that enjoyed by the Town Councillor. There was another point to which he wished to draw attention. Was the right hon. Gentleman prepared to go back to what he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) considered to be the much wiser mode of re-election provided by the Municipal Corporations Act? Instead of that, he adopted the plan of the School Boards, which had worked very badly—namely, the plan of all the County Council retiring at the end of a certain period. There was a still greater anomaly. When a Town Councillor was elected an Alderman, the vacancy occasioned in the Council was filled up by going back to the particular constituency which the Alderman had represented. But the right hon. Gentleman had adopted the reactionary plan of allowing the new Councils to fill up their own vacancies. In reply to an argument advanced by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury), he would rather insert improvements in the present Bill, and let the Municipal Corporations copy them, than take what was bad out of the Municipal Corporations Act and perpetuate it here. His hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvonshire had spoken in reference to the danger of a class of men being elected who would not feel themselves responsible, and neglected their business; but he did not think there was any force in it.

MR. RATHBONE said, his statement was that it did not follow that, although men might desire to be appointed on account of the honour and dignity of the position, they would necessarily attend the meetings of the Council and take their full share of the work.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he was glad to hear his hon. Friend give an explanation, because he thought there was likely to be more irresponsibility on the part of the selected Councillors than on the part of those who were directly responsible to their constituents. He would not presume to say that there was not a good deal to be urged on both sides of the question; but it was one which must be tested by experience and not by theory, and he ventured to say that, as a rule, the principle of selection did not work well in the boroughs. There was a desire, both in the Councils and in the constituencies, to effect a change in the present system, and it would be, on the whole, better not to perpetuate the principle in that Bill, but to make every man directly elective, as was done in the case of the school boards, which constituted the last great change in the system of local government. In the case of the school board, the principle of selection was not introduced, although it had been urged upon precisely the same grounds as were brought forward now. The House of Commons of that day, however, decided that every Member should be directly responsible to the constituency he represented. He thought that was a wise course, and he supported the same principle now.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield) said, his right hon. Friend who had just sat down had made some reasonable remarks in regard to the probable working of the clause if it were passed in its present form. He, therefore, hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would give attention to these points as they came on, and would take care, in connection with the new Councils, that one particular Party should not make use of an aldermanic majority in order to secure a permanent majority. He did not think that anything could more tend to bring the County Councils into discredit than the establishment of perpetual majorities. It was quite plain, in his opinion, that in order to secure efficient work in the Councils they must include some selected Councillors. He did not intend to give any opinion as to the working of the system in any of the boroughs; but if they were to secure perfect work it was necessary that there should be selected Councillors. [Several hon. MEMBERS: Why?] That was exactly what he was going to explain. Those who knew county life intimately would be aware that at present there were two very large classes, both of which ought to be largely represented on the future County Councils, but which might be partially, to a large extent, excluded if there were no selected Councillors. There were, in the first place, a few men in each county who had attained considerable age, and still remained the most experienced in county government, but who, from their age, would not be willing to undertake the fatigue of going through a county contest. There was no reason why those gentlemen should. They had absolutely nothing to gain by being on the County Council, but all their experience would be for the good of the county government. The second class was a larger class, who would, for the future, be the more important element—namely, large tradesmen, small paper manufacturers, millers, and that class which were not found scattered through the rural districts, but were found congregated, perhaps, to the number of half-a-dozen together in one small county town. These men, having no connection with a rural district, would stand no chance of election in that rural district. Therefore, if they wanted to have a sufficient number of this commercial class on the County Council, there must be found an opportunity of adding some of them by selection, because if there were half-a-dozen in one small town, not more than one would be elected. Therefore, he earnestly hoped that the Government would stick to their present plans, and not accept the Amendment.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, he wished to explain to the House what it was that induced him to take a part in the present conversation. It had reference to a point which had been fairly raised by his noble Friend who had just sat down. His noble Friend hoped that the Government would adhere to their present proposition in its present form, and he based himself upon two arguments with respect to the class of persons whom he thought would find their way into the Councils. The first and weightiest of the arguments of his noble Friend was that in respect of the class of those who might be called seniors. Now, it would be almost indecorous of him to say anything on behalf of seniors. To say that experience was a very notable element in the conduct of public business would seem so very like a reflex compliment upon what was called the present company, that he would venture to avoid the argument. Like other good things, it might be carried too far. A great experience in county affairs might be a very valuable thing, and it might be very desirable to have a minority of Members who should sit for a longer term than the majority. He would assume that he had risen also in consequence of what was said by his right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler)—with the general tenour of whose remarks he completely agreed—with reference to the retention of the arrangement as to Aldermen in the Municipal Corporations Act. Now, he had not had the advantage of the practical experience in reference to Municipal Corporations possessed by his right hon. Friend and other Members of that House; but he had been conversant for a considerable time with questions in relation to the consolidation of laws, and there he would lay it down, as a practical rule of business, that the only sound course, as a general rule, was to separate consolidation from reform. Consolidation was not reform. Otherwise, so far from making real progress, because it was thought there was an opportunity, they only brought business into confusion. Unquestionably, therefore, he should have resisted a proposal to abolish the arrangement with respect to Aldermen upon the simple ground that it was a question of municipal reform, and that there would be great inconvenience in dealing with it as a question of consolidation. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had approached this question in the same practical spirit and the same desire to listen candidly to what might be said on all sides which had marked all his proceedings and eminently governed the able speech in which he originally submitted the Bill to the House, and he said that he looked with favour upon an Amendment which would provide against the perpetual majority, so justly objected to, by taking care that certain persons should be disabled from voting in the choice of the new selected members. He did not think that was a happy arrangement in some other respects. The House had now a fair opportunity of considering the authority which ought to attach to the Municipal Corporations Act, and they were at liberty to consider that question freely. His right hon. Friend had given an accurate and just account of the way in which the aldermanic arrangement worked. There was no doubt that between 1835 and 1841 important Acts of Parliament were contested between the two Houses with a particularity and pertinacity of which he knew no other example. The tactics of the House of Lords were managed with extraordinary astuteness and skill by Lord Lyndhurst, the Conservative Party were just recovering from a great and disastrous defeat upon the question of Parliamentary Reform, and the adoption of many arrangements was virtually forced upon the House of Commons during those years to which the Liberal Party was very averse. This was no Party question. There could be no doubt that direct election was much better than secondary election, and had a great deal more weight. If they were told, as his noble Friend had said, that there were certain classes of people who would not go into the Council unless there were secondary election, his answer was that the same objection might apply to that House. Of course, there were exceptions here and there. No doubt, it was desirable that there should be men of great experience in that House. But everybody knew that in the constituencies seniority carried the greatest weight, and he had known constituencies recognize that consideration in a spirit of almost extravagant generosity in not contesting seats occupied by old Members. His noble Friend had referred to the class of millers. Now, the class of millers was well known in agricultural districts, and, whether the farmers liked them or not, it was not likely to be from want of knowledge. He claimed no weight whatever for his own judgment in the matter. He was very much disposed to think, and to press, that the principle of election had better be carried through. If a portion of the Council were to sit otherwise than by direct election, there would be an implication with regard to a certain class of the Members as to whose qualifications the constituencies were not well qualified to express their opinion. He had no complaint to make of the general spirit of the Bill, or the manner in which the Government were inclined to deal with this question, but he attached much importance to the general principle of election.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) said, he wished to point out to the President of the Local Government Board that the case in favour of the Amendment was far stronger in London than elsewhere. The Members representing the Metropolis in that House might be said to have decided unanimously, or by a large majority, that, as a general principle, it would be far better to have the County Council wholly composed of elected members. The introduction of the selected element would be more retrograde in London than anywhere else, because in the City Aldermen were now elected upon a principle which they wished to see universally enforced. The Aldermen of the City of London were now directly elected on the widest municipal register within the limits of the United Kingdom. They had recently had an opportunity of testing the relative worth of direct and indirect election in the case of the Metropolitan Board of Works. That Board was indirectly elected by the Vestries, and certainly, at the present moment, did not smell sweet in the nostrils of public opinion. On more than one occasion the members had denied their responsibility when questioned as to their votes, which they would not have been able to do if they had been really responsible to constituencies. In London there were not two opinions that in the case of the County Councils there ought to be direct representation. There was more at stake than in the rural districts, because, as the right hon. Gentleman well knew, the expenditure must be much larger. It was, therefore, desirable to bring the responsibility directly home, and the best course was to make every member of the Council understand that he was under the necessity of appealing to the ratepayers at large. No man in London would be worth his salt who was afraid of facing a popular electorate, or who would say that he would not serve unless he was selected by the other Councillors. At present, he only knew one class that was likely to be disqualified in the eyes of the public, and they were the members of the present Metropolitan Board of Works. As to men of experience not being likely to be elected, he wished to draw attention to the fact that when the School Board of London was first established, it was composed of men of great age and experience, with Lord Lawrence at their head as its first Chairman.

Viscount WOLMER said, his remarks did not apply to London, the case of which was quite different, but to the County Councils only.

Mr. LAWSON said, he quite appreciated the views of the noble Lord; but he wanted to know whether the right hon. Gentleman intended to apply this provision of the Bill to London? What he maintained was that the whole of the body to whom they were going to give these enormous powers should be directly elected by, and responsible to, the inhabitants of the Metropolis.

Mr. MATTINSON (Liverpool, Walton) said, he was glad to think that Her Majesty's Ministers were standing to their guns in regard to this matter. If he believed that there was any real danger of the elected members being swamped by the selected members he would not support the proposal; but it must be borne in mind that the selected members would only form a fraction of the entire Council, and there could be no real danger of their ever swamping the elected Councillors. In the next place, it must be borne in mind that these Councillors were not to be selected by an irresponsible body, but by members who were directly responsible to the constituency, and the selection would be made immediately after the election by popular vote. If the election were to take place by the expiring Council in the last days of its existence, the suspicion might arise that the majority in the Council were anxious to perpetuate their power. But that objection did not apply here, because immediately after the first election the Council would be required to appoint the selected members. Therefore, he did not think that any practical danger could arise of the selection of anybody who was obnoxious to the ratepayers. On the contrary, the desire of the Council would be loyally to give effect to the general wishes of the rateyayers. The Committee were aware that in the case of Municipal Corporations the principle of selection existed as well as that of election, and he confessed that he had not been able to follow the objections which had been urged against the principle of selection. It had been suggested that in some cases the principle had not worked well, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) said that it had worked badly in the case of Liverpool and Bristol. He knew nothing of Bristol, but he had some knowledge of Liverpool, and in regard to that town he might say that, so far from the selective or aldermanic principle having worked badly, it had worked, not in restriction, but in aid of popular rights. The suggestion was that it had worked badly, because the Liberal Party had been prevented from obtaining a majority in the Council, through the action of Conservative Aldermen. The truth was that the only chance the Liberal Party ever had of coming within a measurable distance of a majority in the Council had arisen from the obsolete arrangement of the wards. The Liberals represented the small wards; the Conservatives the great, populous wards; and but for the existence of Aldermen, on one occasion at least, the sense of the majority of the ratepayers would have been misrepresented. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had endeavoured to explain the action of the Liberal Party in reference to the Act of 1882. It was alleged that during the long years they had been in power they had never attempted to interfere with the carrying out of the aldermanic principle, and the right hon. Gentleman justified the course they had taken by reminding the Committee that the Bill of 1882 was a Consolidation Bill. But what the right hon. Gentleman had to explain was not the proceedings of 1882, but the acquiescence of 50 years by the Liberal Party.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON (Lancashire, Rossendale) said, that his right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian had admitted the necessity for securing to the County Councils as much as possible the elements of experience and continuity, and suggested a mode in which those elements might be secured. But in that suggestion his right hon. Friend somewhat overlooked the necessity for securing that special kind of experience which was so necessary at the present time—the experience of those who had hitherto taken a very prominent part in county government, and were almost universally admitted not to have abused the trust placed in them. He fully admitted the value of the suggestion, which he understood to be that the constituencies themselves should elect members to serve for a longer or a shorter period, so that in course of time some continuity might be secured on the Council with a certain amount of experience. But that suggestion would not necessarily secure on the Councils, at the first elections, the presence of those men to whom he had referred. He quite agreed with the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) that the question was not a very simple one, and that much might be said on both sides. He was very glad, indeed, to notice that the right hon. Gentleman opposite had expressed his intention not to adhere strictly to the present mode in which Aldermen were elected in boroughs. By that announcement it seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman had removed the only objection to the system as it existed in boroughs at the present time. Whether or not the Liberal Party were responsible in any degree for the continuance of that principle in boroughs he was not aware. What was of more importance was that he had not heard any complaints made with reference to the aldermanic principle in boroughs except as to the mode of election, which it was said in certain boroughs insured to one political Party a continuance of power. The Amendment the right hon. Gentleman was going to introduce would to a great extent, if not completely, do away with this objection, which, so far as he was aware, was the only objection to the system which now existed in boroughs. If the system were a valid one, and had worked well in boroughs, there was no reason for refusing to incorporate it in the present measure; but if it were not, he should hail it as a proposal of great value as a temporary measure. They were going to introduce a new element in the management of county affairs, and with that new element there must necessarily be a lack of experience. It had been universally admitted that a considerable number of those who had taken part in county business ought to continue to do so. It was doubtful, however, whether a great number of those gentlemen would come forward and risk all the trouble and labour of popular election; but if the proposal of the Bill were adopted, a certain number of them, at all events, would be able to keep their positions. He thought, therefore, that, at all events as a temporary measure, the precedent of the Municipal Corporations Act might be followed.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, he wished in a few words to endorse the arguments of the hon. Member for West St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson) in regard to London. He believed that the clause as it stood would have a very disastrous effect upon the Metropolis itself. Everybody would admit that the Metropolitan Board of Works had fallen into disrepute, and the only way to provide for proper Municipal Government in London was to have direct representation. The proposal of the Government would have the effect of inducing the better men not to seek election in the first instance, but to lie by in the hope of being selected by the Council as Aldermen. Therefore, in the first instance, there would be an inferior class of Councillors elected by London generally. The same argument would apply also to the Councils, and that was his reply to the noble Lord the Member for Petersfield (Viscount Wolmer). The fact would be that experienced men, whose services it was so important to secure, would not seek election, but would wait in the hope of being selected as Aldermen, and in that way they would get an inferior Council to start with, the members being returned from an inferior class of men. With regard to London, he agreed that there was a universal consensus of opinion in favour of direct representation. [*Cries of* "No!"] It was remarkable that two Conservative Members for London had given Notice of opposition to the creation of Aldermen, and he believed that the great majority of the Conservative Members for London were against the principle of placing Aldermen upon the new Governing Body. At all events, whatever might be the decision of the House on the Amendment before it, he ventured to express a hope that in the case of London there might be direct representation.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, that his only personal claim to speak on the question was that of some long municipal experience; but after the reference to London he felt he ought to state that, as one of the Members for London, he had presented a Petition from the Governing Body of his constituency urging that selected members would not be desirable in the case of the Metropolis. He ventured to express a hope that in a case like this the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would not hesitate to improve, if it were possible, upon the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act. What was claimed as the strongest argument for the principle of selected members? The noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), the noble Lord the Member for Petersfield (Viscount Wolmer), and other speakers, contended that the selective system would be the means of inducing gentlemen of experience to enter the County Councils. He earnestly hoped that those who had hitherto administered county affairs with so much economy and so much advantage would be retained on the new Governing Body, and it was because he felt most strongly on the subject that on the second reading of the Bill he expressed a hope that no more than one door would be opened for admission, for such a second door would prove to be a delusion. He trusted the Government would reconsider their decision on this matter. When it was stated that the system would be a means of placing experienced men on the Councils, it must be assumed that the Aldermen in boroughs were usually selected from outside the Council. Now, he had taken some trouble to ascertain, with approximate truth, what the exact facts were upon this point—namely, the selection of Aldermen, and he found that the principle had been almost invariably to select Aldermen from inside the Town Councils. He believed that the exceptions had been very few indeed. He wrote to the Town Clerks of 25 boroughs of the largest population, and he asked for the figures as to the election of Aldermen during the last 10 years. He found that in 18 boroughs, which gave him the exact figures, 411 Aldermen had been elected from within the Councils, and only 21 from outside. In the case of Bristol, 9 were elected from without the Council, and at Birkenhead 6, which accounted for 15 of the 21; so that in the majority of the boroughs there must have been absolutely none elected from without the Council. From Birmingham he received the general reply "invariably elected from within the Council;" from Manchester he got exactly the same reply; the same from Portsmouth; the same from Hull, which accorded with his own experience. From Plymouth the answer was "most exceptional to go outside;" and from Liverpool the reply was "as a rule from within, but there are numerous exceptions." He was bound to say that these exceptions might have been of decided advantage; they might have been the fulfilment—they probably were the fulfilment—of the idea which originally induced Parliament to insert the Proviso "from within or without the Council" in the Municipal Corporations Act. The case at Norwich seemed to be very exceptional. There 28 had been elected from without the Council, and only one from within. Norwich seemed to have acted upon a most singular principle, because it generally elected as Aldermen those who had not been re-elected as Councillors. In other words, if a man was not approved after experience and trial by his constituency, that was a title to be elected as Alderman. He thought that, as a general rule, it might be said that election from within the Council was wise, because the men selected had shown their ability to act or otherwise; they had gone through the ordeal of election; they had come into contact with a constituency; and he argued that the general impression was that, as it was in the case of that House, so it ought to be in the case of the County Councils, no one ought to be a member unless he had come into contact with constituents. That seemed to him to be the result of the figures which had been given to him; but he also impressed upon the right hon. Gentleman, as one reason for taking a modified course of this kind, an argument which had been mentioned, and which appeared to him to have very considerable force. It was this—that there would be a strong tendency on the part of the majority to strengthen itself when elected to the County Councils; and he could imagine nothing more calculated to perpetuate strong Party feeling, which was most undesirable in administrative matters, than the existence of such a feeling in the Council. Take the case of licensing, which they must still assume to be part of the functions of these Councils. Might it not be felt by those who might have succeeded in the election that they had a bounden duty to support the principles which they had advocated by electing partizans of their own in order to carry out their views more effectually? Take the case of economy, or the want of economy. They praised the existing *régime*, because it had conduced to great economy and considerable efficiency; but there might be a *régime* in which there might be undue extravagance, and if the party of extravagance should succeed in the election, and should again strengthen itself by the selection of selected Councillors of the same character as themselves, the minority, who might be in favour of wise economy, would be powerless in face of the Party so strengthened. He had the strongest regard for the general character of the Bill; and, therefore, he would not do anything to support this Amendment if he thought it struck at the Bill. On the contrary, he thought that it would materially improve the Bill, and conduce to its effective working and to the credit of the Ministry; and, therefore, he hoped that the Government would find some reasonable means of meeting the proposal.

Mr. RITCHIE said, his hon. Friend (Sir Albert Rollit), who had spoken very strongly against the proposal in the Bill, had argued from two different points of view, one of them altogether contradicting the other. [Sir Albert Rollit: I put it alternatively.] His hon. Friend said that the argument that had been used, that this provision afforded an opportunity of asking Gentlemen who might not otherwise be disposed to run the gauntlet of an election to serve as selected Councillors, was not a good one, as the object aimed at would not be attained. Then his hon. Friend proceeded to tell the Committee that he had been at considerable pains to find out how this rule of selected Councillors operated with reference to boroughs, and the result of his inquiry was that he found that almost entirely the aldermanic element was elected from within and not from without the Council. But he (Mr. Ritchie) could easily conceive that, even if that were to be the operation of their proposal, there would be very great advantages connected with it; because there might be many gentlemen who would be prepared to run the gauntlet of election, and go to the expense of election once in every six years, who would not care about doing it once in three years; and if the Aldermen were selected from inside the Council, the Bill would give the Council an opportunity of giving these gentlemen, some of them at any rate, a longer term of years than they would have if they had to go every three years to the electors. Under these circumstances, the Council would be afforded an opportunity of giving a double term of office to gentlemen they might desire to honour, if it were, as the hon. Gentleman seemed to consider it, a distinction. Even from that point of view, he (Mr. Ritchie) thought it was very desirable that, if a Council in a borough had the opportunity of conferring that distinction upon members of their own body, a County Council should have the same opportunity of conferring a similar distinction upon some of its members. Even if they were selected from within the Council, he believed there were considerable merits attached to the proposal they had to make. His hon. Friend, after having made that point in his argument, proceeded to abolish it by saying that the result would be a tendency of the majority on a County Council to make their majority very much larger by means of selected members. That meant that they would not be selected from within the Council, but from without. [*Cries of* "No, no!"]

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT remarked that vacancies in the Council would be supplied by co-option.

Mr. RITCHIE said, the hon. Gentleman was already aware that certain proposals were to be made with reference to that; and although it would be quite out of Order for him to speak in detail now upon those proposals, he might say that they had a hidden purpose in making them; it was with a view of saving expense. But if the Committee desired to make an alteration, providing for election when vacancies were created, the Government would be perfectly prepared to agree to such an Amendment.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT asked the Chairman whether a fallacy should be attributed to him on the ground of something that might be done?

Mr. RITCHIE said, he did not desire to attribute a fallacy to his hon. Friend, and he would say no more upon the point; but, certainly, if the vacancies created by selected Councillors were filled up by the Council, there could be no strength in the argument the hon. Gentleman had used. The Government had made this proposal strictly upon the lines of the Municipal Corporation Act, and they had not heard from any quarter of the House that the aldermanic system in municipal boroughs had been productive of evil. Some Gentlemen had vaguely stated that the system was an unsatisfactory one, but no illustration had been given to show that it had worked badly. If there was any fault to be found with the system as it existed in the boroughs, that was a matter which ought to be dealt with by the general amendment of the law, both with reference to Municipal Corporations and all other Bodies that might have similar rights. But they thought that, in proposing as they had done to extend the benefits of the Municipal Corporations Act throughout the country, it was only fair and right they should make a proposal to the Committee by which County Councils should have the same opportunity of appointing the aldermanic element as Councils in boroughs. It would, of course, be for the Committee to say whether the proposals of the Government were acceptable to them. The Government had no reason to suppose, from representations made to them, that they were otherwise than acceptable to the constituencies on whose behalf they desired to set up these new institutions, and they thought, therefore, the Committee would do wisely to adhere to the proposals.

Sir JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said, there was only one point he wished to lay before the Committee, and that was with respect to an example that had been set of late years. The right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill had had some experience of the working of the Charity Commission, and he must know that the system by which the Board of Management elected themselves, when vacancies occurred, gave the greatest dissatisfaction. He (Sir John Swinburne) asked the Government to lay this fact to heart before persevering in resisting this Amendment.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) said, that considerable reference had been made in the course of the debate to the case of Liverpool, and the experience gained there was very important. He desired, as knowing something about the case, to say a few words in respect to it. He did so in the presence of an hon. Member, the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood), who was popularly supposed to hold the whole Town Council of Liverpool in the hollow of his hand; and if he was mistaken in what he asserted he would, no doubt, be corrected by the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member for the Walton Division (Mr. Mattinson) was, perhaps, to be excused in making the observations he had as to the course of procedure in the election of Aldermen in Liverpool, for his connection with that City was of very recent date. He (Mr. Sinclair) would give one instance, and one only, as to the election of Aldermen which occurred not very long ago. The Town Council of Liverpool consisted of 64 members, of whom 16 were Aldermen, leaving 48 elective Councillors. There were, at one period, of those 48, 28 Liberals and 20 Conservatives; but at that time there were eight Aldermen who held their seats, and there were eight Aldermen who were about to be elected. Of the 20 Conservatives, some who had just been returned were, by the Court which tried the Petition, declared not to have been properly elected; but their vote was taken in the election of Aldermen, and if they added to these 20 Conservatives the 8 Conservative Aldermen, the result was there were 28 Liberals to 28 Conservatives. One of the Liberals, a gentleman who had formerly been a Conservative, did not vote, with the result that there were eight Aldermen, 20 Conservatives, and 27 Liberals voting. As a matter of fact, eight other Conservative Aldermen were elected, thereby perpetuating the Conservative political character of the Town Council of Liverpool, when, at that time, there was a distinct majority of eight Liberal elected members in the Body. He had used the words Liberal and Conservative, but he would just as soon have said Conservative and Liberal, if the facts had been in an opposite direction. He believed that the perpetuating of any particular form of government in a Town Council, whether Liberal or Conservative, was a decided mistake in the real interest of the town itself; and he trusted sincerely that, now the Committee had the very important question before it as to the future constitution of the County Councils, it would take care that that which had worked badly in the past in boroughs should not be perpetuated in the future in counties, and that the opportunity would be taken of making the election directly elective. He ought also to say that the principle which had been mentioned by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Islington (Sir Albert Rollit) as having been frequently, if not invariably, adopted at Norwich, the principle of electing as Aldermen those who had been rejected by their constituents, had very frequently been adopted at Liverpool. He did not say that it invariably happened, but it very frequently happened at Liverpool that those who were rejected as Councillors were, at the next election of Aldermen, elected as Aldermen.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, that as the position in London had been challenged, not in a speech, but by articulation, he wished the hon. Gentleman opposite, who thought he might find some opinion in London in favour of selected Councillors, would have given them some evidence where he could find it. Go where they would, quite irrespective of political Parties, they could not find any opinion in London in favour of the existing system. The people of London had unfortunately suffered too much from the want of thorough control or the want of any practical control over their own affairs. The hon. Gentleman the Member for West St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson) might have carried his argument respecting the Metropolitan Board of Works a little farther. He might have asked in how many instances had a member of the Board of Works been selected from outside the Vestries? He (Mr. J. Rowlands) knew that under the Metropolitan Local Management Acts the Vestries had power to go outside themselves on purpose, he supposed, to get the pre-eminent ability which had been spoken of. In how many cases had they gone outside their own Bodies? He remembered in one instance in an East End parish there was quite a revolution in the Vestry, because certain members of the Vestry considered a prize which belonged to them had been taken away from them, and given to someone outside. It was an invariable rule that they should select a Vestryman to send him to the Board of Works. If the principle of selection was a good principle, and gave them better men than they could get under ordinary conditions, the Board of Works ought to be a Municipal Body of light and leading to the whole world. He left hon. Gentlemen to judge for themselves how far that was the case. He thought that to go back to what was done in 1835, and ask them to re-enact such a principle as the one to which he had been referring, was absurd in the extreme. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board was justified in playing with the Municipal Corporations Act as he was doing. When he (Mr. J. Rowlands) and several of his hon. Friends asked the right hon. Gentleman to deviate from the Municipal Corporations Act with regard to the franchise he told them the Government could not do so; he could not consider the case of the lodgers of London, because he was going to keep strictly to the procedure of the Municipal Corporations Act; yet afterwards, on Friday, he went away from that Act. He was not going to say that in the first case the right hon. Gentleman did not do good; but in the second case the right hon. Gentleman introduced in the Bill a very pernicious principle indeed, because he gave to non-residential owners powers to sit on the new County Councils. But, apart from whether the principle was good or bad, the right hon. Gentleman had deviated from the Municipal Corporations Act where he thought it was necessary. The principle which was introduced in 1835 was one totally at variance with the democratic spirit of the present day; such a principle was against all modern legislation. There had been two Reform Acts since the time when the principle of selected Councillors was adopted; power had been given to the democracy, and he wanted the Government not to talk about their confidence in the democracy, but to show their trust in the democracy. If the people of the counties thought they would like selected Councillors, let them have them by all means. The people of London, however, protested against the system. Two hon. Gentlemen sitting upon the Ministerial Benches had spoken against the system quite as much as any of the Opposition. London had had a better opportunity of judging what selected Bodies were than any other part of the country; it had too much of them now; and the people knew that such a system must end in introducing in municipal life a pernicious principle which could never tend to the full development of the interests of the masses of persons concerned in municipal government. They ought to legislate on broad principles, and he maintained that no valid argument had been adduced in favour of the re-enactment of this principle.

Mr. HANBURY said, before he gave his vote for the Amendment he should like to know distinctly what course the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board was going to adopt with reference to Sub-section D of the clause, because it appeared to him that there was a great deal in one argument which had been adduced. That argument was that in the case of a small majority of members of a Council pledged to an extravagant policy it might be possible for those Members, by electing members of their own Party, to keep a majority on the Board. A great deal would depend upon whether the places of members so selected would be filled up by co-optation. If the right hon. Gentleman proposed that vacancies were to be filled up by co-optation he should certainly vote for the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Stansfeld). If the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) was willing to give way on that point, and say that such vacancies should be filled up by direct election, then he thought one of the arguments in favour of the Amendment fell to the ground.

Mr. RITCHIE said, the Government were prepared to accept an Amendment by which vacancies would be filled up by direct election. They could not see the force of the argument used against it, and, therefore, they were quite prepared to accept an Amendment in that sense.

Mr. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) said, he desired to point out that the concession or alteration by the Government did not in the slightest degree invalidate the argument of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Albert Rollit), because all who had experience of Town Councils knew very well that one of the principal elements in the appointment of Aldermen was the appointment of Councillors who had safe seats. As a Town Councillor, he said unhesitatingly that this was the weakest, most unsatisfactory, and least defensible part of the whole machinery of Town Councils, and that it worked exceedingly badly.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE said, he thought it was fair that he should be prepared, as one of the supporters of the Amendment, to point out to the Committee that it was a little hard that the argument about continuity should be adduced, when he could show that the Amendment which he originally was to have moved in that respect, and which he gladly gave up in favour of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stansfeld), made provision upon this very point. His Amendment provided that half of the members of the County Council should be elected for three years, and that there should be continuity provided for in that way. He thought that the Committee would hold that there was a great deal of reason in the objection which was urged by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) on that point, and he asked the Chairman whether it would be in Order if he were to move an addition to the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman in these words—

"Provided, that on the occasion of the first election of the county council in each county a certain proportion of the councillors shall be selected by the elected councillors."

MR. RATHBONE said, he was on the point of making a somewhat similar suggestion to that which had just been made by the hon. Gentleman (Sir Roper Lethbridge). What struck him as being the best arrangement to meet the difficulty pointed out would be that at the first election one-fourth of the County Councils should be selected by the elected Councillors; but that afterwards that one-fourth should be elected by the whole county. A man would vote for the Councillor for his own district, and also for the selected Councillors for the whole county. That would meet the difficulty pointed out, and which, he believed, would be a very great defect in the Bill. If they had no Councillors except those who were elected by small constituencies, and who would naturally be elected to represent the local ideas, probably they would not have the men who would represent the whole county, and who would most likely be the men who would do most of the county work. Such men would be pushed out, and possibly there would not be the class of men in the County Councils necessary to carry on the work. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) would consider the suggestion now made, for he would find it would meet a great part of the difficulty. As he had said before—many Members were not present at the time—that difficulty was not an idle difficulty, but had been found a practical difficulty.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, he could not imagine that the present House would be responsible for the proposals now before them in the shape of the Government plan. If it had emanated from "another place," he thought it would have been appropriate; but he could not imagine any more direct slight to the constituent Bodies of this country than the House of Commons attempting to tinker up the present system. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) had been properly complimented upon his distinguished and practical common sense, and he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he was going to be guided in the course he was about to take by some old-fashioned arrangement previously arrived at after communication with "another place," or whether he was going to be guided by the almost universal expression of experience which had been made in the Committee of that House? So far as he (Mr. Illingworth) had observed, there was not a single Member, who had risen to any experience in municipal life, who had not altogether exploded the fancies indulged in by two noble Lords sitting upon the Opposition side of the House, and by one hon. Gentleman opposite. The noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) and other weak-minded Members of the Committee wanted some superior person, that the constituents of the county could not find, pitchforked into these popular Bodies. He (Mr. Illingworth) disbelieved altogether in the honesty of men who pretended to hold popular power in respect, and who, at the same time, sought to undermine and to cripple it in the manner suggested that afternoon. What was the position in which they found themselves? The hon. Gentleman the Member for South Islington (Sir Albert Rollit) gave them statistics which were of immense value in guiding the mind of the Committee, for they altogether exploded the idea that these superior personages would be found by the system of co-optation. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Scarborough (Mr. Rowntree) had clearly shown what happened at present. Whenever an election of Aldermen took place, the majority of the Council looked through the list, and saw where the majority in the wards was largest, and where it was safest to create a vacancy. Without dwelling upon that case, it was obvious, he (Mr. Illingworth) was there to say, as one who had been within a municipal borough for 40 years, and who knew a good deal of its working, that there was a great deal more harm than good arising from the system of selected members—it was a restriction upon the rest of the Body. He could not conceive why gentlemen seeking to serve the public should desire any higher honour than that they should be elected by constituencies, and he did not see that it conferred any considerable dignity or power of usefulness on anybody that he should have conferred upon him the title of Alderman. Then, on the other hand, he saw no advantage whatever in the notion about continuity. He believed in the omnipotence of the constituencies to return the same men over again if they wished to do so; certainly he would put no restrictive power upon constituencies if they wished to change their representatives. The House of Commons had no such special safeguard, as they all knew, yet, as a rule, three-fourths of the old Members were returned at a General Election. The county elections would partake more of the character of a Parliamentary election than of a municipal election, and he should be exceedingly sorry if the Committee were to reflect so strongly upon the constituent Bodies of this country as to carry out the proposal as it now stood. On the other hand, he was bound to say that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) did not attempt to argue as if he had any strong conviction of his own upon this point. The right hon. Gentleman had not even been guided by experience—he had simply taken his stand upon the fact that the amending Act of 1882 left the old form of selected members in the Corporations as it was originally; but the right hon. Gentleman must now be satisfied that the question had never really come before the House of Commons for reconsideration. He (Mr. Illingworth) did not hesitate to say that his own experience went altogether in an opposite direction, and that there was a constant danger arising from the operation of the aldermanic system. Wire-pulling went on, and it was very undesirable such a system should exist in respect to Corporations. The more simple and direct they could make the constitution of these popular Bodies the greater satisfaction they would give both to the elected and the constituents.

Mr. WEBSTER pointed out that the selected members in the Metropolis would not be selected by single Local Bodies, but by the whole of the Metropolis, and that, therefore, they would get men of broad and comprehensive mind, men who could look fairly at all questions affecting the Metropolis generally. He did not think the question was one of the deepest importance; but he thought that if they were to have selected members, they ought to establish a system by which a small majority should not have the power of electing men of their own views—that they should have some system of proportional representation. Before he sat down he wished to correct a small mistake made by his hon. Friend the Member for West St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson). The hon. Gentleman said that the Conservative Metropolitan Members had decided to vote against the principle of selected members. He did not know where the hon. Gentleman got the information, but it was quite inaccurate.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he desired to state his municipal experience, which had been a pretty long one. He had served every municipal office which could be served, and he could confirm what had been said by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Scarborough (Mr. Rowntree). He was satisfied that the system of electing Aldermen had done considerable damage to Town Councils by dividing those Bodies into Parties, and he was sure that if the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) had had the experience he (Mr. Mundella) had had in municipal government he would not stand by his present proposal. It would make no difference in the election of Aldermen whether the seats vacated were filled up by direct election or not. As a rule, Parties met privately and decided upon the seats which were to be maintained. They always took care to maintain certain seats; and, as a result, municipal government divided itself into Liberal and Conservative Parties. Men were elected Aldermen not because of their experience, but because their seats were safe. He trusted the Government would see their way to abandon their present proposal.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) rose to address the Committee, when

Mr. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.) rose in his place, and claimed to move that the Question be now put.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 264; Noes 192: Majority 72.—(Div. List, No. 136.)

Question put accordingly, "That the words 'the Councillors elected by the Council' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 250; Noes 214: Majority 36.—(Div. List, No. 137.)

MR. RATHBONE said, he wished the Government could see their way to accept the Amendment which stood in his name, which suggested that after the first election the selected Councillors should be chosen by the Local Councils. They would certainly acquire some mode of connection between the County Councils and Local Councils, and it seemed to him that a very natural mode of connection between the two Bodies would be that the selected Councillors should be selected by the Local Councillors of their own Body. It would, moreover, have a very beneficial effect in inducing men to enter the District Councils, if they knew that if they distinguished themselves by devotion to their work they stood a chance of being selected as members of the County Councils. It seemed to him that his proposal was so simple and plain that he need not detain the Committee further in explaining it. He was persuaded that if the Government could see their way to adopting this mode of selecting the selected Councillors, they would make their scheme of Local Government work much more harmoniously and efficiently.

Amendment proposed,

After the word "council," insert the words "after district councils are constituted in pursurance of this Act, be elected by the district council, and shall be."—(*Mr. Rathbone.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. RITCHIE said, there were two objections to the proposal of the hon. Gentleman which were of considerable weight. In the first place, every District Council would have the right of sending its member to the County Council. The number of selected members would be very large, and it might be necessary, under the hon. Gentleman's proposal, to resort to the grouping of District Councils for the purpose he had in view. That grouping would entail a large number of difficulties which it was unnecessary for him (Mr. Ritchie) to enter into. There was a further objection to the Amendment, and that was that it would substitute the principle of delegation for selection, which he did not think the Committee would be wise in assenting to. He trusted the hon. Gentleman would not press his Amendment.

MR. RATHBONE said, it would be of no use to press the Amendment; but he could not say that the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman had convinced him. In many cases the arrangement he suggested had been found to work well. As this Amendment was objected to, he would like to move another. If the right hon. Gentleman was not willing to accept it now, he would move it on Report. The Amendment was to the effect that after the term of office of the first set of selected Councillors had expired, one-fourth of the whole Body should be chosen by the county at large, and not by a small section of it.

MR. CONYBEARE said, the right hon. Gentleman had not condescended to give a single argument against this Amendment. First, he said that he could not agree because there were practical difficulties in the way of the Amendment. He (Mr. Conybeare) would like to know what those difficulties were, and if the right hon. Gentleman would take the Committee into his confidence and tell them the difficulties, he guaranteed that some of the Members of the Committee would find a remedy for them. It appeared that there was a form of delegation involved in the Amendment which the right hon. Gentleman did not approve of, but he had not told them why he did not approve, and he thought the form of nomination which he proposed was infinitely worse than the proposal of his hon. Friend. Before the Amendment was withdrawn he thought he was doing no more than necessary in pointing out that not a single solid argument against the Amendment had been advanced by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. RITCHIE said, he had an Amendment to suggest to the Committee in connection with the selected Councillors. It might be said that there was something invidious in the words, and various propositions had been made with regard to what these Councillors should be called. He was afraid that it was his own error that the term "selected councillors" seemed to be meant as the title of those Councillors, but, as a matter of fact, it had simply been used for the purposes of the Bill. He proposed as an Amendment to omit the words—"The councillors elected by the council shall be called selected councillors in lieu of aldermen," and to substitute the words "councillors elected by the council shall not be called aldermen but are in this Act referred to as selected councillors."

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 19, leave out the words "the councillors elected by the council shall be called selected councillors in lieu of aldermen," in order to insert, "the councillors elected by the council shall not be called aldermen, but are in this Act referred to as selected councillors,"—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, he did not understand why the right hon. Gentleman should have an objection to call a spade a spade. The fact was that the term "selected councillors" meant that these were gentlemen who were not elected or intended to be elected, and were put in because they could not be elected. That was the ground on which the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) supported the creation of those Members, and that was the ground on which they on that side of the House opposed the term. He could not accept the self-depreciation of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board with regard to this Bill, because he was sure that it had been framed and drawn up to express exactly what was intended—namely, that there was to be a sort of cream of the cream, who were to be selected because the constituencies would not elect them. It was an attempt to tone down the very democratical principle of the Bill. If it was intended by the Government to show that they did not trust the democratical principle, that they distrusted the people, and that in order to take the edge off the Bill they were going to have this superior class of members on the Councils, then he said, let all the world know what it is they were going to do. The Government should have the courage of their principles and belief, and state clearly to the country that there was to be on the Council a certain number of vulgar persons called elected members and certain superior people called selected members. He did not know what they were to be called. He gathered from the Amendment that they were not to be called Aldermen, and some hon. Members thought they ought not to be called selected Councillors. But some name must be given them, and he suggested that they might be called superior nondescripts.

Commander BETHELL (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) said, he had an Amendment on the Paper to substitute the name of "reeves" for that of selected Councillors. He wished to know whether it would be necessary for him to move it as an Amendment to that of the right hon. Gentleman.

The CHAIRMAN said, there were several hypotheses possible. The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman might be rejected, and in that case it would be possible for the hon. and gallant Member to move his Amendment. On the other hand, if the words were struck out, then the hon. and gallant Member could move that the Councillors should be called "reevemen."

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, that he intended to take the sense of the Committee upon the question whether they should be called Aldermen or not, which he and many hon. Members thought was the best name.

Mr. RITCHIE said, as there seemed to be some desire to substitute other names, it would be most convenient if he were to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Commander BETHELL said, he rose to move to leave out the words "selected councillors" and insert "reevemen." The name he proposed was one strictly analogous to that of Aldermen, which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) said he proposed to retain. The term "reevemen" was well known to hon. Gentlemen as having been in use a great many years ago, and as being a corruption of an old word in the same way as "aldermen" was also a corruption of an Anglo-Saxon word. There was nothing in that name which implied selection, and, as the term "alderman" had been always associated with boroughs, so he thought in later times the word "reeve" had more especially been connected with counties. On the other hand, he believed that it was not a very archaic word; it was in use up to the year 1830, and, although not generally in use at the present time, it was not of so archaic a character as to make it necessary for hon. Gentlemen to reject it on that ground. He believed, at any rate, that the Government would find it more suitable than the term "selected councillor," and, as the word occurred to him as being the best for the purpose, he hoped that it would be accepted by the Committee.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 20, to leave out the words "selected councillors," and insert the word "reevemen."—(*Commander Bethell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'selected councillors' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the question of the name to be given to these Councillors, he was bound to say, did not appear to him to be one of vital importance, but he was afraid that the term "reevemen" was not one which would be very familiar to the ears of the common people, and that they would hardly be acceptable to a great part of the community.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM said, in that case, if they were to have any name at all, it would be better to retain the name of "alderman," which was used in boroughs. He pointed out that the effect of selection of Aldermen in Bristol had been to saddle them with one class of men for the last 50 years. He was bound to say that in Bristol the Aldermen were the youngest men in the Council, and were, generally speaking, on the Council because they had been rejected by the constituencies. His knowledge of the matter led him to think that the name was the most absurd one that could be adopted; but, if they were to have any name at all, it was preferable to an old and obsolete term.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he hoped the Committee would not agree to the introduction of the word "reevemen." It had been suggested by the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) that if the selected members were to be called "reeves," the other Councillors might be called "ruffs"—but he wanted to know why they should not be called Aldermen? They had in Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester a class of Councillors called Aldermen, and yet, when these County Councils were to be elected, the name was objectionable. It would seem that the intention was to cast some stigma upon the present class of Aldermen. He might remark, with reference to what had been said by the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Commander Bethell), that he doubted that the term had anything to do with age; it came from the old term *eaorlderman*, and its history was associated with the borough life in the country. He hoped, however, that the hon. and gallant Gentleman would not put the Committee to the trouble of dividing on his Amendment, and that the Government, who had adopted the terms of the Metropolitan Corporation Act so freely, would retain the name of "aldermen."

Mr. W. F. LAWRENCE said, he thought there was a great deal to be said in favour of retaining the term "alderman," as had been suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton. For his (Mr. W. F. Lawrence's) own part, he was strongly in favour of that well-known term, and also strongly opposed to the adoption of the new term "reeveman." He had an Amendment on the Paper to substitute the word "warden," which was a perfectly well-known term in rural districts in connection with the offices of "way warden," "people's warden," &c., and would, in his opinion, be an unobjectionable substitution.

Commander BETHELL said, that the reason why he objected to the term "alderman" was because he wished to see town and county life being kept distinct. He must leave the matter in the hands of the Committee, but he did not regret having brought forward his Amendment, as it had offered the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) an opportunity for a very excellent vicarious joke.

An hon. **Member** said, he hoped that the personalty of Aldermen would not be merged in the general body of Town

Councillors. He and his hon. Friends did not regard them as superior persons as some hon. Members opposite appeared to do. The name proposed to be given to them was in itself enough to say that they had not earned the honour of obtaining their position by the votes of the electors.

Mr. RITCHIE said, the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite was quite mistaken in supposing that the Government desired to cast the slightest slur on the Municipal Bodies throughout the country. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton, and other Members of the Committee, desired that the word "aldermen" should be retained, and if that were the general wish the Government would offer no opposition to the proposal, although the term did not appear to them to be so suitable for rural as for town life.

Mr. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, he had an Amendment on the Paper consequential to another Amendment which, if it were carried, would, he believed, do exactly what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton desired, and which he understood the Government would be willing to adopt.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he had suggested that it would be better to call the Councillors Aldermen, because there appeared no objection to that term.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Sir JOSEPH BAILEY (Hereford) said, he rose to move the insertion of the word "county" after "selected" in line 20. He did so because in another section of the Bill the right hon. Gentleman set up a district Council, and it was desirable to distinguish between the members that were elected for the district and those who were elected for the county.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 20, after the word "selected" insert the word "county."—(*Sir Joseph Bailey.*)

Question proposed, "That that word be there inserted."

Mr. RITCHIE said, he had no objection to the Amendment.

Mr. WADDY said, he apprehended that the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman would do the exact thing which hon. Members were desiring to avoid.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 172; Noes 109: Majority 63.—(Div. List, No. 138.)

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 20, leave out the words "selected councillors" and insert "wardens."—(*Mr. W. F. Lawrence.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RITCHIE said, he had already stated that the Government would consent to retain the word "aldermen." It was for the Committee to decide; but the Government were willing to agree to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. Ritchie, the following Amendment made:—in page 1, line 20, leave out the words "selected councillors in lieu of."

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said, that the Amendment he rose to move was so important that he was surprised that no one had put it on the paper. It was to insert after the word "aldermen" "but shall sit for three years only." The Bill proceeded on the lines of the Municipal Corporations Act, and the provisions of that Act would hold good where they were not expressly excluded, and hon. Members would be aware that the Aldermen would thus have the right to sit for six years. The object of his Amendment was to limit its operation by saying that members selected in the manner proposed should hold their office for three years only, and not for six years, according to the Municipal Corporations Act. He moved the Amendment as a means of enabling the Government to meet half-way Members on that side of the House. There were many hon. Members on his side of the House representing county constituencies who had no opportunity of speaking on the very important subject which had been under discussion all the afternoon, the subject of the selected Councillors, owing to the Closure having been applied, he thought, somewhat abruptly. Those he represented felt very strongly on that question. He would not be in order in reopening that discussion; but he would say that, if the Government could see their way to accept the Amendment, it would leave open a door and enable the country later on to consider the desirability of having entire freedom of election for all members of the County Councils. Hon. Members would have seen that the principal argument advanced on the opposite side, and also by the noble Lord (the Marquess of Hartington) for the retention of selected Councillors, was that otherwise you could not secure on the Councils men of weight and experience. His amendment perfectly meet this argument; but it had the advantage of leaving matters free for the second election. After the period of three years, it would be seen how the system worked, and, in the meantime, an opportunity would have been given for considering whether Parliament should not trust the people absolutely in this matter. In this way they might carry out the words of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, who said, that as there was only one door by which that House could be reached—namely, through an appeal to the people, so, also, there should be only one door in order to reach the council chamber of the county.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 20, after the word "aldermen," insert the words "but shall sit for three years only."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Long) (Wilts, Devizes) said, he must object to the Amendment on behalf of the Government, inasmuch as practically it destroyed the value of the Aldermen, whose presence on the Council was intended to secure the continuity of policy so much desired in that House. If the Amendment were accepted these Councillors would only sit for the same time as the elected Councillors, and it was that which the clause was intended to avoid.

Mr. FIRTH (Dundee) said, he should support the Amendment of the hon. Member, and would point out that, when the conduct of members on those Bodies was found to be worthy, they were always re-elected at the end of the period of service at which they were required to be re-elected. That was the case with regard to School Boards and other Bodies.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM said, the Government not only wanted to have a large proportion of the Council to consist of selected members, but they also wished them to hold office for a longer period than the elected members. He ventured to say that if the principle were forced into the Bill it would not last; the question would be opened up again, and would lead to the downfall of the whole system of selections which was most unsatisfactory.

Mr. MARK STEWART said, that the average duration of the periods of service of members of Councils was much shorter than that term which was proposed to be conferred on these Councillors by the Bill. He believed that the average term of service in Parliament was five years, and on Town Councils and School Boards three years. If that was the case with regard to those Bodies, why should they be asked to concede a longer period to selected members of County Councils?

Mr. RITCHIE said, that the system here adopted was that under the Municipal Corporations Act, which fixed tho period for Aldermen at six years.

Mr. MARK STEWART said, that this was done to get rid of a proposal made in the House of Lords, that Alder men should be elected for life; and surely they were not so benighted as to wish to go back to the principle of 50 years ago.

Mr. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) said, he thought there was a much stronger case against the appointment of selected members to the County Councils under this Bill than existed in the case of Municipal Institutions, because there would be great jealousy as to the locality from which they were appointed.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 111; Noes 148: Majority 37.—(Div. List, No. 139.)

Mr. WADDY said, the Amendment he was about to move was purely consequential, and, as he understood, was accepted by the Government. Before proceeding with his remarks he would prefer to wait until some Member of the Government was present.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. WADDY said, the distinction drawn in the clause at first was between selected Councillors on the one hand and elected Councillors on the other. As long as that wording was retained, the Amendment he proposed was unnecessary; but directly the words "selected councillors" were struck out and the Councillors were called Aldermen, the whole ratio ceased, and it became necessary to insert other words. He proposed that the clause should stand thus:—"The councillors elected by the council shall be called aldermen," and then the next portion of the clause would naturally follow. Hon. Members would see that the Amendment was purely consequential, and he hoped it would be accepted.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, lines 20 and 21, leave out "and the other councillors shall be called elective councillors."—(*Mr. Waddy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RITCHIE said, that, as far as he could see, there was no difference in principle between hon. Members; but he thought that some slight modification of the wording of the clause would be all that was wanted. He had at first said that he would admit this Amendment; but, on further consideration, he thought it was better to leave the words as they stood, with the slight modification he had alluded to. The 2nd subsection began by saying, "as respects the councillors;" then Sub-section (a) followed with the words which had been agreed upon. Now if they accepted the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman, the only Councillors they would deal with would be the Aldermanic Councillors; and it seemed to him that they ought to deal with both classes of Councillors. He suggested that the word "elective" should be struck out, and the word "county" take its place.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. FIRTH said, that was the Amendment which he had on the Paper a little further down, and he now understood the Government to accept that Amendment.

On the Motion of Mr. Ritchie, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 21, leave out "elective" and insert "county."

Mr. ALLISON (Cumberland, Eskdale) said, he rose to propose that they should add after Sub-section (a) the words "and the county aldermen shall be elected from the county councillors." The object of his Amendment was very simple—namely, to secure that the Aldermen appointed should be elected from among the County Councillors. They had been told earlier in the evening that an hon. Member, after inquiring into the cases of 25 boroughs, found that in the great majority of cases, the Aldermen had been elected from the Councillors in the boroughs, and the right hon. Member himself said that it was desirable to reward members of the Council by giving them a longer period of service, in order to secure the services of men of superior merit. He thought it desirable that they should be subjected to election, and rely on the suffrages of the electors. It was because he thought that every member of the Council should be elected that he hoped the Government would accede to his proposal.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 21, after the second "councillors," to add the words "and the county aldermen shall be selected from the county councillors."—(*Mr. Allison.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. RITCHIE said, this was a very important departure from the Municipal Corporations Act; and the Government, while ready to accept any Amendment which they considered an improvement on the Bill, did not regard the Amendment in that light, and were, therefore, unable to agree to it. It was true that he had used the argument that Aldermen might be elected from inside the Council as a reward for long service, but that was answered by an hon. Gentleman opposite by the remark that that was of very little value from his point of view. It was clear that there might be gentlemen outside the Council who, from circumstances, could not stand the racket of a general election, but who it was extremely desirable should be on the Council, on account of the valuable services which they could render. The Government, therefore, preferred to leave the question in the position in which it stood under the Municipal Corporations Act.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, that with reference to one of the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman that there were superior persons to be selected from outside the Council who could not stand the racket and cost of an election, he would remind him that the cost had to be taken out of the rates. [Mr. Ritchie: No.] Then he would ask why the right hon. Gentleman had departed from the Municipal Corporations Act, under which the expenses of election were paid out of the rates? He did not see why one class of men should be relieved of the trouble and cost of a contested election at the expense of others; and he would like to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that if he were so anxious to follow the analogy of the scheme of Local Government at present in vogue, it would have been better if he had followed that of the Local Government Board instead of the Town Council. There were no less than 1,200 Local Government Boards in the country, against only 300 Town Councils. With regard to the remark of the right hon. Gentleman as to not restricting the selection of Aldermen to those who had already been elected Councillors, he pointed to the figures which the hon. Member for South Kensington (Sir Algernon Borthwick) had placed before the Committee, which proved that, in the great majority of cases, those men were selected and accepted as Aldermen who had served their time as Councillors. Of course, there might be reasons for that; but, at any rate, it seemed to him a strong argument that this was a more popular way than the Bill proposed of getting these Aldermen on the Councils. If they must have Aldermen, it would be better to follow not alone the letter but the spirit of the Municipal Corporations Act, the practice under which had become an almost universal rule. For these reasons he thought the Amendment ought to be accepted.

Mr. WADDY said, this was a matter about which it seemed to him impossible that they should be too careful. The view of hon. Gentlemen on those Benches was that there might be a special favour granted to some members, but that every man, to have any power whatever in Local Government, ought in some way or other to go through the fire of popular election. That, in their opinion, was the very centre and substance of the Bill, and upon that they must stand. The Government were endeavouring to put on the Councils a certain number of men over whom, either directly or indirectly, the public would have no power. He was rather sorry that the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill was not in his place, because he was obliged to say that this everlasting reference to an Act passed so many years ago was simply idle. He and his hon. Friends did not for one moment believe that all wisdom was locked up in the Municipal Corporations Act, which was a very good thing at the time, but wanted a great deal of improvement now, and really stood condemned, if they were told that everything in the Bill was to be on the lines of modern institutions.

Mr. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.) said he should support the proposal of the Government, because he considered that it would be the means of bringing very useful men upon the Council, of whose services they would otherwise be deprived. It was well known that some men were, for reasons, particularly adapted for certain services; among other things, for instance, a man might be particularly well acquainted with the working of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts, and it would be a great misfortune to the county to be deprived of the services of such a man on the Council. Therefore, he thought the proposal in the Bill wise, and should give it his cordial support.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) said, he believed the right hon. Gentleman had stated in his speech on the introduction of the Bill that its principle was that every man who served on the County Councils should come into direct contact with the electors. He said—

> "We believe that it is essential that whoever shall be the representatives of the constituencies on the County Council should be checked by the healthy test of direct contact with those who elect them."—(3 *Hansard*, [323] 1654.)

Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to use even stronger language, which was cheered by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long), and said—

> "We believe and feel that as there is but one door through which all who desire to take part in the great Council of the Nation that sits within these walls must enter, so there ought also to be but one door through which all who desire to take part in the Councils of the Counties and in the management of local affairs should enter."—(*Ibid.* 1655.)

Members of the House of Commons knew by what door they must enter—it was the voice of the people; but if this Amendment were not accepted, numbers of men would obtain seats on the County Councils who had had no contact with the electors, and, therefore, had not entered, as the right hon. Gentleman said they ought, by the same door as Members elected to that House. He knew cases of Town Councils where Gentlemen had sought popular election more than once, and where they had been rejected, the constituencies showing that they did not want them, and yet they had been subsequently returned by a Party vote of the Town Councillors themselves—he did not say on which side, because he believed in this matter that the Liberals had been quite as bad as the Tories. It was notorious, however, that many gentlemen, who would not otherwise have been there, got upon the Town Councils of boroughs by the votes of those who themselves had been elected, and who selected and did not elect. He himself was an Englishman, and neither an Irishman nor a Scotchman, but he had some information with regard to those countries; and, if he was rightly informed, in Scotland the baillies occupied to some extent the same position as Aldermen in England. He was told that they could not be selected by the members of the Councils, except from the number of elected members; and he was told, as to the Town Councils in Ireland, that there were no Aldermen upon them who could be selected, and had not previously been elected by some sort of popular vote. He (Mr. Cobb) would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board not to be continually telling them that he was following the Municipal Corporations Act, because, as a matter of fact, the right hon. Gentleman seemed to be following that Act when it suited his purpose, and abandoning it when it did not suit his purpose to follow it.

MR. T. FRY (Darlington) said, he was sorry, after the close Division they had had, that Her Majesty's Government did not seem able to meet hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House in reference to this question. In the borough he had the honour to represent, there had not been, since its formation 20 years ago, a single case of an Alderman having been elected in any other way than from inside the Town Council. That, he thought, was a strong argument in favour of the present Amendment.

MR. RITCHIE asked, why hon. Gentlemen had such distrust of the County Councils in regard to the election of Aldermen? Why should they desire a restriction to be placed upon County Councils which was not placed upon Town Councils? The Committee having decided in favour of having Aldermen in connection with County Councils, he claimed for those Councils the same freedom of choice in the selection of Aldermen which existed in the boroughs. If the Amendment were accepted, the anomaly would be set up that in a county they would have the selection of Aldermen limited and fettered, whilst in a smaller Local Government Division—that was to say, in a borough—they would have the selection unfettered. He understood that in his absence certain remarks of his had been quoted by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Cobb), who seemed to think that he (Mr. Ritchie) had departed from the substance of those observations. He (Mr. Ritchie) did not remember the exact words he had used; but, if he recollected rightly, when he spoke them he was impressing upon the House that there was to be in the operation of the measure no position on the County Councils which should not be as easily obtainable by one man as another—that the doors were open, and that no one should be prevented from entering. The desire had been to enable any person with the special privilege of wealth or any other special privilege to be elected or selected by the Council as an Alderman—to enable the County Council to elect as Aldermen men of any rank whatever. It had been assumed that the County Councils would invariably select gentlemen of vast wealth and influence, but he could quite understand that in some counties the very opposite would be the result. He could not, therefore, agree to the restriction that hon. Gentlemen opposite would put upon the County Councils—a restriction which, as he had already pointed out, did not exist in connection with any Council in any borough of this country.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, the second edition of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was not quite so clear as the first edition, which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Rugby (Mr. Cobb) had just quoted. He (Mr. Broadhurst) regretted that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board was not in his place to hear that very admirable sentence of Radicalism quoted from his own speech, which had been so very opportunely read by the hon. Member for Rugby. The objection to the proposal in the Bill with regard to these elected Councillors was this—that it was a direct invitation to the elected Councillors to go outside their own Body for the purpose of electing Aldermen. It was as plain as possible. They would have this Body of selected gentlemen mainly composed of men who, if they put themselves up to be returned by the popular vote, would not get elected by that vote. The position of selected Aldermen would be reserved for this class of men. If the Government were going to create a real and proper County Government, let them have it founded upon the best and strongest principles. It was astonishing what regard Her Majesty's Government had for existing law and the existing condition of things; but he noticed that their particular objection to the creation of anomalies was when something was proposed which was in advance of the present law and present practice. There was never any objection to an Amendment which was not an improvement, or not an improvement in the right direction. He (Mr. Broadhurst) hoped the hon. Member for Rugby (Mr. Cobb) would again read the extract he had given them from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, because he was sure that the right hon. Gentleman would find it impossible to object to the Amendment, unless he objected to and was prepared to disown his own speech, or desired to see his own words wiped out as though they had never been uttered. He there distinctly declared that the County Councils were to be popular—simply elected on the popular vote.

MR. BARING (London): I rise to Order. I think the hon. Member is bound to address the Chair.

MR. BROADHURST said, they sometimes received guidance and light from out of the darkness behind the Chair, and it appeared that they were to be indebted to that remote part of the House for some of those advantages on the present occasion. The Committee would, no doubt, be sensible of that attention. He had been pointing out, when he was interrupted, that it was impossible for the Government, with any consistency, to oppose the proposition of his hon. Friend. Unless this proposal were accepted in some form or other, it would be impossible to regard these Councils as consisting of men of ability sent on the Councils by the people; because he had the firmest conviction that nine-tenths of the selected Aldermen would be of the class of men who would not otherwise find seats on these Bodies, except by the means and through the forms of this particular section of the Bill.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, if the Committee would allow him, he would call attention to a change in the law made in 1882, which, he thought, had escaped attention. They had been told, in the course of this debate, that the Act of 1882 followed the Act of 1835—that it was a Consolidation Statute, and that there was no change whatever in the law. Now, it appeared to him if there was one official more than another who ought to be the creation of the popular vote, and who ought to come to his election as a result of that vote, it was the Mayor of a borough. Now, according to the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, the Mayor must be chosen from the members of the Council for the time being; but one of the changes in the law made by the Act of 1882, which was passed by a Liberal Government, was one which enabled the Corporation to choose as Mayor any person qualified to be a Councillor, whether he was a Councillor or not. Now, he (Mr. Powell) did think it was a somewhat severe demand upon Gentlemen on that (the Ministerial) side of the House to be told that it was a wrong thing to allow

Aldermen to be chosen outside the Council, when hon. Gentlemen themselves, in their Act of 1882, introduced a change in the law enabling the Councillors of a borough to appoint a Chief Magistrate from a class which had not been exposed to popular election. He (Mr. Powell) was sorry that he had not had an opportunity of mentioning that circumstance at an earlier period of the discussion. He was obliged to the Committee for allowing him to submit it now for its consideration.

Mr. STANSFELD said, he could not agree with the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. If this were a proposal *de novo*, he (Mr. Stansfeld) could understand the argument. It would be this—"If you choose to trust the elective Councillors with the duty of selecting a certain number of Councillors or Aldermen, do not limit their choice." That was a plain proposition; but the answer was that the choice should be limited, because the power was objected to. The whole argument upon which the right hon. Gentleman had proceeded, and upon which those who had supported him had proceeded, appeared to him (Mr. Stansfeld) to be based on a distrust of the electorate. ["No, no!"] Yes; it was evident that their arguments were based upon that distrust, and when he used the word "distrust" he did not mean it in any offensive sense. He could not put it more plainly than it had been put by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), who always spoke plainly and to the point. The noble Marquess had said, in answer to a question put to him, that the point was that they wanted in the first election to introduce upon the Councils a number of men who at this moment had experience, instead of introducing new and inexperienced men. Therefore, the theory was that the Government could not trust the electorate to elect men of experience. If that was not their theory, then there was another—that these men of experience and position would not condescend to go through the rough and tumble of an election; therefore they were to invent, in this provision of the Bill, a special method of putting them on the Councils. They the (Opposition) contended that that was practically inconsistent with the principles laid down by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board in introducing the Bill, and they were therefore opposed to it. Under the circumstances, as they had just been beaten by the Closure at a period when the debate was by no means exhausted by a majority, though a considerably reduced majority, on a proposition which did not satisfy them, but which was considered better than that of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board—for all these reasons, they recommended this Amendment to the Committee. If they carried the Amendment, they would have succeeded, so far, that they would have provided that no Councillor would be put upon the Council who had not been elected. It seemed to him (Mr. Stansfeld) only reasonable, on the right hon. Gentleman's own principle, that the Government should accept the Amendment, and certainly he (Mr. Stansfeld) was prepared to vote for it.

An hon. Member said, there was one argument in favour of this Amendment which had not been mentioned. He did not know whether hon. Gentlemen knew what was continually taking place in large cities, notably in Liverpool, in the matter of the selection of Aldermen, when the members of both Parties in the Town Council were equally balanced. In Liverpool, when political Parties in the Town Council were equally balanced, one vote was required to turn the election of Aldermen. Well, it being necessary to elect a Councillor in this state of things, no less than £1,000 was on one occasion spent in winning the seat necessary to secure the vote. The seat was won by notorious bribery and corruption, and the appointments to the position of Aldermen were made. Subsequently, the Councillor who won his seat on the Council by the expenditure of £1,000 was disqualified; and then the question arose whether the Alderman who had been appointed, and appointed solely through that election, was also disqualified, but it was found that that was not the case. It was solely owing to that fact that one Party in Liverpool held their position — simply through putting Aldermen on outside the Councils. He thought that, therefore, was a very serious question. There would be a tremendous fight at the outset for one Party to obtain the upper hand, and when one Party was successful, that Party would select Aldermen from outside, and select them, not because they were fit men to be on the Council, but because they were partizans, and because their election would be in the nature of a permanent benefit to one side or the other.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said, that this might be a favourable opportunity for him to say what he had intended to say earlier in the evening, and he thought it would be a comfort to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board that he should point out that in 1880, when the hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. W. H. James) introduced a Bill dealing with the election of Aldermen, he (Mr. Causton), then having the honour of representing Colchester, gave the House a practical illustration of how the election of Aldermen worked in that Borough.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman, in making his speech, must be pertinent to the Amendment.

Mr. CAUSTON: What I have to say is pertinent to the Amendment, Sir. What I have to say is as to the failure of the present method of electing Aldermen.

The CHAIRMAN: The question of Aldermen is settled. The Question now before the Committee is whether or not the Aldermen should be selected from the County Councils.

Mr. CAUSTON said, that was just the point he was going to speak upon. He was going to say that during 43 years there was not a single Liberal Alderman or Mayor elected in the borough of Colchester; and no doubt hon. Gentlemen opposite would say—"And a very good thing, too." The different Aldermen and Mayors who had been elected during those 43 years all belonged to one Party, and only two of them had ever received the votes of the ratepayers. He thought that was a strong argument why they should not allow the new Councils to have an opportunity to elect as Aldermen those who were outside the body of elected Councillors. That was what he had wanted to point out earlier in the evening, as the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had desired to have a practical illustration. He had now given him one which clearly showed that the system in question had in the past worked very badly.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he should like to say one word in explanation of the criticism of the hon. Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell), who had stated that in 1882 the Liberal Party introduced a Bill to consolidate the law with regard to Municipal Corporations, and that during the discussion of that Bill a change was effected in the law whereby the chief magistrate of a borough could be appointed outside the body of elected Councillors. The facts of the case were these—and he could speak with considerable accuracy about the case, for, although he was not a Member of the Government at the time, he had watched the fate of the Bill with the greatest care, the Government had refused to accept any Amendment to the Bill in any shape or form in that House; but in the House of Lords, apparently without any public attention being called to the fact, and certainly to the great surprise of people who subsequently discovered it, those two or three words which the hon. Member for Wigan had read were introduced into the Bill. The attention of the House of Commons was not called to the Amendment in any way, and the House agreed to the Lords' Amendment at the end of the Session. The Government were, no doubt, responsible, and ought to have called the attention of the House to the matter. He could only say that, so far as the House of Commons was concerned, it was in entire ignorance of the change having been made.

Mr. F. S. POWELL said, he must thank the right hon. Gentleman for his confirmation of his (Mr. F. S. Powell's) statement. Each House of Commons was responsible for its own acts, and as the Liberal Party was in power when the Act in question was passed, he must look upon that Party as responsible for the change to which he had referred.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, he should like to answer the question which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had asked. He had asked why should they draw a distinction between Councils in towns and Councils in counties? Why should they so much distrust all those who were likely to be in a majority on the County Councils? Now, the answer to that question was this—that they had had a great deal of experience of the sort of thing which went on under the existing powers in the country districts, and had good reason to imagine what would happen in a majority of cases in the counties of this country when the parson and the squire secured a majority in the elections for these Councils. There was no part of the country in which there was such an amount of Boycotting existing as in those places where the parson and the squire were the dominant authorities. Those gentlemen who would be elected under the arrangements made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would become the dominant factors on the County Councils for the next 50 years, and the spirit they were likely to act in towards the humbler classes was very well illustrated by an article which appeared in the current number of *Blackwood's Magazine*. In that article there was a reference made to the "Radical tinkers, tailors, and others," who were likely to get places on County Boards. They knew that a great deal of tyranny was practised at the present time in connection with the Quarter Sessions; and it was because hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House feared, and had good reason for knowing, that this sort of thing would be prolonged and perpetuated under this system of Aldermen which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board was insisting on, that they offered the strongest opposition in their power to the proposal in this provision.

Mr. COBB said, that since the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had done him the honour to refer to the quotation he had given from his speech, and as the right hon. Gentleman was not in the House at the time he read that quotation, he (Mr. Cobb) might, perhaps, be allowed by the Committee to trouble it by reading the quotation again. It was very short indeed, and it would give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity——

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport): I rise to Order. We have a new Standing Order under which no Member is entitled to repeat again an argument used previously in debate. The hon. Member is actually proposing to read over again quotations from a speech with which we have been favoured once already.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot say the hon. Member will be out of Order in referring to that speech, but it is a very remarkable innovation.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, they desired the Government to give them some guarantee that this power of selecting Aldermen would not be abused by the County Councils. Hon. Members desired the Government only to allow those persons to be chosen as selected Councillors who at some time or other had received the confidence of the electorate. The Government had made concessions to their friends. They had said that non-resident owners of property should be qualified for becoming members of the County Councils. A man might endeavour to get a seat on the County Council, in the ordinary way, by offering himself to constituencies with nothing to recommend him but his ability, and might prove altogether unsuccessful. He could then go to a place where he owned property, and where his own people might be in the ascendant, and he might be put on the Council by friends of his, notwithstanding his unfitness to serve, as illustrated by the refusal of the constituencies to elect him. They had heard so much in times gone by about these hidden geniuses in some parts of the world, who were prepared to do all the public duty of an Empire, if they could only be found out; but, unfortunately, the ability of these gentlemen was always of such a character that they were never able to impress their fellows with it, and they remained unheard of until, by some privilege or other, they managed to secure the position which their ability had never been able to win for them. He thought that the Government, having conceded to their friends in the Bill that there should be selected Councillors, should concede to the other side that these Councillors should not be selected from a class, the members of which had never been elected to the Council, and who had never previously obtained the confidence of a constituency. The Government had gone out of its way to make concessions to its friends; but it seemed that, however reasonable the suggestions were which came from the opposite quarter, they were not to receive favourable consideration.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he trusted the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would not give way on this Amendment. He was glad to see the Government opposing Amendments coming from that (the Opposition) side of the House—they were acting in exactly the way he should like them to act. They brought in a Bill professing to be founded on democratic principles, and took every opportunity of shirking the logical consequences of those principles. He would read an extract from a speech which was quite convincing on the point which they were now discussing—namely, whether or not these selected members of the Councils should be taken directly from amongst the councillors themselves. On this point he would read a passage, and he would tell the Committee afterwards from whom he was quoting—

> "We believe," said the orator, "that it is essential that whoever shall be the representatives of the constituencies on the County Councils shall be checked by the healthy test of direct contact with those who elect them."—(3 *Hansard*, [323] 1654.)

That extract was from the speech delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board in introducing the Bill. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) would ask the right hon. Gentleman to be consistent with the excellent principle there laid down—that members of the Council should come into direct contact with the constituencies. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) was justified in calling attention to the remarks which had fallen from the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) earlier in the evening. Why did the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board insist that the County Council should be allowed to go outside of its own Body in appointing selected Aldermen? Why, because in that way alone could they force upon the Councils men whom the electors did not want there. The argument in favour of that proposal given by the noble Lord he thought an honest argument, although he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) did not think it was a sound one. The noble Lord said that if they did not make a provision of that kind the Councils would be entirely composed of what he was pleased to call inexperienced men, and that the experienced men, who had hitherto done all the work, would be excluded from the Councils. Well, the persons who had done the work up to the present were all of one class—that was to say, of the landlord class; and the argument of the noble Lord was that they must have some means of maintaining the present ascendancy of those gentlemen. What else did it mean? If these gentlemen were worthy of the confidence of the constituencies, in Heaven's name let them be returned by the constituencies; but do not let them perpetuate on the County Councils, by a squire majority, the evils which the Bill claimed and pretended to do away with.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 170; Noes 217: Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 140.)

MR. RATHBONE said, he begged to move the Amendment which stood on the Paper in his name, and to which he did not think any objection was taken by the Government.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 21, after the word "and," to insert the words "county aldermen shall not vote in an election for county aldermen."—(*Mr. Rathbone.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. CONYBEARE said, he had handed in two or three Amendments, but was not quite clear which was the first one. He thought the first was that no person should be selected as an Alderman unless he had received a clear majority of two-thirds of the votes of the Council. The object of this Amendment was to provide against cases such as those which had been mentioned by hon. Members that evening. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had challenged hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House to give reasons and facts showing the faultiness of the method of working of the aldermanic system in Town Councils. Such facts had been supplied to the right hon. Gentleman, and he (Mr. Conybeare) hoped that he was satisfied with them. What he (Mr. Conybeare) desired to prevent by this Amendment was such abuses as had occurred on Town Councils, and were likely to occur on County Councils unless some such provision as this were adopted. He did not say that the provision was worded in the best possible manner, but its meaning was perfectly clear. He would take an illustration in this way. He thought the provision of the Bill was that the selected Councillors, now called Aldermen, were to be a quarter of the whole Council. If they took the case of a Council consisting of 80 members, it was, of course, quite conceivable that one Party might come in with a very small majority—say, one of the Parties on the Council might have a majority of one only. Now, what would follow in such a case? Why, unless some provision such as was contained in this Amendment were put in the Bill, that majority of one might be converted into a majority of nearly one-fourth, or, perhaps, a great deal more, of the whole Council. For instance, they might have a majority such as he suggested—31 on one side and 29 on the other; then that very small majority would have it in its power to elect 20 members as Aldermen of the same complexion, politically, as themselves, and the result would be that the majority of one only would turn into a majority of 22, because they would have 51, including Aldermen, as against 29, which would be the minority of elected Councillors. But that by no means represented the whole case. They might, of course, have the case of one Party being in a larger majority than a majority of one, and that majority would then have it in their power to place themselves in a much greater majority by this system of selected Aldermen. If, for instance, the Council consisted of 80 members, they might have no less than a majority of 40 on one side in politics and only 20 on the other. By this process of selecting Aldermen they would put it in the power of the Party having the majority of 40, as against 20, to add another 20 to their already large majority. They could thus give themselves 60 votes, as against 20. Now, it was to prevent such abuses of the exercise of this power on the Councils, which seemed to him certain to take place unless some limitation were adopted in the Bill, that he proposed this Amendment. He was not sure that one party would be more apt to exercise this power than another. It was a power which had been exercised in the past in the case of Aldermen on Borough Councils; and there was reason to suppose, as had been said by an hon. Member just now, that there would be a tendency on the part of a majority to increase that majority, and it was only in human nature to expect that they would do so. If they did, it would militate against the principles stated by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, who, at any rate at one time, seemed so anxious that the Councils should be based on popular support —that was to say, that one Party should be allowed to go so entirely against the wishes of one part of the constituencies.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the last Amendment, to insert the words "and no person shall be selected as an alderman unless he has received a clear majority of two-thirds of the votes of the county councillors."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. Member name a Teller?

Mr. CONYBEARE: Mr. Waddy.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 48; Noes 376: Majority 328.—(Div. List, No. 141.)

Mr. CONYBEARE (who was received with ironical cheers) said, that no doubt hon. Gentlemen upon the Ministerial Benches thought he would be deterred by the Division which had just taken place from proceeding with the next Amendment which stood in his name. He could only assure them he should be nothing of the kind, but that he should take a Division upon this and every subsequent Amendment he might choose to put down. The Amendment which he now proposed was in the following terms:—

"That every alderman shall at the close of his term of six years of office, before being re-elected as an alderman, submit himself for election as a councillor."

He should follow the example set by the right hon. Gentleman who was in charge of the Bill; as the right hon. Gentleman did not see fit to give them any reason for his action, he (Mr. Conybeare) would refuse to give any reason for his action.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 21, insert after the words last inserted, "and every alderman shall at the close of his term of six years of office, before being re-elected as an alderman, submit himself for election as councillor."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. RITCHIE hoped the Committee and the country would thoroughly understand the course which was being pursued by the hon. Gentleman. The Government were submitting to the House of Commons a Bill of a very large and important character, one of great extent, and containing a large number of clauses. Very important issues were to be considered, and they must necessarily occupy a considerable amount of time in discussion. There had been debates that night—the Government did not complain of them in the slightest degree, because the matters under discussion had been important. There had been several Amendments proposed, and several debates. There had been much difference of opinion upon important questions. Those questions had been discussed, and, he thought, settled; but the hon. Gentleman now desired to prevent the Committee proceeding with the clauses of the Bill by proposing to the Committee Amendments which he had not even taken the trouble to put down on the Paper, and which he did not even take the trouble to explain to the Committee.

MR. CONYBEARE thought the attack which the right hon. Gentleman had just made upon him was altogether unwarranted. It was perfectly impossible for him to put this Amendment on the Paper before he had seen the result of the debate upon the essential question as to whether there should be selected Aldermen or not; it was impossible for him to place an Amendment of this kind on the Paper until it was decided, as it was in the dinner hour, that Aldermen should be selected and fixed upon the people for six years. The right hon. Gentleman taunted him with not having placed this Amendment on the Paper. How about the right hon. Gentleman's own Amendment—one of his principal Amendments which he placed before the Committee in a verbal fashion, but almost immediately afterwards withdrew, so that they had not yet had an opportunity of seeing it? There were other Amendments which the right hon. Gentleman told them he was going to propose, but in his sublime condescension he did not choose to put them on the Paper. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] He thought most hon. Members knew he had been in the House long enough not to be put down by their clamour. He was not proposing this Amendment in an obstructive spirit. [*Renewed cries of* "Divide!"] He had had several Amendments on the Paper, but he certainly had not detained the Committee with any lengthened remarks upon them, and he did not go to a Division upon them. That was the first time he had challenged a Division, but it would not be the last. With reference to the charge of obstruction which the right hon. Gentleman had made against him, let him point out that if this Amendment really was, as the right hon. Gentleman said, intended to re-introduce a question which had been already decided, it would have been in the discretion of the Chairman to have ruled it out of Order. The fact that the Chairman did not do that was, to his (Mr. Conybeare's) mind, conclusive proof that the point raised by the Amendment was a fresh one. Everyone must admit that it was a new point—that it had not been previously decided. It might be a small point, but it appeared to him it was desirable they should, in some form or another, place in the Bill a restriction against an abuse which had been proved to exist under the present system, and which it was known would exist under the system proposed. He was satisfied it was possible for a majority of one in a Council to appoint certain persons as Aldermen who would remain in the Council for 30, 40 or 50 years. [*Laughter.*] That was perfectly conceivable and perfectly possible, and the proposal he had made in order to meet that difficulty was simple. It was that after a man had served one term as Alderman, he should submit himself for election as Councillor. Under his Amendment it would be in the power of the Council to replace an Alderman if they chose to do so. That was a new point which had not been previously discussed; he submitted it was a point for which there was some reason. [*Laughter.*] He could quite understand hon. Gentlemen opposite saw no reason in it; but it had, perhaps, quite as much reason in it as the suggestion which came from the other side of the House, that the Aldermen should be called "Reevemen." As the Amendment was calculated to safeguard popular liberties, those liberties which hon. Gentlemen opposite professed to have so much at heart, but which they so little cared for, he begged to submit it to the Committee.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, the Committee had already decided in favour of the principle of aldermanship; but the question, what proportion to the whole body the selected element should be, still remained open. He was opposed to the selected element altogether. He would desire, if it were open to him, to eliminate it; but, inasmuch as he was not able to eliminate it, he wished to reduce it to a minimum. There might, however, be many hon. Members of the Committee in favour of some selected element, but who, at the same time, desired that the selected element should not form an extravagant proportion of the whole body. As the Bill stood, the selected element would constitute one-fourth of the whole body. His proposal was that the number of the County Aldermen should be one-ninth of the number of elective Councillors. A forcible reason which had been put forward in favour of the principle of Aldermen at all was, that there was a number of persons who it was desirable to have upon these boards, but who would not, as the President of the Local Government Board had suggested, be prepared to stand the racket of a popular election. But he thought he might put it to the Committee that the number of such persons was comparatively small; indeed, he felt sure that if they reserved for these superior personages one-ninth of the total number of seats, they would make ample provision for them. But the principle of Aldermen might be applied for a much less creditable purpose. It might be used for the purpose of consolidating the strength of the majority and absolutely crushing the minority. Take the case of a board where the number of elective Councillors was 75. They would suppose that upon that Board they had one Party composed of 37 persons. He did not want to use any specific political term to describe the Party, and, therefore, he would call them merely Reformers. They had 37 Reformers upon the Board, and they had 38 other persons belonging to a different Party, whom they would call Reactionaries. They, therefore, had a majority of one in favour of a reactionary policy. Although they had a nominal majority, the reactionary Party would not be able to do much mischief as they thus stood. But what would happen under the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman? The 38 Reactionaries could take to themselves 25 other spirits worse than they, and, therefore, there would be on the Board 37 Reformers and 63 Reactionaries. It seemed to him most unreasonable that a Party having a majority of one should be able in this way to absolutely crush out the minority. For these reason, he begged to move that the proportion of selected members, instead of being one-fourth of the whole body, should be one-ninth.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the last Amendment, to add the words "one-ninth" instead of "one-fourth."—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. CONYBEARE said, it was all very well for the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to charge them with obstruction. They had been charged with that sort of thing before, but they did not intend to be deterred from doing their duty by such charges. The right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill had not had the common courtesy to reply to the suggestions and Amendments which had been brought before the Committee by hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman's conduct deserved condemnation, which, however, he would not then give utterance to. The right hon. Gentleman might think that any suggestion coming from the Representative of a Metropolitan constituency deserved no consideration from him at all. He (Mr. Conybeare) must say that he took an interest in this matter, because it affected parts of the country where he happened to live, and also that part of the country which he had the honour to represent. He had some interest in the measure; he desired to see it made a good measure, and a workable measure, and he would tell the right hon. Gentleman that it was not his desire to obstruct it. All he desired to do was to see it made a better Bill than it was at present; and all he could say was that if every proposal for the Amendment of the Bill was to be scouted and sneered at and ridiculed, or left without a word of comment by the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the measure, the whole discussion in Committee was reduced to a farce, and the sooner they got rid of the Bill the better. He wished to know from the right hon. Gentleman what reason he had to give why a different quorum to that in the Bill should not be accepted? The right hon. Gentleman had proposed one-fourth, but they on the Opposition side of the House said that was too much, and an hon. Gentleman had suggested one-ninth. Would the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board tell the Committee upon what he based his preference for one-fourth?

MR. RITCHIE: We base our preference for the one-fourth on the Municipal Corporations Act.

Question put, and *negatived.*

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.) said, he had ventured to put an Amendment down on the Paper to increase the time of service on the County Council from three years to six—that was to say, to leave out the word "three" in order to insert the word "six." He thought that no one who considered carefully the question of elected Councillors would wish to see the election of those Councillors take place too frequently. It was a very expensive business in the first place, and the candidates as well as the ratepayers ought most certainly to be considered; and, in the next place, it was desirable that the Councillors should not be interrupted whilst gaining experience in the work expected of them. When the Committee considered the importance and responsibility of the post of elected Councillor for a county, they would see that the men filling that post should have a substantial term of office. Again, in the discharge of their functions upon a County Council, looking at the nature of the business which it was proposed to transfer to these Councils, it would be at once, seen that a Councillor ought to be well acquainted with the business to be performed, and that a short term of three years would give no sufficient opportunity of learning that business. He had consulted many men well conversant with the facts of the case; and although Quarter Sessions had been to a certain extent condemned, yet all those on both sides of the House who had carefully considered the question were of opinion that the Courts of Quarter Sessions had done their duty carefully and well, and their opinion, at any rate, would command respect. He believed that the Courts of Quarter Sessions, generally speaking, throughout the country were of opinion that six years would be a much better and much more reasonable time for men to be elected for than that short period of three years. Believing that he was expressing the view which was unanimously held, not only amongst county gentlemen—he would put that class on one side—but amongst all those who must be interested as much as any body of men could be in this matter—namely, the agriculturists of the country, when he said that it would be a matter of great advantage that the gentlemen appointed on the County Councils should have a longer period of office than that proposed in the Bill, he begged to move the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 22, to leave out the word "three," and insert the word "six,"—(*Sir Walter B. Barttelot,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'three' stand part of the Clause."

MR. RITCHIE said, they had inserted the word "three" in accordance, as he had said often before, with the terms of the Municipal Corporations Act; but, of course, if the Committee should consider that the period proposed by his hon. and gallant Friend would be better than the period proposed in the Bill, the Government would not object to the alteration. At the same time he had to say on the part of the Government that, looking at the fact that they had hitherto adhered to the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act with reference to the selection of Aldermen, they were disposed to recommend the Committee to adhere to the term as contained in the Municipal Corporations Act.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE said, he had placed an Amendment on the Paper, which would cover the point here dealt with, with the additional consideration that if the terms of his Amendment were adopted by the Committee it would secure that half of the County Councillors should go out of office every three years. That would give an election every three years of half the County Council, and in that way the continuity of action and policy of the Council would be preserved. He thought, perhaps, he might be in Order if he moved his Amendment as an Amendment to the proposal of the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot). The words he proposed were—

> "The councils shall be elected for a term of six years, and shall then retire, except one-half, to be chosen by ballot, of those first elected, who shall retire after a term of three years only."

He thought the Committee would see that that would secure a very important point which was commented on by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) when the former Amendment was under discussion. It would secure a continuity of policy, because it would practically prevent an entirely new Board ever coming into office. There would always be on the Board half the members who had served for three years before.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not a very convenient mode of dealing with the proposal before the Committee to take this further Amendment into consideration. It is not possible, in fact, to move it as an Amendment to the present Amendment. There are other Amendments which will raise the same question, which are quite independent of the Amendment before the Committee, and upon those the hon. Member (Sir Roper Lethbridge) can bring forward his proposal.

Baron DIMSDALE (Herts, Hitchin) said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill had rather missed the point of the suggestion which he thought was put in this Amendment as to the period during which the elected Councillors should hold office. There was a certain sum of money allocated to the County Councils, which they could distribute towards the relief of local taxation; but if the Committee added to the expenses of the election of the Councillors, that would diminish the fund at the disposal of the Councils to be distributed in this way, and, so far as he was concerned, he thought that would be an evil. He thought that fund had already been diminished quite sufficiently in other ways. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), in dealing with the Wheel Tax, had to diminish the amount allocated in support of roads; and, knowing as they did the expense which would be thrown upon the county rates, he thought that care should be taken to bring about, as far as possible, a reduction of the expenses of elections. If the present proposal was objectionable, he himself had an Amendment on the Paper fixing the period of office at five years. The Amendment was one which had been unanimously adopted by various Quarter Sessions, and should have the ready support of the Committee.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would adhere to the words of the Bill. The hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) seemed to think that the question lay altogether in the desirability of the gentlemen elected having a long apprenticeship in order to learn their trade, but he seemed to forget the rights of the constituencies. He (Mr. Illingworth) contended that to debar the constituencies from the possibility of reviewing the action of their representatives for six years was not a thing to which the Committee should agree for a moment. It was true that they had a Septennial Parliament; but everyone knew very well that the average of the Elections was something like three years, and that, therefore, in practice the constituencies had an opportunity of reviewing their decisions more frequently than once in seven years. He did not think, so far as the counties were concerned, that there was as much weight as hon. Members seemed to think to be attached to what was called the continuity of policy. Surely the constituents, when they were called upon to elect candidates, would be able to give consideration to that subject. They would send men back who had already been on the Councils if they considered it necessary, and if they did not send those same gentlemen it would be because they preferred new instruments for their work. Those, he thought, were substantial reasons why the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board should adhere to his proposal, and should refuse to alter the term from three years to six. He thought there was something to be said with regard to annual elections which lay beyond this proposal; but, so far as the present suggestion was concerned, he did not think that to take an election every third year would be a very heavy burden on a constituency.

Sir RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) said, he apprehended that the interests of the country would best be served by making the best arrangements in the Bill to secure the return to the County Councils of the best men to represent the people. It was in that view, and in that view alone, that he gave his support to the proposal before the Committee. He was satisfied that the best men they could select were in many cases those who desired to live a peaceful life, and to whom the turmoil of an election would be a deterrent. In this House they had always confronting them the necessity of returning to their constituents, and many of them, at any rate, were in the habit of regarding such a contingency without fear or apprehension; but it was entirely another thing under this Bill. Here they were going to provide a new system to take the place of one long established. The old system was one not condemned for inefficiency or extravagance; but still the interests of the counties demanded that they should have a reconstruction of their Local Government. Speaking as one who had had some experience for some years past of that Local Government, he was, above all things, anxious that they should have on the newly elected Body the very best men they could get. He should support the Amendment for no reason whatsoever but this—that he thoroughly believed that to put forward before the men who presented themselves for election that they were to have a period of six years during which they could retain their office, and for the continuation of their work, they would obtain upon the County Councils a number of persons who would be the best for the work, and whom they otherwise might not be able to secure. For that reason, and for that reason alone, that by it they would secure the best possible system of election, he was prepared to support the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he hoped the Government would adhere to the three years' term. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Wells Division of Somerset (Sir Richard Paget) had said that what was desirable was to give people a prospect of a quiet life. Well, he (Sir William Harcourt) was not quite sure that even the Septennial Act gave them that. The people who were dependent upon popular election never had a very quiet life, particularly during the period of its existence, or even at its termination; and, therefore, he did not think that that ought to be a governing consideration. What they had to consider here was that they were making a new experiment in government. They were arranging for the election of a Body which was to exercise very important functions; and surely the constituency ought, within the period of three years, to be able to pronounce whether in this new experiement their representative had carried out the policy they desired. It was impossible to foresee the great number of important questions which would arise. There would be a great number of new questions in the administration of the new County Councils which, after the expiration of three years of experience of the new government, the constituents should have the right of pronouncing an opinion upon. The proposal in the Bill was a reasonable one in the interests of the constituents. They ought to have the right of saying "Aye" or "No" as to the conduct of their representatives during that particular period.

Mr. F. S. POWELL said, he hoped the Government would accept the Amendment of his hon. and gallant Friend. He should not have ventured to rise, after having spoken a few minutes since, if he had not desired to lay before the

Committee the opinion of the Quarter Sessions of the West Riding of Yorkshire. The Quarter Sessions of that Riding had passed a resolution in favour of the six years term. Now, he was quite aware that there were some counties in England where the opinion of the Quarter Sessions might not carry weight with hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House; but the Quarter Sessions of the West Riding was not composed of magistrates, nor of one class of society only, but, on the contrary, they had in that great manufacturing district all classes abundantly and well represented on the Court of Quarter Sessions. The proposal of the hon. and gallant Baronet commended itself to his mind, for the reason given by another hon. Baronet (Sir Richard Paget)—that was to say, because he desired to see chosen on the Councils men who were able to do effective and useful work. He did not think they ought to be influenced in this matter by any fear of the expense of elections. He was quite sure that any economy or saving arising from few elections would be a foolish saving of money, unless accompanied by efficiency. They might save small sums in the expenses of elections, but they would lose far more by costly and expensive mismanagement. He felt the importance of having on these Councils men who had gained experience, as the business of the Councils would be of an administrative character, such as the management, to give one instance, of lunatic asylums. The administration and management of those large establishments—and they were establishments of gigantic proportions—required experience; and unless they had upon those Councils men who had served for many years and had become acquainted with the details of their administration, he was quite sure their management would not be efficient, and he was also certain that while thus losing efficiency they would also incur increased expenses. On this ground, he hoped the Committee would adopt the proposal of his hon. and gallant Friend.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, that perhaps he might be allowed to say that, even in reference to the Quarter Sessions which the hon. Member who had just sat down had spoken of, he thought that if the hon. Member would look into the composition of that body he would find that about five-sixths belonged to one party.

Viscount EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock) said, he wished to call attention to the term of service the Committee had agreed to in regard to County Aldermen. If the Government agreed to the three years' period for the County Council, every alternate Council, when elected, would find themselves face to face with a body of Aldermen elected by their predecessors who would be sharing and perhaps controlling their deliberations during the whole of their period of office. It seemed to him that this was an arrangement which might be singularly inconvenient in practice. It might be got over if it were arranged by the Committee that the first batch of Aldermen should retire after three years, so that the new Council could elect a number corresponding to one-fourth of the whole Council, or the difficulty could be met by accepting the proposal of the hon. and gallant Baronet opposite; but if the Government adhered to their proposal, and the Aldermen were elected for six years, they would be face to face with the difficulty to which he referred.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, that his noble Friend opposite (Viscount Ebrington) had failed to remark that of all the Aldermen who were first elected, half would retire at the end of the first three years, so that the evil he anticipated would be entirely averted by the fact that the incoming County Council would be able to elect the other half of the Aldermen. He (Mr. W. H. Smith) was aware that a great many of his Friends on the Ministerial side of the House attached great importance to the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir Walter B. Barttelot); but, under all the circumstances of the case, the Government thought it better that at all events there should be an election in every three years. Until the new Councils had an opportunity of becoming thoroughly acquainted with the duties they would be called upon to discharge, the best course would be to fix the period at three years, at all events in the first instance. If it should be found by experience that this provision did not work favourably in bringing about the selection of perfectly competent men, it could be altered. If it was found that those who were not fitted to take part in County Government came forward, and those who were fitted failed to come forward, it would be open then for them to make Amendments in the period of election; and he would point out that if the hon. and gallant Baronet carried his Amendment, it was proposed that there should be an election of one-third of the County Council every two years, so that, instead of the county being plunged into the excitement of an election every three years, they would have that excitement every two. He thought, on the whole, the provision the Government had introduced was one which would work well, and gave the County Councils an opportunity of becoming acquainted with their work. He trusted, therefore, that the hon. and gallant Baronet would not press his Amendment.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE said, that notwithstanding what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) he hoped the Government would extend the term and make it a longer period than three years. Those who had watched Public Bodies, as he himself had done, would admit that their observations tended to show that during the first year a newly elected Body was engaged in learning its business, that during the second year the Members worked fairly well, and that during the third year they "played to the gallery" with a view to re-election. The period of three years would have some inconvenience in it in that way, and if the Government, as a compromise, would accept five or even four years it would be better than three.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 384; Noes 82: Majority 302.—(Div. List, No. 142.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again," put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

WAYS AND MEANS.—COMMITTEE.

Ways and Means—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Sir, I would make an appeal to hon. Members to take the Resolution on the Paper this evening upon the understanding that there will be opportunity for discussion on the Motion for the second reading of the Bill which will be introduced to give effect to the Resolution. I may point out that it is highly desirable in the interests of the trade that the question should be disposed of, and I venture to hope that the House will agree to the course I have suggested, by which the Business will be expedited.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, he confessed that, for his part, he had no great anxiety that the House should arrive at the details of the Bill. The Government had deliberately determined to place a duty on a single class of wines, and now appealed to the House to pass a Resolution without discussion which would work a great injustice on a particular trade. But, surely, merely because a wine was expensive, the House of Commons were not to be asked to place upon it a special tax. He pointed out that German wines were largely imported in bottle, and people were to be told that if they drank still hock they were not to pay a higher price than before—that was to say, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer came down and told the House that it was not worth while to preserve the existing agreement between Great Britain and France.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, there was one point in connection with the proposal upon which there ought to be an understanding. His right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed that this should be taken as a formal stage, and that the discussion should take place on the second reading. But if that were agreed to, then the Government should make this the first Order of the Day when it was set down. If the right hon. Gentleman would consent to that, then it was to be hoped there would be no objection raised now.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, there would be considerable difficulty in complying with that suggestion, because it would be remembered that the great pressure in regard to the Local Government Bill necessitated that measure being taken *de die in diem.* It would be remembered that the present Bill was one on which discussion was not bound to stop at 12 o'clock, and perhaps it would be convenient to close the discussion on the Local Government Bill at a reasonable hour on Thursday or Monday, and then proceed with the present proposal, and continue the discussion, if necessary, beyond 12 o'clock. He thought that arrangement would save the time of the House better than the arrangement suggested by his right hon. Friend. Of course, the Government would allow fair time for discussion.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, it was because the Bill could be continued after midnight that they asked for an assurance as to the time when it would be taken. In the conversation that took place on the reservation of time on private Members' days, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) specially referred to this measure and to the Committee of Supply as the only Business likely to interrupt daily progress with the Local Government Bill. It was a reasonable request that this should be the first Order of the Day. It was really an important question, and though it would not, he hoped, take a very long time, it should not be pushed forward late in a Sitting.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, he would give an undertaking that it should be the first Order of the Day, and in all probability it would be set down for Thursday.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, to make this possible it would be necessary to take the Report to-morrow as a formal stage, and he hoped hon. Members would assist him, so that the Report might be taken, and the Bill circulated on Wednesday morning.

(1.) *Resolved,* That instead of the Duties on Wine imposed by "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1888," there shall on Wine imported in bottle be charged and paid, from and after the date of the passing of an Act embodying this Resolution, the Duty following, that is to say:—

Sparkling Wine imported in bottle, the gallon .. .. *s.* 2 *d.* 6

This Duty is to be paid in addition to the Duty in respect of alcoholic strength under "The Customs Amendment Act, 1886."

(2.) *Resolved,* That it is expedient to make provisions for levying Customs' Duties on Wine in bottle.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow,* at Two of the clock.

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

NATIONAL DEBT (SUPPLEMENTAL) BILL.—[Bill 264.]

(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Jackson.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Price of Government annuities to be calculated on basis of two and a half per cent. 10 Geo. 4. c. 24).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, the Bill contained nothing of a contentious nature, while it was of grave importance to the public interest that it should be passed.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said, he should be the last person to oppose a measure of grave public importance; but he must protest against the method in which the Government conducted their Business.

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into Committee on the Bill.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses *considered,* and *agreed to.*

New Clause—

(Application of the National Debt Conversion Act (1888) to Scotland.)

"Section 27 of the National Debt Conversion Act, 1888, shall in its application to Scotland be construed as authorizing trustees to invest in any of the securities in which trustees may invest under the Trustees (Scotland) Act, 1884, without the approval of the Court of Session,"—(*Mr. Jackson,*)

—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be now a second time."

DR. TANNER asked, was any explanation to be given of the clause?

MR. GOSCHEN said, it was to remedy a small omission in the Conversion Bill, and it carried out a suggestion thrown out by the right hon. Member for South Edinburgh.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

Bill *reported,* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 131.]

(*Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Colonel King-Harman.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be further adjourned till Monday next."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked that, in justice to Members who had to travel long distances to attend discussions of Irish Business, the Bill might be set down for a date when there was reasonable prospect of its being taken.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, at least three days' Notice should be given of an intention to proceed with the debate. If it were put down for a distant date, an opportunity that might present itself earlier for proceeding with the Bill might be lost.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (LAND COMMISSION) [REMUNERATION].

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he intended to propose an Amendment objecting to an increase in salary of County Court Judges in Ireland in connection with this measure, and he must object to the Resolution being taken then.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Committee thereupon *deferred* till *Monday* next.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL [*Lords*].—[BILL 233.]

(*Mr. Mundella.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 31st May.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Consent of local authority generally required to provisional order for supply of electricity).

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he desired to withdraw the Amendment which he placed before the House on the last occasion, and substitute another, to which he hoped there would be no objection.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, to add at end of Clause—"The grant of authority to any company or person to supply electricity within any area, whether granted by lease or by means of a provisional order, shall not in any way hinder or restrict the granting of a licence or provisional order to the local authority, or to any company or person with the consent of the local authority within the same area."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses *agreed to.*

Bill *reported,* with an Amendment; as amended, to be considered upon *Thursday.*

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES) BILL.—[BILL 61.]

(*Mr. Mundella, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Richards, Sir Hussey Vivian, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Stuart Rendel, Mr. William Abraham.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he would appeal to the Government to say whether or not they had an intention of bringing in their Welsh Education Bill; and, if not, whether they would allow this and another Bill on the same subject before the House to be referred to a Select Committee? The matter had been standing for three years, waiting for the Government proposals; and if, without further delay, a Committee were allowed to consider these Bills, something might be arrived at.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford) said, it was a matter not for him to decide.

Second Reading *deferred* till *Wednesday.*

STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRADE, SHIPPING, AND MANUFACTURES.

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures have leave to print and circulate with the Votes the Minutes of their Proceedings from day to day.—(*Sir Matthew White Ridley.*)

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures have leave to print and circulate with the Votes any amended Clauses of Bills committed to them from time to time.—(*Sir Matthew White Ridley.*)

House adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 12*th June,* 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Quarter Sessions (37).
Committee—Rochester Bishopric (98-146).
Third Reading—Clergy Discipline (118-147), and *passed.*
PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS—*Second Reading*—Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 4) * (120); Local Government (Poor Law) (No. 5) * (121); Metropolitan Commons (Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray) * (122).

CLERGY DISCIPLINE BILL.—(No. 118.)

(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.*)

THIRD READING.

Order of the day for the Third Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3ª".—(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.*)

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, in presenting two Petitions against the Bill from the clergy of his diocese, said, that the measure as originally drawn contained some very extraordinary and unjust provisions. It was in order that time should be given for the consideration of those provisions that on former occasions he had suggested that the Bill should not be passed with precipitation. The reply was that, on the whole, it was expedient to go on with the Bill in its amended form. The measure now before the House was practically a new Bill; not only did it deal with new matters, but it bore a new title. Originally the Bill was called the "Church Discipline Bill"; now it appeared as the "Clergy Discipline Bill." To the clergy in his diocese the measure was far from acceptable, the reason being that it provided a novel and very bad first Court, while it made no provision at all for appeals. The Court consisted of six persons—the Chancellor, three clergymen, and two laymen. The Chancellor was made absolute on matters of law, and had power to say what was a matter of law and what was not. The Court was neither a Judge nor a jury, but it would be a tolerable jury if the Chancellor were not there. This Court would not meet with general acceptance, and it was not the best that could be devised. It was not the Court recommended by the Ecclesiastical Courts Commissioners, nor was it recommended in any other way; but it was an invention arrived at he knew not how, and it seemed to satisfy none of the conditions of a good Court. It was not what those who were called High Churchmen had asked for. The measure would destroy the old Consistorial Court altogether, and nobody wished it to be destroyed. Both Convocations had approved the recommendations of the Ecclesiastical Courts Commissioners, who condemned the notion of a Court consisting of several persons deciding by a majority, and recommended that the Bishop and the Chancellor should be Judges. It was a novel Court, and there would be difficulty in working it. The Bill involved the creation of many new Judges, for every diocese was to have one of these Courts; there would be from 180 to 200 of these Courts, and in the intricacies of local procedure, which would be more expensive than before, there would be great difficulty in getting them all to work harmoniously. Another extraordinary thing was that a Bishop might not be a promoter of a suit. Others would not deem it a desirable thing that they should have to institute prosecutions in these criminal cases. The Bishop was ousted from the Court, and all that he had to do was outside. It would be unfortunate if this should prevent or delay inquiry in cases in which reports were current impugning the character and conduct of clergymen. By way of compensation the Bishop had some minor powers given him. The only inducement offered to them to accept this measure was the supposed cheapness of procedure, about which, however, there was considerable difference of opinion. There were seven steps which the Bishop had to take if he wished to get a case heard; and on the whole it could not be said that this was the best or strongest course possible, or that the Bill provided the simplest mode of procedure. With regard to the refusal of appeal, he thought he was justified in asking why this right, which was inherent to the laws of every country, was to be taken away by their Lordships' House without the slightest notice, and upon a single night's debate? The clergy would find that they had been placed in a totally different position from that with which they had been familiar by the action of their Lordships' House. The right of appeal was expressly recognized by the law. He had taken the course he had pursued in regard to this measure with great pain and regret, especially considering the lateness of the period at which he had intervened, and the fact that he had to differ with the most rev. Prelate (the Archbishop of Canterbury), and other Members of the Episcopal Bench; but he must say that the clergy ought to have known what was being done, so that they might have been able to express their opinion on it. He did not intend to move the rejection of the Bill. His object was to ask for delay, so that the measure, which he considered so bad, might be judged, not by himself, but by those who were best able to judge it. If the Bishops were framing a measure by which they themselves were to be tried, they never would have framed such a Bill as this; and he would say further, in the presence of great legal lights, that it was impossible to suppose that such a measure as this, without any appeal and with so strange a tribunal, could have been drafted. Considering the position and services of the clergy he did think they ought to be thoroughly protected by that House and by the Bishops who had seats there. He hoped, therefore, that the measure would come to an end, so that the clergy might feel that they were protected by the law, and so that the right of appeal, which had never been denied to them, might not be taken away.

The Bishop of LONDON said, he wished to supplement the account which had been given of the original drafting of the Bill in order to show that they had done their very best to make the matter thoroughly intelligible to all concerned in it. It had been agreed that a Bill of that sort should be prepared by the whole body of Bishops in July last, and a Committee was appointed to prepare the Bill. Of that Committee the most rev. Prelate who had just spoken was a Member. They agreed to meet on the 21st of November at Addington. The most rev. Prelate who had just spoken concurred in that, but he was prevented at the last moment from attending, having another engagement in a Court of Appeal. The Committee were, therefore, obliged to proceed without him, and the Bill was sketched out under the presidency of the most rev. Primate of the Southern Province. The cases dealt with by that Bill were not like doctrinal or ritual cases; the decision of which turned almost entirely on matters of law, and which, therefore, should come as speedily as possible to London, where they could be litigated with all the advantage of having at command the best possible legal assistance. The cases dealt with in that Bill, on the other hand, turned, as a general rule, not on points of law but on questions of fact; and, therefore, it was thought that they should provide that those questions of fact should be determined, as under the ordinary Common Law, by investigation on the spot. It was considered that that would not only largely diminish expense, but would be more likely to secure a sound decision. It was the universal principle in all criminal business before the Courts of the State. There all those questions were decided on the spot by a jury. They were perfectly aware that it was not right that the Court should absolutely decide such questions. There was no appeal that he had heard of from the verdict of a jury in a criminal case, and no means of interfering with that verdict except by the use of the Prerogative of the Crown. There did not, therefore, seem any reason why there should be any very marked difference between these cases and those which were ordinarily submitted to a jury. But they felt that it would not be right in all cases that it should be left absolutely to the decision of the Court of First Instance with no possibility of having the decision reviewed, and for that reason from the beginning there had been in that Bill provision for a rehearing which was in reality an appeal, the difference being that it was a rehearing on the spot; and that seemed to them the right way of dealing with those questions of fact. He had himself sat on these cases of appeal in the Supreme Court, and he thought that nothing could be more unsatisfactory. They had to deal with the evidence put before them printed on paper, and had to examine it; and it seemed to him impossible not to be weighed down by the sense that the judgment pronounced on that evidence given on paper was in reality a judgment to the last degree given in the dark. They had the statement of the witnesses, indeed, but knew nothing at all of their demeanour. There was no distinct and clear record of how the evidence was exactly given; and he felt that it must be exceedingly unsatisfactory that the Court below, having come to a certain conclusion with the witnesses in person before it, should afterwards be overriden by a judgment pronounced with no witnesses before the Court at all. They inserted, therefore, a provision for a rehearing; upon different suggestions that were made that provision was strengthened, and they were prepared to strengthen it still further. But that anything would be gained by appeal on questions of fact in the absence of the witnesses was a very doubtful thing indeed. If there was any ground for a rehearing they were more likely to get justice done by having the case reheard with the witnesses before them than by sending it up to London to be judged of without the presence of witnesses. That provision as to a rehearing having been in the Bill all along, if the most rev. Primate who had spoken last objected to the provision, he could not understand why his objection came so very late. Another point was this. A measure was passed about three years ago called the Pluralities Act Amendment Act, which constituted a Court for the consideration of cases where clergymen were charged with the neglect of their ordinary ecclesiastical duties. That Court had now been in operation for three years; it had been worked in several dioceses, and had been found to work exceedingly well; and it had seemed to them that they could not do better than adopt a Court which had been actually tried, and which experience showed to be very efficient. They did not think it would be wise to leave the question of whether a man had been guilty of an offence absolutely to a single individual. The Diocesan Court would have decided such a matter by the judgment of the Chancellor. The Committee met again on February 8, and went through the drafted Bill. The Primate of the Northern Province was present all the time that they were discussing that question, and he could remind him of what he said on the matter. The Bill then contained a reference to that Court as constituted by the Pluralities Act Amendment Act. The Bill simply provided that the Court, as constituted under that Act, should be the Court for the purpose of this Bill. The Primate for the Northern Province objected to that, and said it was not right that the Court should be defined by reference to another Act, but ought to be fully defined in the Bill before them, on the ground that it was a Bill of very high importance, and that the other Act was a very subordinate one. They entirely acceded to the suggestion, and they accordingly provided that the Court should be such as was provided by the Pluralities Act Amendment Act, but that it should be described in words, and not by reference to the above-named Act, and accordingly that had been done. The most rev. Primate of the Northern Province was there when they settled that matter, and they had done with that question before he left the room. The most rev. Primate did not stay the whole time, he knew; the exact moment when he left he could not say; but he had every opportunity, with the Bill in his hands, of saying anything he pleased on the question of a rehearing being substituted for an appeal, and he did not take the trouble.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK: I did not know of it.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON: The most rev. Prelate said he did not know it and did not read it; but it was in his hands, and they could do no more. If he would not read it, and said he knew nothing about it, what could the Committee have done more? The most rev. Prelate told them now that he did not read it. He was sorry indeed for that, but surely they were justified in assuming that he really was cognizant of the matter as far as they were concerned. There were two other Courts besides that one, because there was a choice left between three distinct Courts. When the Bill was read a second time objection was taken to that, and it was urged that it would be far better to define the precise powers of that one Court, and to make it stand alone, and not to leave any alternative. Accordingly, when the Bill was altered in Committee, what was done was to keep that Court, but to define it more exactly, and to lay down that in that Court the Chancellor should have the decision of questions of law, and that the other members of the Court should only decide questions of fact; and to make it more clear they inserted words to the effect that the Chancellor should not only decide questions of law, but should also decide what were questions of law and what were questions of fact. The Court, as so constituted, would be a really strong Court. He had no doubt that it would do its work with ease and efficiency, because, having already tried those Courts, they knew what they could do, and there was not the slightest difficulty in working them. This, then, was the position which the Bill occupied. The things which had been objected to had been in the Bill from the beginning, and any changes made in the Bill had been introduced in order to make matters clear where they were likely to be misunderstood. The two matters to which the most rev. Prelate objected had been before the clergy for some time, and they had had ample opportunity of understanding the mode in which it was proposed to deal with those cases. He had no doubt that the most rev. Prelate could, if he chose, bring forward many Petitions from the clergy against the present measure, or against any other Bill which he did not happen to like. But he could testify that he had received, since the introduction of the Bill, constant encouragement to go on with it. Again and again he had been told by the clergy that they did not wish to keep black sheep among them. He believed this to be true. There was no body of men who would be more grateful if scandalous living clergymen were removed from their midst; and he believed that if this Bill were passed into law it would do a great deal to bring about that result.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK explained that he deeply disliked the Bill from the first, but having been prevented from taking part in the initial stages of it he had withdrawn from its consideration until now.

LORD HERSCHELL said, he thought their Lordships had some ground of complaint against the most rev. Prelate who commenced the discussion. The measure was of great importance to the clergy of this country, and upon such a question their Lordships naturally desired to obtain all the assistance and guidance possible. A large number of their Lordships had been actuated by one motive only—to assist the most rev. Prelate who introduced the measure, and to make the Bill as good as possible for the purpose of regulating and making less expensive and onerous than at present the getting rid of clergymen who were a disgrace to the Church. That was an object in which all their Lordships had an interest. Unless, then, the most rev. Prelate was of opinion that no amendment of the law was necessary, surely their Lordships might have expected that he would render to them all the great assistance which he was so well capable of affording in order to make the measure as good and effective as it could possibly be made. He did not understand the most rev. Prelate to say that the law was not unsatisfactory. He thought he would be a bold man who asserted that the law was satisfactory. If, therefore, the law was unsatisfactory, surely their Lordships received but little assistance by a speech on the third reading of the Bill which did not guide them to a correct conclusion, which did not point out what should be done, but which merely pointed out what had been done, and which simply invited in "another place" the rejection of a measure to which their Lordships had devoted a great deal of time and attention. The most rev. Prelate had explained that he did not agree with the Bill as introduced and as discussed among the occupants of the Episcopal Bench, and therefore he had taken no further part in the discussion. That might be a satisfactory explanation, but the bulk of their Lordships were in a different position from the Episcopal Bench. When a question of this kind was introduced to the notice of their Lordships, surely they had a right to anticipate that if the most rev. Prelate differed from the other occupants of the Episcopal Bench he would say why he differed, where he thought the Bill wrong, and where he thought it could be made better. He understood that the main objection was taken to the want of appeal on questions of fact. He admitted the force of many of the observations which had been made; but their Lordships were in this difficulty. If they allowed an indiscriminate right of appeal, they would sanction at the same time an indiscriminate right to cause expense. They must, therefore, determine which was the greater evil. This Bill dealt with moral offences which did not come within the scope of the Criminal Law. Here it was thought that questions of fact, but not of law, might be determined by a tribunal consisting of several individuals whose decision might well be accepted. It must be remembered, too, that in cases of a far graver character than these, and where the consequences were infinitely greater, a certain number of individuals did determine questions of fact. The most rev. Prelate might have assisted their Lordships in determining to what extent an appeal might be allowed on special application and if a sufficient case had been made out, without at the same time increasing the burden of expense. He had no doubt that if the most rev. Prelate had any suggestions to offer likely to cause the Bill to assume a better shape their Lordships would be ready to listen to him and to consider the proposals. He could not help, however, deprecating the general attack made on a Bill having a most laudable object in view and to which great attention had been given, an attack which might hinder the chances of the measure "elsewhere," without bringing their Lordships nearer to the solution of a very difficult question.

Lord COLERIDGE said, the noble and learned Lord had said that he must be a bold man who would say that he was satisfied with the state of things at present existing. He was bold enough to say that in the matters dealt with by this Bill the present state of things was better than it would be were the proposed changes made. He would add that if it was really correct, as the right rev. Prelate (the Bishop of London) had said, that the Bench of Bishops had no object, in the three separate and utterly different editions of their Bill, but to make its original meaning more clear, he could not congratulate the Episcopal Bench upon the success of their endeavours.

The Bishop of CARLISLE said, he thought that if the Bill had any excellence at all it was in the character of its Court of First Instance, which would be able satisfactorily to decide questions of fact. Five men chosen in the way proposed by the measure did, in his opinion, constitute a very good Court of First Instance; and, although it was neither judge nor jury, it possessed in an excellent sense the qualifications of both. With regard to the veto, to which objection had been made, he could understand that there might be a difference of opinion when the question was one of doctrine or ritual; but he wondered there could be any difference of opinion in the matter of moral offences. It might be a grievous wrong to a clergyman even to be put upon his defence. He could not understand how the most rev. Prelate could be satisfied with the system of Letters of Request; the most rev. Prelate had mentioned to him a case in which it hadcost him £600 to get a clergyman suspended for six weeks.

The Bishop of LIVERPOOL said, he agreed with the most rev. Prelate that the Bill contained many objectionable provisions. He could not approve any measure of ecclesiastical reform which contained a power of veto by the Bishops such as was to be found in the present measure. A Bishop was, after all, but a man, and should not have the power alone of preventing proceedings. He objected also very much to the prevention of appeal on all matters of fact. He did not think that the proposed tribunal was likely to be a very strong one. He also believed that the old system of inquiring into charges against a clergyman by means of a Commission had answered very satisfactorily. The Bill ought to have been brought before the whole body of the Church before it became law, but it had never been examined by any Congress or Diocesan Congress.

The Earl of SELBORNE said, he thought the Bill as it stood would effect a great improvement in the existing law. In his opinion there was no solid foundation for the objections which had been raised against it. The laity, as well as the clergy, were interested in these matters; and a body of laymen selected from all the dioceses of the country, over whom he had the honour to preside, had by one unanimous voice expressed their opinion that there ought to be no appeal on matters of fact in these cases; and when it was provided, as in the Bill, that there should be a new trial, everything was done that justice required in the interests of the accused person. By doing more they would be throwing unnecessary expense upon persons whose duty it was to take steps to have unworthy clergymen removed from their offices. He protested against the notion that protection for the accused should be carried to the extent of obstructing the course of justice. In every sense that justice required, a full right of appeal was given by this Bill. The right of appeal on questions of law remained unimpaired, and the right to a rehearing, upon proper grounds, on questions of fact. This was more than existed in criminal, and as much as existed in civil cases. As to the alleged hardship of there not being a right of appeal when the Court was divided in opinion, the most rev. Prelate in charge of the Bill was, he understood, about to provide, by amendment in this stage, that there should be a right of appeal in all cases when the Court below was divided.

Lord GRIMTHORPE said, he would like to know whether the judgment was a matter of law or a matter of fact? In his opinion the means of giving judgment provided in the Bill were contrary to the principles of English justice. He objected to the Bill which made the Bishop, Judge, executioner, prosecutor, and pardoner. The Bishop was given a right of veto and of refusing to pass the sentence which the Court thought ought to be passed. Besides the Acts and the Canon of 1571, which he had cited before as showing that the Bishop had never had any right to interfere at all, and much less to stop the sentence of his own Court for deprivation, the felony Act of 1870 still more distinctly decided against it, by making conviction in the Civil Court, *ipso facto*, deprivation for ever.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury) said, he did not quite understand the point of the noble and learned Lord with regard to the judgment. Every judgment was made up partly of law and partly of fact. When the verdict had ascertained and determined the facts then the Court pronounced judgment. That was what was proposed in the present Bill.

On Question, *resolved* in the *affirmative:* Bill read 3ª accordingly: Amendments made: Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons; and to be *printed* as amended. (No. 147.)

QUARTER SESSIONS BILL—(No. 37.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that its object was to give Justices at Quarter Sessions a wider discretion in regard to the periods when Sessions for gaol delivery should be held. The measure would enable them to fix such dates for the holding of Quarter Sessions as would make it possible for them always to clear the gaols of the cases popularly called Quarter Sessions cases before the Assizes. The results of widening the powers of Justices in this way would be to save Her Majesty's Judges on Circuit great inconvenience and to economize much of the time which they at present spent in clearing the gaols.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE—THE REV. MR. DALE, OF CHISWICK.

QUESTION.

Viscount POWERSCOURT asked the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London, Whether the Reverend Mr. Dale, Curate of Chiswick, in the diocese of London, who joined the Church of Rome in February last, still held the Bishop's licence to officiate as Curate of Chiswick in the Church of England; and, if so, whether the Bishop considered this consistent with the doctrine and discipline of the Established Church?

THE BISHOP OF LONDON said, that he did not think this was a matter of grave importance; but he would tell their Lordships how it stood, and he hoped his statement would satisfy the noble Viscount. On the 21st of February he received a letter from the gentleman in question stating that it was not possible for him any longer to minister at Chiswick as he had ceased to be a member of the Church of England, and, therefore, he could no longer help in a Church in which he had ceased to believe. He (the Bishop of London) desired his chaplain to reply, expressing regret that the rev. gentleman had thought it necessary to take such a step, but commending him for having at once given up his duty as a curate in the Church of England. The next day he received a letter from a relative of Mr. Dale, stating that that gentleman was hardly in his senses, that he had been much overworked and did not quite know what he was doing, but expressing a belief that he had not been received into the Church of Rome. That turned out to be a mistake, for he had actually been received. The young man wrote to him about a fortnight afterwards to say that he did not know what he had been about, and could not give any account of himself at all. He sent for the young man, and on examination it appeared very plain that he had no real reason for leaving the Church of England. It was a sort of mad impulse. He told the young man that in the circumstances, having caused a scandal, he could not be allowed to officiate any more without an express renewal of permission, and that, before permission were granted, he would be required to make a public recantation as some satisfaction to the Church for the scandal he had caused. At the time the young man was quite unable, from ill-health, to officiate at all, and nothing more passed between them. He told the young man that if ever he wished to officiate again he must apply to him, and he would tell him the precise conditions on which he would be allowed to do so. He had since seen the young man, who was not permitted by his medical adviser to undertake any duty. He did not withdraw the licence of the young man on receiving notice that he had left the Church of England; it was not usual to do so in such a case, for it was generally understood that such an action voided the licence *ipso facto*. Certainly he had treated the licence as void, because he had told him that he must not officiate without renewed permission from the Bishop of whatever diocese he happened to be in. There the matter stood. Earnest appeals had been made to him by the people of the parish to allow the curate to return to his duties in the parish, because, although he might not be a very wise or clear-headed man, nevertheless he had worked hard and endeared himself to a great many people, especially among the poor. However, he had given a negative answer to all these applications, stating plainly that, at any rate for the present, he could not allow him to officiate in the parish of Chiswick, and the future must be left in his hands when the time came to decide what was to be done; but he would certainly not allow the young man to officiate without such a recantation as would be, in his judgment, a satisfaction to the Church of England. Their Lordships would see that the matter was really a very simple one, and that there was no reason for any disturbance or discomfort about it.

EARL BEAUCHAMP said, he must protest against their Lordships' House being made a Court for the review of the various decisions of the Bishops in England and Wales. He sincerely trusted it would not be understood from this incident that whenever there was a case of satisfaction or dissatisfaction on the part of a Bishop it was any part of the duty of their Lordships to put Questions to the right rev. Prelates in regard to matters of ordinary episcopal administration.

PRIVATE BILLS AND PROVISIONAL ORDERS.

Return, for each of the years 1872 to 1887 inclusive, of all Private Bills and Provisional Orders referred to a Committee in either House as opposed, on which Committees were named; showing whether passed, not passed, or how otherwise dealt with; also showing those opposed in Committees of both Houses, and those that received the Royal Assent; and summary showing for each year the number of Bills and Provisional Orders so dealt with; and also summary showing for each year the number of Scotch and Irish Bills and Provisional Orders so dealt with: Ordered to be laid before the House.—(*The Lord Monk-Bretton.*)

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 12*th June*, 1888.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEES — Corn Averages, *appointed.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [June 11] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Public Libraries Act (1855) Amendment * [292]; Customs (Wine Duty) * [293].

Second Reading—Accumulations [55]; Trawling (Scotland) [155], *debate adjourned.*

Committee—Local Government (England and Wales) [182] [*Third Night*]—R.P.; Oaths [7]—R.P.

Considered as amended—Victoria University * [198].

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS—*Second Reading*—Local Government (No. 10) * [275]; Local Government (No. 11) * [276].

Report—Local Government (No. 7)* [267]; Local Government (Port) * [259]; Local Government (Highways) * [258]; Gas and Water * [247]; Gas (No. 2) * [245]; Water (No. 2)* [246].

QUESTIONS.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—INTERFERENCE AT NEWTOWNARDS.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the recent meeting at Newtownards, Whether his attention has been called to a report of the meeting in *The Newtownards Chronicle*, of April 28 last, in which the following appears:—

> "On Friday evening, a few minutes after 7 o'clock, District Inspector Ward, Head Constable Smyth, and one or two other members of the Force, went to the Ulster Hotel and warned Miss M'Kee against allowing the meeting to be held on her premises;"

whether he will state with what object District Inspector Ward visited the proprietress of the hotel on that evening, where the interview took place, and the nature of the conversation between them; and, whether he will give the names of the other members of the Constabulary who called at the Ulster Hotel on that day respecting the meeting?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The District Inspector of Constabulary reports that the newspaper statement is not correct. On the evening in question he went at about 7.30 o'clock, unaccompanied by any member of the Force, to the hotel. Miss M'Kee he neither warned nor even saw on the subject. The object of his visit was to ascertain whether the hon. Member for East Mayo was going to address a meeting at the hotel that evening. His interview with the proprietress took place in a room upstairs, and did not last five minutes. The nature of the conversation was an inquiry of his as to whether a meeting was to be held that evening in the hotel; and a statement of his that, if so, it would probably be addressed by the hon. Member referred to. The proprietress thereupon said—quite spontaneously, without any "urging" or prompting on the part of the District Inspector—that if she found such to be the case she would not allow the meeting to be held. The only other member of the Constabulary who called that day was Head Constable Smyth. He did so as acting for the District Inspector, who was absent until the evening on inspection duty.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—APPOINTMENT OF JUNIOR INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS.

MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been directed to *The Journal of Education*, for May of this year, which states that Mr. T. A. Stewart, one of the junior Inspectors of Schools in Scotland, has been appointed to the office of Chief Inspector, on the vacancy caused by the death of the late Dr. Wilson; whether it is true, as stated in that journal, that nine senior and thoroughly qualified Inspectors were passed over by the appointment of Mr. Stewart; whether he will state the name and length of service of each of the nine Inspectors so passed over; whether promotion to senior Inspectorships in Scotland has hitherto been strictly according to seniority; and, whether promotion to the rank of Chief Inspector is to be regulated by seniority or by other considerations, and, if the latter, what those considerations are?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON) (Bute) (who replied) said: Mr. Stewart was appointed as Chief Inspector in room of the late Dr. Wilson. There were nine Inspectors whose appointments dated from six years to two months before that of Mr. Stewart, and the Lord Advocate will be glad to give the hon. Member privately the information he desires with regard to their names and length of service. As has frequently been stated before, seniority is one, but not the most important, of the elements taken into account in deciding promotion, special merits being the chief consideration. In the case of the small number of appointments which have previously been made, seniority and special merit were, in their Lordships' opinion, combined.

NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES — THE ARRANGEMENT WITH FRANCE IN 1886.

MR. SAMUELSON (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What were the reasons given by the Newfoundland House of Assembly for their "disinclination to adopt the arrangement arrived at in Paris," in 1886 by the respective agents of the Governments of France and Great Britain in regard to the disputed claims of the French as to their fishing rights upon the coasts of the Island?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The chief ground of objection on the part of the Newfoundland Legislature was that the proposed arrangement gave to French fishermen the right of purchasing bait for the prosecution of their fisheries on the banks of Newfoundland, thereby enabling them to take fish, the sale of which entered into competition with fish caught by Newfoundland fishermen, who were unable to compete with the French in the markets of Europe owing to the large bounties given by the French Government to their fishermen.

In answer to a further Question from Mr. SAMUELSON,

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON said, Her Majesty's Government had always held that the right of fishing was common off certain parts of the coast; but the Newfoundland Legislature held that if the French were allowed to purchase bait it would be prejudicial to the interests of the Newfoundlanders.

WAR OFFICE—THE SCOTS FUSILIERS AT PORTUMNA.

MR. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Major Inver, commanding a company of the Scots Fusiliers stationed at Portumna, County Galway, issued orders to the men under his command on the 10th ultimo, stating that, on pain of imprisonment, they should not enter the house of Thomas Nayes, licensed publican of that town; and, can he state what was the reason for giving such order?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The house in question was placed out of bounds by the officer in command in the exercise of his power as such. I see no ground for questioning his discretion. It is impossible to expect that the administrative and executive functions entrusted to officers in command will be properly exercised if this House intervenes in such minute questions of detail as placing a public-house out of bounds.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND)—THE KILLARNEY BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. SHEEHAN (Kerry, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the reason of the delay in remitting to the Killarney Board of Guardians the first instalment of the loan sanctioned on March 6 last in respect of the Act providing for the erection of labourers' cottages?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The hon. Member is, I think, under some misapprehension. The loan has not been sanctioned by the Treasury, and the matter is still under consideration.

LICENSING ACT (IRELAND)—CONVICTIONS AT MACROOM PETTY SESSIONS.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that at the adjourned Petty Sessions held at Macroom Major General Caddell, R.M., presiding, on May 18, a publican named Denis Cronin and three men found on the premises on Sunday, the 13th instant, were each fined £1 and costs for a breach of the Licensing Act, and that in all the other cases against publicans heard on the first sitting, on the 16th instant, the fines inflicted were 10*s.* each with costs; if he can state the reason why the fine was doubled in the case of Cronin?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Resident Magistrate reports that each of the cases referred to in this Question was considered on its merits; and that the Bench of three magistrates were unanimous in inflicting the penalty named in the case of Denis Cronin and three others. Cronin had rendered himself liable to a fine of £10, and three others to a fine of 40*s.* each.

Dr. TANNER asked, whether it was a fact that Major General Caddell, who adjudicated on these cases, had on several occasions been obliged to be assisted home by the police on account of his drunken condition?

[No reply.]

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DEFALCATIONS IN THE BALLYMENA UNION.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that serious defalcations, to the amount of £1,500, have been discovered in the Ballymena Union; whether the late clerk, T. A. Matthews, and his son, R. R. Matthews, are held responsible for the embezzlement; whether R. R. Matthews has absconded; if it is a fact that Colonel Massey Studdert, the Local Government Board Auditor, when auditing the books, never checked them, but took Matthews's word that they were correct, and never called at the bank to verify the half-yearly balance; and, whether the Local Government Board have refused a sworn inquiry into these matters; and, if so, for what reason?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): It is the fact that defalcations have been discovered in the accounts of the Ballymena Union, amounting, it is stated, to about £1,700. Proceedings are pending against the late clerk on a criminal charge; but the Guardians cannot take proceedings against his son, R. Matthews, his whereabouts not being known. It is suspected that he left the country some time ago. Mr. F. Matthews's sureties have paid £300, being the amount of his fidelity bond. Colonel Studdert reports that there is no truth in the statement that he never checked the books of the Ballymena Union, but took Mr. Matthews's word that they were correct. Colonel Studdert further reports that he did not call at the bank to verify the half-yearly balance; that the bank book was produced at each audit, with the signature of the presiding Chairman attached to each weekly balance; and that this was the recognized authority for the genuineness of the book, though, in the present case, it turned out that the bank book was a false book, with the signatures skilfully forged. As I have already stated, in reply to a previous Question, if specific charges be preferred against any of the officers of the Union, the Local Government Board will consider the propriety of holding an inquiry.

Dr. TANNER: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether it is not a fact that the cloak which the Chairman of the Board, who is a member of the Orange Society, threw over these officials, materially assisted and contributed to these defalcations?

[No reply.]

WAR OFFICE (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE VOLUNTEERS—THE LONDON IRISH RIFLES—TRAINING AS DRIVERS, &c.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact that an officer of the London Irish Rifles, at his own expense, trained a squad of over 20 men as drivers, and also for the duty of loading the waggons as per Regulations; whether the officer applied through his colonel to the War Office for the loan from the Government of four waggons for three months to perfect the men in the discharge of their duties, such waggons lying idle at the time at Woolwich and elsewhere; and, whether the Government refused the application, and on what grounds?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): An application was received from the London Irish Rifles for the loan for three months of three general service transport waggons and one ambulance waggon. It was considered necessary to refuse the application, for two reasons. First, because if the loan were made to this corps it could not be refused to others; and as the stock of waggons is only intended to meet Army requirements, it is not desirable to draw upon it for other purposes. Secondly, because a scheme of regimental transport for Volunteers is under trial, an essential feature of which is the providing from local sources of vehicles and horses, assistance being granted by Government in the matter of forage.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—OPOBO—KING JA JA.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) (for Mr. CONYBEARE) (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any, and what, steps were taken, and, if so, when, to cause King Ja Ja to understand the meaning and effect upon his territory of the arrangements concluded by the Berlin Conference; and, whether he can specify the particular provisions of the Berlin Treaty of July 13, 1878, which have any bearing upon, or relation to, the conduct of King Ja Ja?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The hon. Member appears to confuse the Berlin Conference of 1878, which had reference chiefly to the affairs of Eastern Europe, and that of 1885, which dealt with those of Africa. Ja Ja was informed by Acting Consul White of the only provisions of the Act of Berlin of 1885 which affected him—namely, the engagement of Her Majesty's Government to permit freedom of navigation within the protectorate of the Niger and its branches, as appears on page 33 of the Paper lately presented to Parliament.

In reply to Mr. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.),

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON said, the King was now living in the Government House at St. Vincent. When a settled Government had been established in his former territory, which he hoped would shortly be the case, the King would probably be allowed to return.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—THE BLACKWALL TUNNEL.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether, on behalf of the Metropolitan Board of Works, he can give a specific assurance that the construction of the Blackwall Tunnel for vehicular traffic will be proceeded with as rapidly as possible, and that there is no intention to abandon any part of the undertaking?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): I can assure the hon. Member that the Board will carry out the plans as approved by Parliament in their entirety. They consist of one foot and two vehicular tunnels. As the construction, from its novelty, is expensive, the first contract is for the foot tunnel; and the experience so gained will, the Board hope, conduce to the cheaper construction of those for vehicles.

HOSPITAL SUNDAY (METROPOLIS)—COLLECTIONS IN THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACES.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether, on Sunday, June 10, the usual annual Hospital Sunday collection was forbidden by the Metropolitan Board of Works on all the open spaces under the control of the Board; and, whether this is the first occasion on which such Hospital Sunday collections have been so prohibited?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): The Metropolitan Board of Works some time ago made, with the consent of the Secretary of State, a bye-law prohibiting the collection of money on the open spaces under the Board's control. Some of the persons holding religious meetings on the commons asked to be allowed to collect money for the benefit of the hospitals on Sunday, June 10. The Board, however, thought that objection might fairly be taken to the relaxation of the bye-law in favour of any particular body of persons or of any particular object.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he would state the considerations that had induced him to approve the bye-law forbidding collections being made on the open spaces under the control of the Board?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, that, so far as his memory went, he knew nothing about it. It must, he supposed, have been approved by one of his Predecessors in Office.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would look into the matter, and see whether such restriction could not be removed in cases of a collection for perfectly uninjurious objects?

Mr. MATTHEWS signified assent.

THE TRUCK ACTS—THE RHYMNEY IRON COMPANY.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received a communication signed by two shareholders in the Rhymney Iron Company, and by two tradesmen resident in Rhymney, alleging the persistent continuance of truck practices at Rhymney; and, whether any, and what, steps are being taken by the Inspector of Factories in the matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have received such a communication, and counter-communications from the Directors of the Company. The whole matter has been referred to the Chief Inspector for full inquiry, and for such action as appears suitable when the facts are ascertained.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—SCHOOL TEACHERS' RESIDENCES.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland are empowered, under any Rule made by the Treasury, to require any particular individual to become security for a loan for a national school teachers' residence; and, whether it is necessary that the applicant or lessee should become security when the security of three other persons, any one of whom is sufficient for the entire loan, is offered, and to none of whom the Commissioners object?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The Treasury has not made any Rule requiring any particular individual to become surety for a loan for a national school teacher's residence; but the Commissioners of Public Works, I believe, require (in addition to security for the repayment of the loan) that the manager of the school, or the lessee of the site, shall join in the bond, as they alone can secure the exclusive use of the residence for the intended purpose. There are two questions involved—one is security for the repayment of the loan, and the other is to secure that money borrowed in this way shall not be used for the purpose of erecting residences or dwellings which shall be used for other purposes than teachers' residences; and it is for the purpose of securing that that these men are asked to become bound.

EGYPT—THE MINISTRY—RETIREMENT OF NUBAR PASHA.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) (for Mr. Bryce) (Aberdeen, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the fact that Nubar Pasha has retired from the service of the Khedive of Egypt, and that Riaz Pasha has undertaken the formation of a Ministry; and, if so, who are the members of that Ministry so far as now complete; and whether Her Majesty's Government has taken any, and, if so, what part in advising the formation of a new Ministry in Egypt?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): It is true that Nubar Pasha has retired, and that Riaz Pasha has undertaken the formation of a Ministry. Sir Evelyn Baring has reported by telegraph that the Ministry has been constituted; but we are not yet officially informed of the names of its members. Her Majesty's Government have taken no part in bringing about the change of Ministry.

WAR OFFICE—HYPOTHETICAL INVASION OF THIS COUNTRY.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the great divergence between the statements of the Adjutant General of the Army and the first Lord of the Admiralty as to the possibility of invading this country with a named number of men; and, what official and formally constituted system, in the shape of a Joint Committee or otherwise, exists for mutual information and joint action on the part of the Intelligence or other Departments of the War Office and Admiralty?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle):

I have read the statements made on this subject both by my noble Friend and by the Adjutant General. I, for one, deprecate the raising of any such controversy in public; but, in my opinion, the main divergence arises from the fact that the conditions of the problem are different in the two calculations, and especially as regards the force to be transported. There is intimate and close communication between the two Intelligence Departments; and questions that arise affecting both the Admiralty and the War Office are habitually discussed between the two Directors. So far as I am concerned—and I am sure I may speak for my noble Friend also—I have done, and will do, everything I can to promote this object.

WAR OFFICE—ARMY AGENTS.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether a considerable loss was recently incurred by the bankruptcy of a firm who were agents for two Cavalry regiments; and, whether Army agents will in future be required to give security to the Secretary of State?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The debt of the bankrupts to Government was £1,030 6*s.* 6*d.*, but little of which is likely to be recovered. As regards the future system of agency, including the question of security, the Treasury is now considering certain proposals which we have made to them on the subject.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—THE LICHFIELD CHARITIES.

Sir JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked the first Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will cause the inquiry into the Lichfield Charities, which is ordered to be held on June 20, 1888, to take place at 7 p.m. in lieu of 2 p.m., in order to admit of the poor and labouring portion of the inhabitants of the City of Lichfield giving evidence without losing half a day's labour?

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland Penrith): Perhaps the hon. Baronet will allow me to answer this Question. In accordance with the usual practice the Inspector will be prepared to adjourn the inquiry upon application being made to him on behalf of any persons desirous of giving evidence, and who may be unable to be present at 2 p.m.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — WITHDRAWAL OF THE LICENSING CLAUSES.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Mr. Speaker, I have to inform the House that it has been the duty of the Government to consider the state of Public Business, in connection especially with the principal measure of the Session, and I have now to ask the House to permit me to communicate to it the conclusions the Government have arrived at on the subject. The House will remember that, in introducing the Local Government Bill, I informed the House that the Government had felt it to be their duty to make proposals in the Bill dealing with the Licensing Question; but that they did not consider that portion of the Bill as one which was in any sense vital to the Bill. The proposals we made were of such a nature that we hoped they would have been recognized as very substantial concessions. We believe the effect would have been to reduce the number of public-houses wherever such a reduction was desirable. It is, however, clear that our proposals will meet with strenuous opposition. There are on the Paper no less than 200 Amendments on the Licensing Clauses, occupying 13 pages of the Notice Paper. We have not yet completed the consideration of the 2nd clause in the Bill, which consists of 125 clauses; and we are now within little more than two months of the end of an ordinary Session. The chances, therefore, of being able to deal with this question, as well as with the many other important questions in the Bill, are, in the face of the Opposition, very small; and the result of a determination to adhere to these clauses might very well be that we should find ourselves, after a prolonged struggle, with so little time left as to make it practically impossible to pass the remainder of the Bill during the present Session—a result which, we believe, would be regarded both in the House and the country as little short of disastrous. Looking, therefore, to all the circumstances of the case, the Government have resolved that they will not ask the House to proceed with the Licensing Clauses of the Bill.

MR. J. C. STEVENSON (South Shields): The right hon. Gentleman, in the statement he has now made, has referred to the Licensing Clauses of the Bill. I hope he does not intend to include in that category Clause No. 9, which deals with Sunday closing. No question of licenses or of compensation arise out of that clause.

MR. RITCHIE: Yes; the determination of the Cabinet includes all the clauses in any way bearing on the Licensing Question.

MR. STANSFELD (Halifax): I think I am entitled, in the name of my Friends on this side of the House, to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman and the Government on the conclusion at which they have arrived. I venture to express the opinion that it is a sensible conclusion. I agree with the reasons which the right hon. Gentleman has stated. I do not think it would have been practicable, even with the use of the powers which the new Rules give the Government, to pass the whole of this measure, including the Licensing Clauses, during the remainder of this Session, unless it were most unduly prolonged. I must admit that I, for one, regret, for some reasons, the conclusion to which the Government has come, though I think it wise and inevitable. It would have been a great thing if it had been possible for this House to have come to some conclusion with anything like unanimity upon this great question. But I cannot deny that the Government gauged the situation, so far as I can judge, correctly; and, therefore, I have nothing to say in deprecation of the resolution they have now announced to the House. But with respect to the question of my hon. Friend as regards Clause 9, I hope that that may be a matter for further consideration. ["No, no!"] I would remind hon. Members that none of the clauses can be withdrawn without the consent of the House. The 9th clause stands on quite a different footing from all the others. I need not trouble the House by any explanation of it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman is out of Order in discussing the clauses.

MR. STANSFELD: Then I will not pursue the subject further.

PUBLIC BUSINESS—THE BANN, BARROW, AND SHANNON DRAINAGE BILLS.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When he hoped to be able to introduce the Drainage Bills of which he had given Notice?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have consulted with my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury; and we agree that the most convenient course would be to introduce the Bills as the first Order of the day on some Government afternoon, on the understanding, of course, that the discussion would not last very long. My right hon. Friend will announce the precise day on which he will take that course as soon as he can.

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY TO THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND BILL.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he supposed that although this Bill was on the Paper, there was no intention of proceeding with it to-night?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): No, Sir.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.—[BILL 182.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 11th June.*]

[FOURTH NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

COUNTY COUNCILS.

PART I.

Clause 2 (Composition and election of Council and position of chairman).

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, the Amendment which he had to propose was a very simple one; its object was to assimilate the method of retirement and eletcion of County Councillors to that already adopted in the case of Town Councillors under the Municipal Corporations Act. He need hardly remind the Committee that under the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act one-third of the Town Councillors retired every year. If the words he proposed to omit were omitted, then the election of County Councillors would take place in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act—one-third would retire in each year, instead of the whole body retiring every third year. He had not heard that any objection had been raised to the present method of the retirement of Town Councillors; he believed there was no demand for any change in that respect. On the other hand, there was a system of triennial election in the cases of the school boards throughout the country. Under the Education Act, the members of school boards retired every third year. He had heard many complaints in respect to the retirement of the whole school board every third year. It was alleged that in many cases it resulted in a want of continuity of administration and policy. It not unfrequently happened that the majority of the school board was changed at an election, not in consequence of objections to the board's general policy, but on account of some objection to a detail of management on some special subject. There were many people who thought it would be a great advantage in the case of school boards if the elections could take place in the same way as the election of Town Councils did. On the whole, therefore, it appeared to him that the system adopted under the Municipal Corporations Act was a better one than that provided in the Bill. The Government themselves did not seem to be very clear as to which was the best system, for he observed that in Clause 43 it was proposed that in the case of the District Councils the elections were to be conducted upon the plan provided by the Municipal Corporations Act—one-third of the members were to retire every year. County Councillors, therefore, were to retire in a body every third year, while a third of the District Councillors would retire every year. It appeared to him it was desirable there should be one system for Town Council, County Council, and District Council, and that the best system was that one-third of the members should retire each year. It had been said by the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) that annual elections might result in the turmoil of a General Election each year. But the Committee ought to bear in mind that under the Bill there would be only one representative for each district. Therefore, there would only be the turmoil of an election in one-third of the districts in each year. Under the circumstances, he thought the system of election provided by the Municipal Corporations Act was the best, and that it should be applicable to the different authorities. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 23, leave out all after "years" to end of sub-section (*b*).—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, he hoped the Government would see their way to accept this Amendment. It seemed to him there were two strong arguments in its favour. The first argument was that in this matter they were following the precedent of the Municipal Corporations Act, which the President of the Local Government Board said that, as a rule, he should endeavour to follow throughout the Bill. That, alone, was a strong argument in favour of this particular proposal. The other strong argument was that they would not get continuity of policy, which they should get on Councils of this kind, if all the members retired at the same time. He should prefer that we should elect these Councillors for six years and that one-third of them should go out of office every two years. If they could have agreed to that he would have been perfectly prepared to have dropped the Aldermen altogether. That would have been a very great improvement in the Bill. However, they had decided to keep the term of election three years. He earnestly hoped the Government would adopt this proposal, and let one-third of the Councillors go out every year.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) said, he hoped the Government would see their way to accept the Amendment of the right hon.

Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). There was a financial side to the question of which it was desirable the Committee should take note. It was a side of the question which had come under his notice, as he had the honour for five or six years at one time to be the Chairman of the Finance Committee of a large Corporation. The proposal of the Government was to throw the cost of the election of the whole of the County Council on one particular year. Under the system of the Municipal Corporations Act the cost of elections was distributed over three years, and, looking at the fact that the rates were to bear a considerable portion of the cost, it became a serious question. Reference had been made to school board elections. The school board election in the borough of Birmingham cost the ratepayers about £1,000, and that sum was quite sufficient to compel the Corporation to raise an additional rate of ½*d*. in the £1. The practice and the law was to levy the rate as near to the amount necessary as a ½*d*. rate would give, and the custom was not to levy for any small balance there might be. But if the balance was increased by the sum of £1,000, such a Corporation as that of Birmingham was obliged to levy a ½*d*. rate which they would not otherwise levy. Therefore, he begged to point out to the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) that the system which he proposed was one which would, in all probability, inflict on a particular year a heavier ratal than would otherwise be inflicted. That was a point which he thought told strongly in favour of adopting in regard to the County Councils the system which applied to Municipal Corporations, under which only one-third of the Councillors retired annually, and under which there was no necessity for Corporations to alter the unit of ratal.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, he trusted the President of the Local Government Board would accept this or some similar Amendment. The system by which one-third of the members of Municipal Corporations retired each year had, he understood, worked very well. It had given to the Corporations a continuity of work, and he could not help thinking that the wisest course would be to adhere to it. In the case of the London School Board a totally different system prevailed. The whole body retired every third year, and he understood that at each election there was a complete change in the composition of the Board. He certainly thought it would be very much better that the system of election provided by the Municipal Corporations Act, which had worked well, should be carried out in this measure. But he did not think that the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman would effect the object in view. It did not make it clear that for the first three years the individuals elected should retain office; it did not make it clear that one-third should retire each year after the first three years. Therefore, whilst agreeing with the principle of the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment, he did not quite see that the Amendment would carry out the views of its mover.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board for information as to the election of the Borough Councillors?

MR. RITCHIE said, that as far as the Town Councils in the boroughs which were to be made counties in themselves were concerned, they would practically be County Councils. Of course, he did not imagine there would be any alteration in the name. There certainly would be no alteration whatever with respect to their election. It seemed to be supposed that there would be two Councils in those boroughs. Nothing of the kind. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) who moved the Amendment, said that the Government were somewhat departing from their principle in having a different system for election for the County Councils from what they had in boroughs. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly right in that observation; but although they had gone on the lines of the Municipal Corporations Act in setting up County Councils, there were material differences between County Councils and Town Councils. They did not propose, therefore, to adhere strictly to the proposal in the Municipal Corporations Act with reference to annual retirement. The right hon. Gentleman was aware that the area over which the Town Council ruled was divided into three-membered areas. There was an annual election in every area. The result of that was that every elector in every part of the borough was able to record his vote annually. The material difference in the proposal of the Government was that they suggested that single-membered areas should be set up. It would not, of course, be in Order for him to argue as to the advantages or disadvantages of single-membered areas; he would have an opportunity of doing that, he imagined, later on. Single-membered areas would, of course, increase very materially the difficulty of adopting the provision in the Municipal Corporations Act with reference to annual retirement. He did not mean to say that some arrangement could not be made by which there should be annual retirement even in the case of County Councillors; but the result would be very different from that which obtained in towns. They might set up groups of single-membered areas, and they might say that A should elect its member this year, that B should elect its member next year, and C should elect its member the following year. But by that arrangement no constituency in the country would be able to return a member more than once in three years. No voter would be able to give his vote for a member oftener than once in three years, so that there was that which was a most material difference between the position of Town Councils and of County Councils. They had proposed the system of election every three years; firstly, because they suggested single-membered areas, and, secondly, because they believed it would cause considerably less cost both to the candidates and to the counties. Looking to the charges which would devolve upon County Councillors, the latter was a very material consideration. He had always contended that although they generally adopted the principle of the Municipal Corporations Act, they departed occasionally from the exact stipulations of that Act. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to imagine that there was no other elected local Body except the school board, which was elected *en bloc* every three years. There were, however, numerous cases in which Boards of Guardians were elected every three years. Upon an application made to it, the Local Government Board might sanction an election triennially instead of annually, and there were many Boards of Guardians the members of which were elected every three years. Speaking of the system of election in the case of school boards, the right hon. Gentleman said that, on the whole, it was not considered satisfactory. The right hon. Gentleman might be in possession of information which he (Mr. Ritchie) did not possess, to show that such a mode of election was unsatisfactory; but there was a material difference between the school board and the Council set up by the Bill. The Committee had agreed to the proposal of the Government with reference to selected Councillors or Aldermen. There was, therefore, an element there which was not in existence in school boards. There was to be an aldermanic Body which was to be elected for six years, so that they would always be able to secure that continuity which he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman it was extremely desirable to secure. On the whole, and especially looking to the fact that one of the main principles they wished to insist upon was single-membered areas, he hoped the Committee would assent to the proposal made by the Government on this subject. The right hon. Gentleman had laid stress upon the fact that the members of District Councils were to be elected annually, while the members of County Councils were to be elected triennially. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman would see that District Councils possessed in a greater degree than County Councils the characteristics of Town Councils. What they were setting up throughout the country were, first of all, County Councils having jurisdiction over the whole county, and then they were setting up a series of Town Councils, although they did not call them so, with smaller jurisdiction.

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Chitheroe) said, the right hon. Gentleman, in his concluding remarks, tried to explain to the Committee why he adopted the system of triennial elections in the case of County Councils, whilst he adopted the system of annual elections—one-third were to retire annually—in respect of District Councils; but he confessed the right hon. Gentleman had not made at all clear to his mind—he doubted whether he had made clear to the mind of the Committee—any tangible principle on which that distinction rested. What those who supported the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) argued was, in the first place, that the President of the Local Government Board had announced his intention of, as far as possible, following the precedent of the Municipal Corporations Act; and, in the second place, that, in respect to the election of the District Council, he adopted the very mode they now advocated. The only objections at all tangible which the right hon. Gentleman had urged to the Amendment had been two. First of all, the right hon. Gentleman had objected on the ground of expense. That was not the first matter they had to consider. What they had to consider was, how could these Councils be best constituted for carrying on efficiently the work of local administration? The right hon. Gentleman had said that under this Bill it was proposed to have single-membered areas for the election of the County Councils; but he had admitted it would not be at all impossible to introduce the principle of annual election—the principle of the retirement of one-third of the Council every year. There were many hon. Members who thought it would be wise if the right hon. Gentleman followed the precedent of the Municipal Corporations Act in this respect, and if he associated three members with each electoral district, so that one member should retire every year just as one of the representatives of the ward of a town did. He would not enter into the subject now, because it could be discussed hereafter. All he would say upon it was that, whether the right hon. Gentleman adopted the one-member area, or the three-member area, it was perfectly possible for him to follow the precedent of the Municipal Corporations Act, and to adopt the system whereby one-third of the Council retired every year. What he particularly wished to press on the attention of the right hon. Gentleman was that they had had some experience of the working of the system of triennial elections in the case of the school boards. He had had some little experience of the London School Board, and he assured the right hon. Gentleman that what was stated yesterday by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockport (Mr. Sydney Gedge) with reference to the London School Board, was perfectly true. If they elected a Body for three years, the first year was spent by the members in learning their business, in the second year they did their work reasonably well, and the third year they spent in thinking of the coming election. That did not tend to good administration. Moreover, the whole Board might be changed at the election; and possibly on some chance cry arising at the moment. On the other system—allowing for the Aldermen—such a cry would affect only one-fourth of the Council.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Clitheroe Division (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) seemed to treat finance as if it had nothing to do with good administration. He had said that they must endeavour to secure efficiency in the administration of local affairs; but his (Sir Richard Paget's) idea of efficiency was rigid economy, and that sound finance was the very essence of good government. Therefore he opposed anything which would throw unnecessary expense on the rates. Labouring under a misconception, the House unfortunately arrived at a conclusion last night in favour of the election of County Councillors for a period of three years; but he trusted that even yet that decision might be reversed. He believed it would be found that, in fixing a longer term, the efficiency they desired would be secured, and they would be able to get the best men or the best selected body. According to the Bill as it stood, no sooner would the members of the County Councils be elected, than one-fourth of them throughout England would be looking about for the next election. In other words, one-fourth would go out in the first year, another fourth would go out in the course of the next year, and only a small portion of the Council would remain for the full term of the office. He did not think that that was the best way to secure the services of good men. He was in favour of the principle of partial retirement; but he thought its application in the manner proposed would be mischievous and dangerous to the efficiency of the body he wished to see created. There was also another reason—namely, that the Amendment was inconsistent with the Bill as it was drafted. It was perfectly clear that unless they entered into some arrangement and grouped together their electoral divisions in a way that was not provided for, much confusion would arise. The principle of the Bill was that of single-membered divisions, and, unless these were linked together in pairs or triplets, no one would know in which Divisions new elections would have to take place. Unquestionably the system of harassing the counties with annual elections, year by year, was one which would be distasteful to all parties concerned, and on that ground he would oppose the Amendment.

Mr. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon) said, he agreed very much with what had fallen from the hon. Member opposite, though he confessed that he approached the question from a different point of view. The hon. Member spoke of the importance of keeping up the interest of the electors in the work of the Common Council, but that was what frequent elections would fail to do. Nothing tended so much to injure the work as having the elections too frequently. Even a man with comparative leisure found it extremely difficult to take an interest in the numerous elections which now took place. Indeed, one of the curses of the present system was that one of its weaknesses was frequent elections; and if they multiplied those elections they would only increase the difficulty which now existed, and the democracy would take very little interest in the elections. Therefore, the multiplication of elections ought to be avoided. He agreed with the hon. Member that yesterday the Committee made a mistake. He thought it would have been far better if the selected members were elected, as the House of Commons was, practically, for six years, but the error which had been committed was one which could be set right afterwards. He did not think that they could gain anything by annual elections, and when they came to District Councils, he would urge on the Government to confess that that was a blot upon their measure, and to see whether it could not be remedied.

Mr. WHARTON (York, W.R., Ripon) said, the main object should be to obtain as good a body and as experienced a body of County Councillors as they could possibly secure. They should remember who these County Councillors were going to follow. They were about to take the places of a body of men elected for life to discharge the duties, and however able they might be, it would take them some years to master thoroughly the details of the work in which the magistrates had spent their lives. Now, what was the scheme of the Bill, and what would be the scheme, even if the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman opposite were carried? They would have a body of men who would have a minimum of experience with a maximum of work to do. He wished that the system of periodical retirement had been at longer intervals than one year. He would much have preferred that one-third should retire every three years. By that means they would get men of experience upon the County Councils—seasoned men who would be better able to do the work thrown upon them. Under the proposed system there would be a number of unexperienced and useless men upon the Council. He therefore regretted that the system of retirement *en bloc* had been fixed upon by the Government, and he trusted that, before it was too late, the Government would introduce a system of periodical retirement.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, that in framing a Bill of this kind they must be guided by experience. The country had had considerable experience of two modes of elections—namely, the annual retirement of one-third of the elected body in municipalities, a system which had been in force for 50 years, and the triennial retirement *en bloc* in school boards. The testimony of those who had had experience of both matters was in favour of the former. An hon. Member behind him (Mr. Powell Williams), who had been responsible for the finance of one of the largest boroughs in the country, had given his experience of the working of the system in municipal boroughs, and his right hon. friend (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth), who was a member of the London School Board, confirmed the view which had been expressed as to the effect of retirement *en bloc.* He confessed that he was not satisfied with the scheme as it stood at present. He had voted last night against the hon. and gallant Member for Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), but he had voted against it on account of a previous provision which had been carried. He thought that if the Aldermen were abolished it might be wise to elect all the Council for six years, one-third going out of office triennally. The hon. Member for Somerset (Sir Richard Paget) used a phrase which they had heard a good deal of in the course of the discussion—namely, that they wanted the best men. But the best men were those who had the confidence of the electors. There could be no other test. They were doing away with the theory of best men selected on nomination, who had no doubt discharged their duties with great ability—he referred to the county magistrates. They were substituting the principle of popular election, and it had its expensive side as well as its efficient side. Upon the question of cost he would venture to assert that the Amendment of his right hon. Friend would not add one penny to the cost which, instead of being all incurred in one year, would be spread by the Amendment over three years. Instead of being paid in one lump sum for one election, supposing the cost was £30, it would be divided into three sums of £10 each. With regard to the question of administration, that could only be settled by the appointment of men of long and practical experience. He had sat upon a Town Council and upon a school board, and he spoke feelingly when he said that in one case he had never seen any disturbance with respect to the continuity of administration, whereas in the other case the work was turned into a state of chaos when a new Board was elected. It was also found that the candidates went to an election upon special cries at particular years, in accordance with the feeling which prevailed at the moment. One vexed question had been withdrawn from the discussion of these bodies, but there would be other questions arising in the early period of the establishment of these Councils. In the Town Council the administration went on systematically as a rule for three years, and public opinion was brought gradually to bear upon any important question. In the Town Council there was a body of men who were constantly in touch with the people, and that was the secret of the success of our municipal institutions. He could assure the hon. Member who spoke last with reference to the question of securing the best men and men who had the confidence of the people, that he was unwise in disregarding the great precedents of our municipal institutions. He did not think it was possible to find an institution in the history of this or any other country of popularly elected bodies discharging their duties so efficiently and with such general satisfaction as our Town Councils had done. No charge of corruption had been brought against them. The President of the Local Government Board knew that, in reference to the Local Boards of Health of the country which were far more numerous than Town Councils, the precedent of the election in municipal boroughs was strictly followed. The question of the election of Boards of Guardians formed no analogy, but the general principle adopted in regard to our municipal life had worked satisfactorily. What he desired was that the system of county government should work even better than that which had applied to the Town Councils, and that they should get good men who would possess the confidence of the constituents, and who would be perfectly in touch with them. He ventured to assert that in nine cases out of 10 the election of a good man was never challenged. With respect to continuity of administration, he attached great importance to such continuity though he did not attach much importance to continuity of policy. Policy was for the electors to decide. In municipal bodies there was, and in school boards, unfortunately, there was not, this continuity of administration. By the Government plan, some question which might for the moment be a burning one, but might in a few months be forgotten, might be decisive in the election for the whole period. Under the system which he advocated there would be no such abrupt transitions as he deprecated.

MR. CURZON (Lancashire, Southport) said, he thought the Government were quite right in making the Municipal Corporations Act the basis of the provisions of their Bill. At the same time he was convinced that too close an attention to the provisions of that Act might lead them to perpetuate some of the evils associated with its working. The right hon. Member who spoke last said they ought to be guided by experience. What experience pointed out to them was most obvious, and it was generally admitted that one of the greatest evils was that every November municipal boroughs were plunged into the turmoil on a small scale of a General Election. So far as his experience went, the wards in which contested elections took place presented much of the agitation and ill-feeling which were generally connected with a Parliamentary election. Surely they desired to leave out as much as possible from the county elections the evils which were associated with contested elections in the boroughs. He was sure that hon. Members who had municipal experience would agree that the frequency of elections had a great effect in inflaming Party spirit. He thought all would admit that it was most undesirable to introduce the same sort of thing into the counties. They wanted to keep them as far as possible free from elections conducted on Party grounds, and triennial elections would be more likely to effect that object than annual elections. A right hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House said with an election every three years they might have a clean sweep of the Council, but in some circumstances that might be a very desirable thing. In municipal institutions as they were constituted at present, with annual elections, there was a constant shifting of policy and a want of continuity. He was aware that if triennial elections were introduced into the Bill, as proposed by the Government, a serious discrepancy would exist between the new County Councils and both Municipal Corporations and the county boroughs, because, in the case of the towns and the county boroughs, the elections would go on annually as they did now, while in the counties they would only take place once in three years. If that were so, he, for one, would not altogether regret it, as it might lead to the abandonment of the existing system in the towns. If they wanted to secure elections every three years in the boroughs, he thought the best way to set about it would be to establish triennial elections in the counties. If they were found to work well, they might look forward to a revision of the Municipal Corporations Act in the same sense.

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, that personally he was in favour of retirement by rotation, but the Committee last night came to a decision not to accept a longer term than three years. He advocated a term of either six or four years, with retirement by rotation every second year. He would not accept the principle that what had worked well in the boroughs would necessarily work well in the counties. The two were entirely distinct in their circumstances. The boroughs were divided into wards, and were thickly populated, the inhabitants being spread over a small area, so that the elections could be conducted at a small cost. The elections for the counties would be an entirely different thing, and he spoke from a considerable amount of experience, having been returning officer in 1880 during three county contests. In county elections they would have to provide a large number of polling booths in order to enable the labourers to poll after their work was done and record their votes. For every one of those polling booths it would be necessary to employ a paid returning officer and clerks, and to incur great expense in setting up machinery, exactly the same as if they had a Parliamentary election. He was strongly in favour of Local Government; but he ventured to think—and he had discussed the question with all classes during the last few months—that it would be disadvantageous to have these annual elections at the cost of the ratepayers. Having said this much, he confessed that he was rather taken aback by what his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) said at the end of his speech. He understood his right hon. Friend to say that they were to have their annual elections for the District Councils; and, if so, it did not signify much whether there was an annual election for the County Councils as well. The whole machinery would have to be put in force in the various districts, and the same expense would be incurred for one election as for two if both were held together. He objected to the Amendment because he believed it would be bringing in a very costly machinery. The Amendment of the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for North-West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) having been defeated, he wanted to see a uniform mode of election established, he did not care whether every two or three years, but one uniform mode of election, both for the District Councils and the County Councils, so that the elections for the District Councils should be held at the same time and manner as the County Councils. The right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton, and those who agreed with him, should remember that there were half-a-dozen polling districts set up in a county at great expense; whereas, in the boroughs, there was only one polling booth. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, one Alderman presided over them, and he did not see how he could be in two places at once; and, at any rate, a most expensive machinery would have to be provided in the counties. He should vote against the Amendment, because he hoped to see the decision of last night reversed, and he hoped the Government would come to a decision by which all elections would take place on the same day, in the same manner, and in the same place.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he should not have troubled the Committee by making any observations if it had not been for the remarks which had been made by the hon. Member for the Southport Division of Lancashire (Mr. Curzon), who spoke in deprecation of the system which now existed of having an election every year for Municipal Councils. He differed entirely from the hon. Gentleman because he had been convinced, by long experience and observation of municipal life, that annual elections in different boroughs were greatly to the advantage of the community. He did not believe that the ill-consequences the hon. Member alluded to did arise; but, on the contrary, he believed that the annual election kept alive the interest in the municipal life of the country, it directed the attention of the voters to the action of the Council, and he believed it was greatly to the benefit of the boroughs. It had been stated by an hon. Member who spoke on the other side of the House that those who were adverse to the Motion of the right hon. Member for Central Bradford had no confidence in the constituencies, and had no faith in the principle of municipal election. Now, he had great confidence in the municipal constituencies and in the maintenance of the principle of popular election; but he did not see that that question was at issue in this discussion, nor did he see in what way the popular principle was more concerned under a system by which one-third of the members went out each year than when the whole body gave up their seats on the Council at the same time. Unless they could draw a clear distinction between urban life and county life, it seemed to him that they were bound to follow the principle laid down in the Municipal Corporations Act. He regretted that the Government had not adopted the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member for North-West Sussex last night. At the same time, he believed that that was the consequence of what occurred in the course of the debate yesterday. For his own part, he still entertained a hope that as the discussion advanced the period might be enlarged, and that they might have a period of six years, or, at any rate, of four. They would then be in a position to provide that the retirement of the Council should not be, at the same time, *en bloc*, but a gradual retirement. He believed that such a principle would benefit not only the Councils themselves, but the constituencies.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he rose to intervene in the debate with the hope of bringing the discussion, if possible, to a close, although he had no objection to the continued discussion of a question which he admitted to be one of great importance, and which had been debated with admirable feeling on both sides of the Committee. The discussion showed a strong desire to constitute the County Council in such a manner as to conduce to its efficiency without any regard to Party considerations. He had listened with great attention to the speech of the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), and he could not help saying in a very large measure he most heartily coincided with the views the right hon. Gentleman had expressed. He only regretted that the speech was not delivered yesterday, when his hon. and gallant Friend's (Sir Walter B. Barttelot's) proposal was before the Committee. He did not understand the observations which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in the sense in which they were so admirably interpreted by the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton. He understood the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian to say it might be provided that members of the County Councils who were elected by a great majority of votes should hold office for a longer period than those members who were elected by a smaller number of votes. But the suggestion was not formulated by the right hon. Gentleman in any manner, nor expressed with the distinctness and clearness with which the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton expressed it. There could be no doubt that there was a vast difference between the conditions of rural life and the conditions of town life. The economy which prevailed in connection with town life was very different in regard to rural life. In a town there might be, in the space of two or three acres, a population sufficiently large to elect Town Councillors for two or three wards; but a space of some eight or 10 square miles would be required for a population sufficient to produce the same result for a County Council. The disturbance caused by an election must be far greater in a county than in a town, and therefore it was most desirable that the occasions for this disturbance and expense should not be more frequent than was necessary to keep the electorate in touch with those who represented them. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford suggested that there should be an election of one-third of the members every year; but the cost of an annual election in a town would be far less than in a county.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he had not made that proposal. He had proposed that there should be an election every third year, which made all the difference.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, it was impossible to get about the county, to obtain conveyances, or to procure officers to conduct an election, except at an expense much greater than the expense in the towns. On the part of the Government, he would make a suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman from the point of view that the Government were not seeking to pass the measure in conflict with the Opposition, but rather with the assistance of the House of Commons as a whole. He would suggest that the right hon. Gentleman should withdraw his Amendment at this stage, and allow the Government to consider whether it might not be possible for them to adopt in some measure the suggestion of the right hon. Member for East Wolverhampton, and to devise a system under which there would be an election of a portion of the Council every two years. If the right hon. Gentleman would withdraw the proposal he had now made, the Government would, between that stage and the Report, endeavour to come to an amicable understanding with hon. Gentleman on both sides of the question, and to provide that the election of a portion of the Council should take place every two years, either by making the period four years or six years. That was a matter to be arranged; but he should think it would be better to adopt the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton, and to make the period six years.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would also reconsider the Alderman question?

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, the essential part of his proposition was this—to do away with the Aldermen altogether, and to elect the Councillors for six years, one-third retiring every two years. He did not say that ample time should not be allowed for the consideration of the question; but he wanted to prevent any misconception as to what the nature of his proposal was. His proposal was to abolish Aldermen, and to make the election every six years, one-third going out every two years.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he did not think that it was necessary to come to any understanding at once as to the basis upon which a future understanding might be arrived at. Between this and the Report stage, the Government would endeavour to gather the feeling of the House upon the matter, and, having gathered that feeling, an opportunity would be afforded for reconsideration, and Amendments might be introduced on the Report.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that, after what the right hon. Gentleman said, he was ready to withdraw the Amendment; but he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would consider the question of the Aldermen in the meantime.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, it must be distinctly understood that the only matter he had undertaken on the part of the Government to consider was the term for which the Councils should be elected in the first instance, and the manner in which they should retire. [Several hon. MEMBERS: And the Aldermen.] He was sure that hon. Members would not ask him to pledge himself to that which he was not, at the present moment, willing to undertake.

MR. BARRAN (York, W.R., Otley) said, his only excuse for addressing the House was that he had considerable experience as a member of a Municipal Corporation. He had no wish to enter into the question, which had been fully discussed last night, in regard to Aldermen; but he should like to impress very strongly upon the First Lord of the Treasury the desirability of very carefully considering the question of the appointment of County Aldermen. A good deal was said last night upon that question, and a strong point was made by a number of Gentlemen on the other side of the House that it was desirable to have the best men to represent the counties in the County Council, and that by adopting the principle of electing or re-electing Aldermen they would secure that object.

THE CHAIRMAN said it was quite out of Order to discuss that matter now.

MR. BARRAN said, that after the ruling of the Chairman he would not go further into the question; but he would ask the Government to consider the matter when they came to deal with the question they had promised to reconsider. The municipal system of retiring once in three years had worked so well in the Municipal Corporations, that he was quite sure if it were adopted in this case by the Government it would improve their Bill. He quite admitted that the elections in the counties would be of a very different order and character from those in the municipal boroughs. The population was very much thinner, the opportunities were very much fewer for the assembling of the people, and, in all probability, a great many more difficulties would present themselves. If, instead of having an annual election, the Government could provide any Bill, either for the election of one-half for two years, or select the whole for six years, retiring one-third every two years, in his opinion that would give a very much better representation of the people on account of the continuity of action. He hoped they would receive from the Government an assurance that the whole question, including that of the Aldermen, would be carefully reconsidered.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) said, he thought that it was unfair to press upon the First Lord of the Treasury the question of the Aldermen; but he would venture to point out to the right hon. Gentleman, as Leader of the House, that, as he had undertaken to reconsider the question, it also involved the question of six years, which was deliberately decided against by the Committee last night. Therefore, if the right hon. Gentleman and the Government reconsidered the subject, he thought they might, at the same time, take into consideration the scheme of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, which would undoubtedly bring about that continuity which the Government and others desired.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) said, he did not think the offer which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) was everything that could be desired. The prospect offered by the right hon. Gentleman was that of a Council elected for six years, one-third of the elected members retiring every two years, and one-fourth of the whole body being elected every six years. He did not think that that principle was likely to be of much general advantage. The objection to elections at long intervals was that it took the decision practically out of the hands of the many and placed it in the hands of the few. If hon. Members would compare the experience they had had of Town Council elections with the experience of school board elections, they would see that there was much reason for believing that he was right in regard to Town Councils; they had an election every year, the machinery was always ready, and those who took an interest in them were always on the alert, so that there was no difficulty whatever in securing that the rights of the electors were preserved. But, in the case of a school board election, there was great excitement for a few days; but as soon as the member was returned, everything was forgotten. There was no machinery for conducting the elections, and, every few years, people were running about to collect money from their richer neighbours in order to create the machinery. The consequence was, that a few rich people had the entire election in their own hands, simply because there were no means of reaching the public; whereas, in the municipal elections, it was impossible to manipulate them in that way, as the democracy, as they were called, were always kept on the alert by annual elections, and the Council was in constant contact with the people they represented. It was on this ground, and not from any fear that continuity would not be preserved, that he was interested in providing that the election should be annual, and he would not be content with anything else. As to continuity, reference had been made to schools boards, of which he had had some experience. So far as his experience and observation went, the policy of the London School Board was absolutely continuous down to the last election in 1885. There was then a complete revolution. But this revolution was facilitated by the difficulty of securing popular interest in the election. And the same difficulty would be favourable to a determination on the part of a few men to keep the elections in their own hands. He was anxious that the people at large should elect these Councils, and should have their attention constantly fixed upon the manner in which their representatives discharged their duties. Further, they should always be prepared with adequate elective machinery in order to bring in the men they wanted. On that ground he was not satisfied with the offer made by the First Lord of the Treasury, and he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford would think twice before he withdrew his Amendment.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) said, that it appeared to him that the object would not be secured by the multiplication or the too frequent multiplication of elections: The experience of the United States and their own, so far as it had gone, showed that when the people were constantly being called upon to give a vote the whole matter fell into the hands of the caucuses and machine politicians, a state of things which had never hitherto existed in this country, and which he, for one, would extremely deprecate. But he thought their object must be the same on all sides. They desired, of course, that there should be a certain continuity of administration, and they desired that the expense and the frequency of elections should not be too great, while, at the same time, they wished that there should be sufficient contact between the representative body and their constituents. He must say it seemed to him that that state of things would be secured by the suggestion which had just been made by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, which was in accordance with the previous suggestion of his right hon. Friend the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler). The question of Aldermen was closely connected with this matter, for those who supported Aldermen in boroughs did so chiefly because they thought that Aldermen were the best means of securing a certain continuity of administration. But he thought it would be found that if each Council should be elected for six years, and one-third should retire every two years, the object for which Aldermen had been appointed was sufficiently secured, and they might very well get rid of what, after all, was an invidious portion of a representative body. Do doubt, if that were done in the case of the County Councils, the precedent would be soon followed in the case of Municipal Corporations.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he was somewhat astonished at what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain). If he understood him rightly, he understood him to assert that the frequency of elections in municipal matters was an evil. That surely was a new idea in the experience of the right hon. Gentleman, who used to think that the more frequent the elections were in a borough the less there would be of excitement with regard to them, and the more they would express the real popular feeling of the place. He could quite understand the point raised by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury in regard to the counties where the elections would take place among an agricultural population sparsely distributed, and in consequence there would be more difficulties than in the boroughs. It was certainly a new departure for the right hon. Member for West Birmingham to intimate that he intended to do his best to keep the democracy from the too frequent expression of their views.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, it was a new revelation to him that the right hon. Member for West Birmingham should object to the electorate too frequently expressing their opinion. He thought that in the rural districts especially a frequent appeal to the electorate would have a beneficial effect upon the political education of the electors. Frequent appeals to the people would be of great advantage in this respect. The electors were scattered about in the counties, and did not read the daily papers. If they had their emotions stirred by appeals in connection with elections of County Councils, he thought it would have a material effect on the political education of the electors generally, and would excite a vast amount of interest in the work of the County Council. One of the defects of this Bill was that by it local government was too much removed from the doors of the people themselves. He should be glad to see any enactment that would bring it to their doors once a-year, and thus create an interest in the work of the County Council which was governing them. So far as contests were concerned, he believed they would be of much less frequent occurrence if the elections took place annually. As to the matter of expense, his experience was that the most expensive contest that could be entered upon was a contest for the school board; because they had no means ready for carrying on the contest, and every three years they had to provide fresh machinery. That remark was certainly true in regard to the town of Birmingham. Much had been said about obtaining the best men to serve on the Councils, but he believed the best men to be those who came most frequently into contact with the electorate, and, therefore, in the interests of the Councils, as well as of the people themselves, he was in favour of a frequent appeal to the constituents.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, he thought it was desirable that the Committee should understand exactly what the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury was. As he understood it, it was this—that he would bring up a proposal to elect members of the Council for six years, one-third to retire every two years. Was he correct in that understanding?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the hon. Member was not accurate in saying that he had bound himself to any period of retirement.

MR. J. E. ELLIS said, he was obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for the correction. But the most important point he wished to refer to was this—he understood the right hon. Gentleman expressly declined to reconsider the question of area. Now, unless the single-member area was reconsidered, the position would be this—the members of the Council elected for six years, one-third of them to retire every six years; so that each elector would only have an opportunity of expressing an opinion as to the manner in which the County Councils did their work once in every six years.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said, that he rose to support, as a County Member, the contention of his hon. Friend the Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottinghamshire (Mr. J. E. Ellis). He was glad to note that the First Lord of the Treasury, in reconsidering the provisions of the Bill, did not bind himself to any particular period. He must protest against the adoption of six years as altogether too long, and he was prepared to abide by the decision come to by the Committee last night.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, the Amendment before the Committee was to omit the words "shall then retire altogether." There was an agreement on both sides of the House that those words ought to be omitted. There was a practical agreement that all the members of the Council should not retire together, but that there ought to be some continuity, a portion only retiring at one period, and a portion at another. The question for the Committee to decide was what the period of retirement should be, whether at the end of one year, two years, or any other period? He should suggest that the best course would be that the Government should accept the Amendment now before the Committee, and omit the words which all of them desired omitted, and then decide the question as to the period at which the election should take place.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) said, that the discussion which had occurred was extremely unsatisfactory. Last night, in a full House, the Committee thought they had decided an important leading principle of the Bill; but now the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury got up and practically told them that all these questions were again to be considered. They would soon have to pass from this clause to the clause which related to the election of District Councils, and they would be in a position of not knowing what the decision of the House was upon far more important questions closely allied to it. He understood the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to say that he was ready to consider all the questions which had been decided last night. He hoped that that was not really sò, and he trusted that the Committee would have a more distinct statement from the right hon. Gentleman as to the exact words that were still left open.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University), in moving, in page 2, line 1, to leave out the words "and one elective councillor only shall be elected for each electoral division," said, the Amendment raised a very important question. Every student of history must have been surprised that representative institutions had not been more general, and that when introduced they had not been more successful. One great reason he believed was the system of voting which had been adopted, and he ventured to advocate the present Amendment on two main grounds—first, because it would tend to secure better representation; and, secondly, because it would give the people representatives who would more surely be in accordance with the views of the constituency. What happened under the present system? The elector, no doubt, was nominally free to vote as he liked; but, as a matter of fact, two men were put up—the nominees of some committee or association. Both were, probably, thorough-going partizans. It might well be that neither of them at all represented the views of the elector. But what could he do? Suppose he were a Liberal, but entirely disapproved of the so-called Liberal candidate. To put up a second, even if much more suitable, much more in accordance with the views of the majority of the Liberal electors, would split up the Liberal vote, and, in all probability, lead to defeat. If, on the other hand, the constituencies returned three or five members, there was much greater opportunity for the representation of different opinions. After the announcement just made by the Government, the elections under this Bill would not, it seemed, turn on the temperance question. But it might be taken as an example. Both sides would put up their candidate, and strain every nerve to carry him. Now, though a very important question, this was only one out of many, and all the rest would be excluded. Large constituencies, returning three or five members, would do much to free the electors from the domination of cliques and enable them to exercise an independent judgment. In the second place, he advocated this proposal because it would give a more accurate representation — because it would secure not only a hearing to the minority, but also power to the majority. It was sometimes stated that those who advocated proportional representation had no confidence in the people, and wished to override their will. Those who said so had obviously never mastered the question. Far from wishing in any way to override the will of the majority, one great object of the Amendment was to make sure that the majority should have the power which was their due. That would not be secured under the system proposed in the Bill. For instance, by the Constitution of 1841 Geneva was divided into four constituencies. In the City, as a whole, the Liberals had a large majority; but they were mainly massed in one district of the town, and the result was that, though in a majority, they only carried one constituency, while the Conservatives, though in a minority, were victorious in the other three. Leeds was divided by the last Reform Bill into five districts, each returning a single Member to that House. At the following election the Liberals polled 23,000 votes and the Conservatives 19,000. Yet the Conservative minority secured three seats and the Liberal majority only two. It was evident that if the Liberals had been evenly spread over the whole of Leeds they would have carried every seat by a majority of 20 per cent. Being, however, concentrated in two constituencies, they carried those two by overwhelming majorities of 2,300 in one case and 2,000 in the other, but were defeated in the other three. The Committee would see, therefore, that in such a case the result of an election did not depend so much on the relative numbers polling, but on the manner in which the votes chanced to be divided. With a given superiority in numbers the majority might carry every seat, leaving the minority without a single representative, which, it must surely be admitted, would be unjust, and, therefore, undesirable. On the other hand, as he had shown, the opposite result might, and often would happen, and the minority of electors would obtain a majority of representatives, which would be even more unfortunate. The system proposed in the Bill would, therefore, reduce the representation of local districts to a matter of chance. The majority might entirely exclude the minority from the County Councils, or, on the other hand, they might fail to secure even a majority of representatives. Surely it was ridiculous and discreditable that we should deliberately adopt a mode of election which would thus reduce the result to chance. Moreover, in local government this consideration was, in one respect, of more pressing importance than in Parliamentary elections. The Liberal electors of Leeds were able to console themselves for their disappointments by the knowledge that in other places Liberals secured more than their fair share of representation, though probably this was not so comforting to the candidates themselves. But in elections for local affairs this would not be the case. If an election were fought on Education or Local Option, and a minority of voters secured the majority of representatives, it would be little consolation to the defeated majority to feel that their side had had undue success somewhere else. This Amendment would secure a hearing to the minority, and, what was of even more importance, power to the majority. These were essential to true representation; but neither of them would be secured by the system proposed in the Bill. It was sometimes said that proportional representation would give increased power to "fads." The very reverse was the case. That was the effect of the present system. Two candidates were before the electors. It was known that the contest would be very close. Then came, 100 earnest men—say, perhaps, anti-vaccinationists. They made everything depend on the question in which they felt an intense interest. Their 100 votes, making a difference of 200 in the result, would turn the election, thus giving them undue power of putting pressure on the candidate, a power which, under proportional representation, was greatly reduced. There were other minor, but yet considerable, advantages, such as the avoidance of the necessity for new areas, which, moreover, would require constant revision. He had seen it recently stated that proportional representation might be a very fit subject for a discussion at the Royal Society, but was not of a practical character, and that it was a system which the electors of the country would never grasp. Why, we had had one form of proportional representation, and perhaps the most complicated form, in operation in this country for 18 years in our school board elections. A Committee of the House was appointed in 1885 to inquire into the manner in which it had worked; and Mr. Forster, Sir Francis Sandford, and Mr. Cumin, all agreed that the satisfactory working of school boards was greatly due to the operation of proportional representation. This Amendment did not raise the question of the mode of voting at all; that would be a matter for subsequent consideration. All the Amendment did was to give larger electoral areas. He ventured, then, to recommend the Amendment to the Committee. It would tend to free the electors from the dictation of wire-pullers; to induce the best men to stand; and would give life and energy to the local government of our country.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 1, to leave out the words "and one elective councillor only shall be elected for each electoral division."—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'and one' stand part of the Clause."

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, he wished to say a few words on the subject of proportional representation, which he understood was raised by the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). He must own that the position of those who favoured proportional representation was somewhat prejudiced by the fact that the alternative system of election and retiring by rotation had been accepted by the House. He imagined, however, that there was no Gentleman in the House of Commons who did not maintain that he was anxious to see fair representation given alike to minorities and majorities. Everybody embraced that doctrine, no matter what his politics might be; but he doubted very much whether any hon. Member would maintain that the present system really carried out the doctrine. It could be proved in a few minutes by means of a pencil and a piece of paper that, theoretically at any rate, the system of single-Member constituencies did not give fair proportional representation to all sections of the population. But this was not all, for it could also be shown that the system did not actually result in fair representation. Various illustrations of this fact had been given at different times. When, therefore, it was practically admitted by everybody that, in theory at any rate, the present system did not give them what they all desired, and when it was further admitted—and he supposed it would not be seriously questioned—that it was quite possible to adopt some method by which fair representation would be given, he could not understand how hon. Gentlemen could object to a proposal in favour of proportional representation. It would, no doubt, be urged that such a system would be so exceedingly difficult to understand that voters would inevitably make great mistakes in carrying it out. But he would remind the House of the numerous prophecies which were indulged in two or three year ago, to the effect that labourers would find it extraordinarily difficult to put their cross against the name of the candidate they wished to support in the Election of 1885. Yet, notwithstanding those forebodings, they all knew how extremely small was the proportion of spoiled papers. He believed that uneducated people would be able to carry the proportional representation system into practice with quite as much facility as they carried out the present system. The scheme advocated by the hon. Baronet the Member for London University was not at present before the Committee; but, with the view of doing what little he could to support that scheme, he should vote for the Amendment which the hon. Baronet had moved.

MR. MORRISON (York, W.R., Skipton) said, that, under the present system of voting, minorities had to content themselves with an inferior class of candidates; whereas, under the system of proportional representation, they would have the strongest interest in selecting the strongest man, in the hope that his return would, to some extent, make up for their deficiency in numerical strength. This was not a mere question of theory. The school boards had, no doubt, been very extravagant in their expenditure; but it could not be denied that they had been very efficient. There had been singularly little jobbery in connection with the school boards, and they had shown very considerable efficiency in the management of elementary schools. They had also shown tact, because they had solved the religious difficulty. The late Mr. Forster said that that difficulty would disappear when men found themselves seated round a table, and could meet it face to face. Mr. Forster's prophecy had proved true. In the school board elections attempts were sometimes made to rouse the spirit of religious intolerance; but when the election was over the members of the board, meeting round a table, found that there were among them far more points of agreement than points of difference, and soon discovered a *modus vivendi*. He thought this had been largely owing to the fact that, under the system of cumulative voting adopted in school board elections, minorities took care to put their best men forward. In view of the experience which had thus been gained of proportional representation—although the school board system was very imperfect in form—he thought that mode of representation was full of hope for the future. It must not be forgotten that the Councils to be created under this Bill would be purely administrative; and, that being so, it was of the utmost importance that each large section of the community should be represented upon them. It was often argued that proportional representation was not required in reference to the House of Commons, because that section of opinion which failed to secure representation in one district obtained it in another. This would, however, be by no means the case in the comparatively small areas contemplated under this Bill. He believed that proportional representation on these Councils would be a great safeguard against jobbery. Probably nobody would deny that the great danger of democratic institutions was the danger of jobbery. The presence on a Board of one strong man who had access to papers, and who knew what was going on, would often have the effect of nipping jobbery in the bud. Those who wished to job feared publicity, and were afraid of a man who was likely to drag their evil practices to light. Those who advocated the representation of minorities claimed that the electoral system should be so arranged that, while the majority ruled, the minority should be heard. He would point out that it was a fallacy to suppose that under the present system the majority necessarily prevailed. That system gave enormous advantages to small minorities. Every Member of that House knew how great was the power of minorities when composed of men fanatically attached to a particular doctrine, willing to sacrifice everything else to carry their point, and ready to give their votes to those who would bid the highest for them. It often happened, especially where a minority was regarded as a power, that a candidate was bound to pledge himself to support some "fad" which the majority of his supporters emphatically condemned. The system of cumulative voting had worked well throughout the country, and the plan proposed by his hon. Friend (Sir John Lubbock) was of the simplest character. In Denmark it had worked for over 30 years with great smoothness, and he did not suppose that anybody in Denmark thought of overthrowing the system. All that was now asked was that the Committee should accept the principle of minority representation, leaving the details to be settled at a subsequent stage.

Mr. WHITMORE (Chelsea) said, there were several reasons why he felt bound to support the Amendment. In the first place, he regarded it as most important, in the interest of the future efficiency of the County Councils, that the electors should vote for candidates primarily because they were sensible men of business, and not because they were the nominees of any particular Party. If the system of single-member constituencies were adopted, it would inevitably lead to the adoption by candidates of the propaganda of political Parties, and the individual merits of men as representatives of the ratepayers would be disregarded. In the next place, if the Committee were going to adopt a plan for the periodical retirement of members of County Councils, in accordance with what appeared to be the general wish of hon. Members, it would be desirable to have, at least, three members for each constituency. In the third place, he thought that some system of proportional representation ought to be adopted. He confessed that he could not vote for the actual scheme which the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) had put on the Paper. He was certain that it was so obscure in its wording that it would lend itself to misrepresentation, and, however honestly the officials did their work, they would be open to the charge of having manipulated the returns. Why should the Committee not resort to the system that had worked so well in the school board elections for some years past? He knew that the common argument against the system of proportional representation was that it was un-English. It had, however, ceased to be un-English since it had been in use on the school boards. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) had said that any system of proportional representation was unsuited for the rough and tumble character of English political life. He (Mr. Whitmore) did not see why we should always have rough and tumble even in political elections. The Corrupt Practices Act had introduced a great change in the whole conduct of such elections, and this change had been gratefully acquiesced in by the Conservatives. He believed that in the elections which would take place under this Bill there need be nothing of a rough and tumble character, and that as the cumulative vote worked perfectly well in school board elections it would work well in County Council elections. He was himself most heartily in accord with the general principle advocated by the hon. Baronet the Member for London University, and he should certainly do all he could to secure, not that the real voice of public opinion should in any way be silenced, but that public opinion, in all its modifications, should, as far as possible, receive adequate representation on the County Councils.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he had to ask pardon of the Committee for rising to speak on the same side as those who had preceded him, but he wished to address himself to the question from a standpoint which had not been adopted by any of them. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) was in his place, he would deal with the arguments put forward by him when the question was under discussion in that House on a previous occasion. He had listened to the right hon. Gentleman with great care on the 15th of April, and had understood him to urge that such a proposition as was embodied in the Amendment of the hon. Member for London University was against the principle on which our whole system of popular representative government was based. He should venture to challenge that assertion, and to show that the right hon. Gentleman had either misunderstood or misrepresented the principle on which representative popular government was based. He had also understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the system of the representation of minorities was one by which the views of the majority would not be put in practice, and, further, that those who advocated minority representation did so in the belief that the majority of the people were always inclined to go wrong, and did not know what was best for them. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) would deal with these contentions in turn. In the first place, he asserted that the principle of the representation of minorities was essentially democratic. It was not a new matter for him to advocate the representation of minorities. John Stuart Mill was his teacher on that subject 30 years ago, and John Stuart Mill certainly represented the opinion of the people of England more thoroughly and instructed that opinion more usefully than some of those who had set themselves up as leaders of the democracy in modern times. Those who supported the principle of the representations of minorities did not ask that the majority should be overruled; but they did ask that the majority should rule not by mere brute force, but in a spirit of intelligence and reason. They felt it was the duty of the minority to bow to the decision of the majority, whatever that decision might be; but they claimed that the decision of the majority could only be intelligently given after the minority had been heard. A minority could only be heard in the Legislative Council of the nation when it had sufficient numerical strength to entitle it to representation, and the majority could only decide intelligently when the Representatives of the minority had stated their views to the House. He could understand that there might be some who did not wish the majority to think before they decided, and who were content with the blind rule of a majority wound up from some centre by a skilfully contrived key, provided that they had the key in their own hands. He was not of opinion that such a system had ever been for the benefit of the people. The proper education of the people in political matters could only be secured by allowing minorities to be heard. It was for this reason that he supported the Amendment, and that he appealed to the Government to adopt it, if only to provide the means of experimenting in the direction of the representation of minorities. He knew that those with whom he was associated, and for whom he might claim most right to speak, were safe in their numbers. Numbers were, however, but a poor protection to the people when the numbers expressed their view without having more than one side of a question presented to them. It might be said that minorities could express their views by means of pamphlets and public meetings; but the best place, and the true place, for the expression of opinions for or against legislation was the House of Commons. He hoped that those who objected to this Amendment would not do so on the pretence that it was not democratic. The proposition which it embodied was really the most democratic that could be submitted to the House—namely, that the majority should rule, but that they should consider before they judged, and that their decision should be based not on the blind strength of their numbers, but on an intelligent appreciation of the points at issue.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, he took it for granted that the Government would oppose the Amendment. The subject which it raised was not a new one, but had been before Parliament for a great many years. It was discussed in connection with the Reform Bill of 1867, when a strong attempt was made to introduce a provision to the effect that Parliament should, somehow or other, be elected by the minority of the people. It was thought that time that, on the whole, minorities were always wiser than majorities. Of course, that was a doctrine which, for the moment, it would be to the interest of the Opposition to maintain; but, remembering that minorities developed into majorities, he adhered to the old opinion that majorities should prevail. Mr. Disraeli described the various schemes of proportional representation, and all the other ingenious conundrums, as he called them, which were then brought forward, as a means of introducing crotchety men into Parliament. The point raised by the Amendment was fought out upon the Reform Bill of two years ago. The principle was carried out much further in that Bill. The proposal his hon. Friend was making was one which was absolutely contrary to the repeated decisions of Parliament. He did not desire to occupy the time of the Committee, but he was quite certain that on this question the Government would adhere to the proposals they had made, which were consistent with the course Parliament had taken, and which they themselves took upon the County Government Bill.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) was quite right in assuming that the Government proposed to adhere to the proposals they made in the Bill; but, although the right hon. Gentleman and the Government were in agreement upon this point, he did not quite understand some of the remarks the right hon. Gentleman had made. He had great sympathy with the object which the hon. Gentleman desired to see taken up, that minorities should be adequately represented, if it was possible to organize any system by which that representation could be properly attained. But, so far as the proposals of the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) were concerned, they had, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby had very justly said, been more than once before the House of Commons, and the House of Commons had, without any hesitation, expressed views adverse to them. It would be quite out of place for the Government to endeavour to re-open this very controversy again, and to set up a system in respect to local institutions which had been deliberately rejected by the House of Commons in reference to Parliamentary elections. He did not believe for a moment that, whatever might be the merits of the proposal of the hon. Baronet, the advocates of proportional representation had yet succeeded in making the smallest impression upon the public mind with reference to their proposal. And, without going over the difficulties which had always been raised, difficulties which proportional representation involved, it was obvious that those difficulties, such as they were, would be greatly aggravated if there was one method of voting at Parliamentary elections and another method of voting at the elections of the County Councils. If there were no difficulties which the mind of the ordinary voter might not be unable to overcome, certainly there would be difficulties created in the mind of the rural voter if he had to give his vote for a Representative in Parliament in one way, and to give it for a representative on the County Council in another way. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby had spoken of single-member areas as being opposed to the interests of minority representation. The Government, however, regarded the single-member areas as in some sense securing a modified form of minority representation. It was perfectly clear how that had been brought about. In the case of a double-member constituency it was quite certain that the majority would be able to return both members; but, if they were to split the area into two and to have one member for each, it was conceivable that they might have a majority in a different direction in one of those areas. That being so, they secured minority representation, whereas, if two votes were given by all the voters in the double constituency, the minority would not be represented at all. Therefore, they thought that by single-member areas they were making provision for securing a modified form of minority representation. His hon. Friend the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Whitmore) seemed to think that with three-member areas there would be less chance of conflict upon Party lines. He did not know whether that was the experience of gentlemen who were connected with the Town Councils, or who had experience of Local Bodies; but he rather fancied that if there were to be a contest at all on Party lines, it was just as likely to take place in three-member areas as in single-member areas, so that he was afraid the proposal of the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) had not the merit his hon. Friend (Mr. Whitmore) seemed to think it had. There were many advantages in maintaining single-member areas; they were the areas for Parliamentary elections, and the Government did not believe there was any reason why they should not be the areas for the election of County Councils. They, therefore, adopted this proposal quite apart from the argument used by those in favour of the proposal of the hon. Baronet for three-member areas. He sincerely regretted it was not in his power to accept the Amendment of the hon. Baronet.

Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) said, he regretted very much that this important subject was discussed while the Chairman (Mr. Courtney) was in the Chair. He felt the arguments in favour of proportional representation would, if he might say so without any reflection upon those who had spoken, have been put before the House far more ably, and far more conclusively, if the hon. Gentleman had not been debarred from taking part in the discussion by his occupancy of the Chair. He (Mr. Sydney Gedge) wished to say a few words in support of the Amendment, not, of course, with the smallest idea of being able to supply the place the Chairman might have so ably filled. He hoped that before long they might hear the hon. and learned Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) taking up the same side, for he well remembered in December, 1884, or January, 1885, seeing from a placard that the hon. and learned Gentleman was to address a meeting in favour of proportional representation. He regretted very much that the Government had met the proposal of the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) with a simple *non possumus.* He hoped that inasmuch as the Amendment had been supported by Liberal Unionists, and by Liberals who were not Unionists, as well as by many of the Government's own supporters, the Government might have been induced to accept it. They heard, in the first place, from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board that it would be puzzling, especially in the rural districts, if there were elections for Parliamentary Representatives under one system, and elections for the representatives of Local Bodies under another system. He (Mr. Sydney Gedge) had a great deal more trust in the people of the rural districts, as well as in the people of the towns, than to adopt such an argument. He not only trusted their hearts; he had not only that sort of confidence which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was so fond of talking about; but he trusted their intellects and common sense. He believed that the man who was incapable of discriminating between two systems of voting was not fit to have a vote at all. Experience, however, had shown that the working men of this country were perfectly able to comprehend the proposed system; trial elections had taken place, and the working classes had shown themselves quite capable of understanding it. Was it to be argued that the people in this country could not understand a system of proportional representation, when for 30 years it had been in operation in Denmark? Under the auspices of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) and the late Mr. Forster, the system was introduced, in 1870, of several members of School Boards being returned for each constituency by a cumulative vote, and of there really being proportional representation; and why should they be unable to do that in 1888 which was done perfectly well in 1870? It was a poor commentary upon the results of the Education Act that those who had been educated under it for 18 years should be less competent to vote intellectually on the new system than those who had not been educated. But then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, with a Toryism for which he would not have given the right hon. Gentleman credit, was quite shocked at the idea that in 1888 Parliament should do anything it resolved not to do a few years ago. He wished the right hon. Gentleman would apply that maxim to the proposal to give Home Rule to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman and all his Friends up to three years ago were totally opposed to the concession of Home Rule to Ireland; and, according to the right hon. Gentleman's theory, that was a reason why they should not vote for it now. There was a different Parliament now; there was a Parliament more in touch with the people; and they were not to be told, especially by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, that if a thing was good in itself, they were not to do it because Parliament in former years had decided against it. Then they really seemed unable to see what were the merits of the proposed system. The right hon. Gentleman called it an ingenious plan by which Parliament was to be elected by the minority of the people. If he had taken the trouble to look into the matter he would have seen that this system would prevent the minority ruling. There was no system which so thoroughly secured the due representation of the majority as the system of proportional representation. Its meaning was representation in proportion to the numbers holding different opinions, and therefore the majority in the country must of necessity, under some one of the proposed systems, obtain a majority in representation, or there would not be proportional representation. Under the present system representation was very largely a matter of chance or haphazard. Let them assume that the people of a town, numbering 10,000, were gathered in a plain in order to vote on different questions; that they then found they were too numerous; that the questions could not be properly heard by all of them; and that, therefore, they divided themselves into batches of 100 each, each of which batches they agreed should elect a representative. The people would know perfectly well that if they were to split themselves up in this way by lot, or by haphazard, just as they might happen to stand, it might happen that those who were of one way of thinking might crowd together, and thus enable the minority to return a majority of the representatives. Such a result had occurred in England. He remembered that in 1874, when the Conservatives came into power with a majority of 50, there were elaborate calculations made to show that they were really in a minority in the country, and that it was through the happy or unhappy accident of the Radicals being crowded together more than the Conservatives that the Radical strength had been thrown away, and that the minority in the country had returned a majority to Parliament. That, of course, might happen under the single-seat system even more so than under the old system, but if they adopted the plan proposed by the hon. Baronet they rendered such a result almost impossible. Every set of opinions would be adequately represented, and, therefore, he trusted the Amendment would receive the assent of the Committee. There was one other point he wished particularly to mention, and it was that under the present single-seat system enormous and undue power was given to those who held strong views on any one particular subject, such, for instance, as vaccination, far greater power than their numbers warranted, because it might happen that five or 10 electors might be able to turn an election. It was well known that these small bodies went to weak-kneed candidates, and obtained their support from fear of losing their seats, and that they were then bound to vote in accordance with the promise they had given, which vote appeared to be supported by a large majority of the constituencies, while, in reality, it was but the wish of a small body in each. Under the proposed system these bodies could concentrate their votes, and thus, possibly, be able to return one out of three or one out of four of the candidates. As a matter of fact, they would be proportionally represented; they would have their due weight; they would have the weight which their numbers and influence entitled them to, and the majority would be in the same satisfactory position.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said, he was one of those who were very strongly of opinion that the House of Commons did right, when it considered the question of Parliamentary reform, to adopt the single-Member seat system, and to put aside the proposal of proportional representation. But when that was said and done he did not think the arguments then used, which his right hon. Friend the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) had re-quoted, had anything whatever to do with the question they were discussing that afternoon. The question of the proportional representation of minorities in respect to local matters had never been brought before the House of Commons in a concrete form, such as they were discussing on the present occasion. Therefore, it seemed to him that it was no argument on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to say the House of Commons had discussed this question over and over again in reference to Parliamentary elections, and had decided that in regard to Parliamentary elections they would not adopt the principle of proportional representation. He (Mr. Sydney Buxton) had not yet, in the speeches of those who were opposed to the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for London University (Sir John Lubbock), heard anything by way of an attempt to meet the difficulty of how they were going, on the new Councils, to obtain a varied representation such as was desirable in local affairs. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Mr. Whitmore) truly said that the elections in municipalities at present turned far too much on questions of Party politics, and in respect to the Amendment they had just discussed the argument had turned on the advisability of obtaining the services of those persons interested in local matters who had great knowledge of administration rather than of questions of policy. But, unless they adopted some form of minority representation in respect to these Councils, it was pretty clear to anyone conversant with local districts, that the contests would continue to turn on Party politics; and that they would not obtain the services of many admirable administrators who otherwise would desire to stand, and who would certainly have a fair chance of being elected. His right hon. Friend the Member for Derby said that all our institutions were founded on the theory of single seats; but he quite ignored the fact that the school board elections were based on an entirely opposite theory. He (Mr. Sydney Buxton) was not altogether in favour of the cumulative vote system, and he could not help thinking that they would have done better had they adopted some other seat system of minority voting in regard to school boards. The only argument used by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board against the Amendment, so far as he (Mr. Sydney Buxton) could gather, was that if they gave some form of proportional representation to these Local Bodies they would confuse the minds of the electors, who, he said, would have to vote one way in Parliamentary elections and another way in County Council elections. Surely the right hon. Gentleman was aware that that was the case now in all boroughs where there were school boards, and in many rural districts in which school boards were elected. If the people were so confused in this matter already, he thought it was greatly to be wondered at that there had been such good school boards as there had been in the past. He would like to hear on behalf of the Government, and those who opposed this Amendment, some real reason given as to how they would get over the difficulty as to these elections turning upon Party politics, or upon some question which might arise at the moment. Looking at it from the point of view of the advisability of getting the best administrators in the Local Bodies, and not because he was enamoured of this particular form of minority vote, he should support the Amendment.

Viscount GRIMSTON (Herts, St. Alban's) said, he regretted extremely to learn, from the tone of the speeches which had been delivered on this question, that the political element would probably be introduced into the new County Councils, from which the late system of government was so happily free. But he hoped that the system, which would eventually find favour in the House, would be that of minority representation, based upon the old three-cornered constituencies, a system which worked very well in the past, and which, he believed, would work very well in all sorts of elections, whether for Parliamentary Representatives or for the representatives upon County Councils. The system of having three members for each constituency, and two votes for each elector, certainly was a system which adequately provided for the due representation of the minority. He simply put this notion forward now as he had not spoken of it before, and he trusted the Government might see their way to adopt it.

MR. CHANNING said, there was one practical consideration which had not been touched upon by any previous speaker, and which seemed to him to be absolutely conclusive in favour of the Government view. They were not legislating for towns, but for country districts. What they wished to secure was the representation upon the County Councils of the definite local wants and wishes of definite and small local areas. He feared that, under the system of proportional representation now proposed, it would be impossible to secure an adequate and just representation of these small local areas, and that, he thought, was quite conclusive in favour of the proposal of the Government. He did not think that they need enter into the question of the possibility of the agricultural population understanding the proportional system of representation. He thought fears in that direction had been greatly exaggerated. But any such system was incompatible with the direct representation of distinctly local requirements, and the object was best met by the single-member district plan of the Government.

MR. BARING (London) said, that if the right hon. Baronet the Member for West Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) had been able to be in his place that afternoon, he (Mr. Baring) would have contented himself with giving his vote in silence as his conscience bade him. But, as the right hon. Baronet was unfortunately unable to attend, and had at a meeting of the Essex magistrates held in the month of March, undertook, at the unanimous request of between 50 and 60 magistrates, to support the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for London University (Sir John Lubbock), he (Mr. Baring) felt bound to speak. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) and the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill (Mr. Ritchie) knew perfectly well that Essex had not, for many years past at all events, been an especially Radical county, and that the Essex magistrates were not biassed in that direction in their views. But the Resolution which was moved by the right hon. Baronet the Member for West Essex was supported with equal strength by Gentlemen of opinions opposed to those which he himself held. It was no Party question, and the Resolution adopted was to the effect that single-member constituencies would tend to the exclusion of many persons who would be desirable members of County Councils, and that it would be wise that some provision should be made for proportionate representation. Like the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Sydney Buxton) they did not feel themselves bound to pin themselves to any particular form of proportional representation; they were prepared to accept three or five member districts where each person could only give one vote, or they were prepared to accept a system under which people could give two votes in three-cornered constituencies, or they were prepared to accept the proposal which the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney) had so eloquently, and he believed so intelligibly, defined. The fact, however, stood on record that the magistrates of a suburban county assembled, with no opposition whatever, passed a resolution in the sense of the Amendment now moved; and even if he could vote against it conscientiously, he should feel bound to vote in the sense of the body with whom he had acted for so many years.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) said, he must confess that he was not quite certain whether the fact that the resolution referred to by the hon. Gentleman was supported by 60 magistrates of a suburban county, who had themselves no representative capacity whatever, would be a recommendation to those who were now endeavouring to set up a popular representative system of government. He agreed with some, at all events, of the objections which had been put forward by the supporters of this Amendment, and he could not agree with all of them. He agreed, however, that it was very desirable that on these new representative bodies minorities as well as majorities should find a place, and he agreed also that it would be a great misfortune if under any system men of great capacity for dealing with local affairs should be excluded. He did not, however, at all agree with his hon. Friend (Mr. S. Buxton) and other speakers who were so exceedingly anxious to exclude Imperial politics from elections for Local Bodies, and he might say that on this point he had had some little experience, because in Birmingham they had really lived under both systems. In the old time the Birmingham Town Council was an entirely non-political body. What was the result? It never was a corrupt body; no one ever brought against the Birmingham Town Council any charge of corruption; but it certainly became an extremely inefficient body, and the reason was that there was so little interest taken in the elections that anybody who was willing to serve could get the nomination of a few people who were locally influential. Then came the time when politics were introduced into the Town Council, not by the Party to which he belonged, but by the opposite Party. But he confessed he welcomed the introduction, because the immediate result was that the elections became very much more interesting to the constituency, a very much larger number of voters, almost as many as in the Parliamentary election, took part in the elections, and a better class of candidates stood for the local government. He thought it would be generally admitted by all Parties that now the Corporation of Birmingham afforded a good example for Bodies conducting local government. Having had this practical experience, he was not at all afraid of the introduction of Imperial politics into the election of these Bodies. He believed that if Imperial politics were introduced, as they would be into the elections of the new County Councils—he was perfectly certain that, do what they might, they would not be able to keep them out—they would find on the whole a better class of persons anxious to serve than if the elections were exclusively confined to purely sanitary and local questions. He agreed that the new Bodies should be thoroughly representative, and that men of ability should not be excluded from them. It was because he believed that the present system had roughly secured both those objects, and that it secured them much better than this alternative system would, that he objected to these curious and complicated devices for securing the representation of minorities. One thing he wanted the House to remark. They had had a succession of speeches in favour of proportional representation, but every one of the speakers had said that he did not pledge himself to any particular system; but that was the very *crux* of the whole matter. He and others wanted to know what it was that hon. Gentlemen really proposed. It was because every plan of this kind had been shown to be open to grave objections that he opposed the Amendment. Those Members who, speaking in favour of the Amendment, said they were not pledged to this or that plan were always found to be voting for any plan which was laid before the House. They admitted there were grave objections to the different proposals made, yet they invariably supported them. They supported, for instance, minority representation in the form of three-cornered constituencies which had conspicuously failed, and for which no one had now a good word to say. They supported the cumulative vote for school boards, and although they admitted the system was a very imperfect one his hon. Friend thought that on the whole it had been a conspicuous success. [Sir JOHN LUBBOCK: Not a conspicuous success—a success.] He (Mr. Chamberlain) thought it had been a most inconspicuous success. There would be no doubt as to the comparative merits of school boards and Town Councils, although when the Education Act was passed and a matter of the strongest possible interest—namely, the *odium theologicum*—was thrown among the constituencies, the greatest possible interest was evinced in the elections, and persons of considerable distinction took part on both sides in the work. He ventured to say that the average throughout the country had since then been deteriorating, and that at the present time the competition for seats was not so good in regard to school boards as it was for Town Councils. Under these circumstances he thought they should be content with what they had. The present system after all, worked well. There were cases of occasional failure, cases where the majority had not been fairly represented; but surely it was better to have a system of this kind, which he held had worked well, than to apply a system upon which its supporters could not possibly agree, each one having in his hands a favourite system of his own, which he could not get a single other person to support when he brought it forward.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, he intended to vote for the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) without the slightest intention of following him into his ulterior designs in favour of minority representation. He looked at this matter from a Metropolitan point of view. Would the Committee consider for a moment the application of the single-member rule to the Metropolis? The Metropolis was represented in the House of Commons by about 60 Members; they were at present in the dark as to what the number in the County Councils for London would be; but he thought he might take it that the number could not possibly fall below 120, and that it was very much more likely to come near 220. If he was right, it followed that the constituency of a County Councillor for London would be about one-third of that of a London Member in the House of Commons. The average proportion of a London constituency was something between 60,000 and 70,000, so that it followed that a County Councillor for London would represent a population of something like 20,000 people, and a population of 20,000 people contracted together into a very narrow area. He thought that constituencies so small, and, if he might use the expression, so workable as these, would not be able to return representatives who would be likely to have the qualifications necessary for administering the affairs of this great City.

MR. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead) said, he did not think that the progress of the Bill was very much promoted by discussing questions of fancy franchises. There had been many discussions at different times in the House on the question of proportional representation; but he was quite willing to admit that he had never been able to regard any one of the proposals as intelligible. He did not think that in the democracy, whom the proposals in this Bill were intended to interest, this project and these fancy franchises would present any very enlightening effect. What the mass of the people desired was something that was plain, and was to be understood. He had no wish to see minorities crushed, but he agreed that when people were in a minority they must make use of argument and reason to convert their minority into a majority. That was a principle which was perfectly plain and simple; it had been the basis of the whole of our system of popular representation. If they adopted one of these fancy franchises which had emanated at different times, but which he was glad had never made any great headway, he was afraid that in the attempt to heal the ills they had they would soon find themselves landed in others they knew not of.

MR. A. E. GATHORNE-HARDY (Sussex, East Grinstead) said, he merely rose to adduce one argument against this proposal, which, so far as he knew, had not hitherto been raised. As he understood, the Government had wisely intimated their intention of adopting the principle of periodical retirement, and one reason why he intended to vote against the proposal of the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) was that it was impossible to work any system of minority representation concurrently with periodical retirement. He thought it was sufficiently obvious that if they had periodical retirement they could not have minority representation, and he could not but think that that argument was one which ought to have weight with those who, like himself, would on other grounds be anxious to give way to the opinions of the minority. He did not think that the school boards afforded the analogy that some hon. Members seemed to think. He should be very sorry to see the minority principle done away with in school boards, because there the religious element and other questions made it so desirable that small minorities should have some special representation. But the case of the County Councils was wholly different, especially since the Government had consented to adopt the principle of periodical retirement.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he protested against the introduction of Party politics in municipal elections. He thanked God they had nothing of that kind in Scotland. It would be the greatest misfortune to introduce into our municipal elections Parliamentary Party politics, and any system that would keep them out would, in his opinion, be of advantage. He would like to see the lion and the lamb of politics lie down together in matters of Local Government. He thought that if there was to be periodical retirement it would be of great advantage to have the members elected by wards, which system was in operation in Scotch burghs, and had been found to work well. He should, for this reason, support the Amendment of the hon. Baronet.

Mr. H. GARDNER said, he regretted that, out of so many Members who had addressed the House, the majority had been Members representing borough or town interests, and that hon. Gentlemen representing County Divisions had spoken so little on this important subject. As representing a large County Division, he was extremely glad that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) was in accordance with his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board, although they had agreed on this subject from different points of view, because, whereas the right hon. Member for Derby safeguarded the rights of a possible majority, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, while safeguarding the rights of the majority, was also safeguarding the rights of a possible minority. The point which he ventured to press on the Committee was that of single districts. If the Committee accepted the Amendment, they would get a very much wider area for the electorate and the elected; and when they considered how difficult it would be for the poorer class to be represented on the County Council, and that it would add greatly to the difficulty of a member standing for a County Council if they were to increase the area of election, it would make it impossible for anyone but the richer classes to stand for election. For these reasons he was extremely glad that the Government had stated their intention of adhering to their original Resolution.

Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said, he felt very strongly on this question. He had not been much influenced by the arguments adduced by the hon. Baronet the Member for the London University, and by several of his supporters, because, with every desire to comprehend these arguments, he had scarcely been able to hear a single word which fell from their lips. He begged to say that the ears of Members on those Benches were not microphones, and, as he had stated, they were unable to hear a single word that had been uttered in support of the Amendment. He, therefore, fell back upon the very able speech delivered some weeks back by their talented Chairman (Mr. Courtney) in favour of minority representation. He had heard all that had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain). He had a great respect for that right hon. Gentleman, who was one of those healthy and robust politicians that he and a great many men belonging to his Profession admired. But he did not agree with his arguments; and he thought that he held too strongly to the opinion that because single-member districts had been approved in Parliamentary representation it should be approved in elections for County Councils. The hon. Member for East Northamptonshire (Mr. Channing) said he liked definite small local areas. Now, his answer to that was that definite small local areas would to a certainty return definite small local men; and just as it was found in county representation that large single-member districts, as a rule, returned large-minded men, with some exceptions opposite—[*Laughter*]—so he considered that large local areas in counties would give larger-minded men than smaller local areas. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham might bear in mind that small local areas had already small Local Authorities; but he did not want such men to come on the County Councils; he wanted men of superior intelligence, men who would take a larger view of business matters and questions affecting the county than smaller men. He would like to know how many County Councillors the Government were going to allot to each county? He would take his own county (Hampshire) which he did not represent, but with which he was perfectly familiar. In that county there were 14 Divisions, of one of which he was Chairman; and if they assigned three Councillors to each of the 14 Divisions, that would give 42 Councillors for the county of Hampshire. He believed that three members returned for the larger Divisions of the county would produce better men than if the same number of Councillors came from 42 smaller districts. He did not agree with his hon. Friend the Member for North Sussex (Mr. A. E. Gathorne-Hardy) with reference to the retirement portion of the scheme, when he said that there would be more difficulty in working a three-cornered system. There was another point which he would press on the attention of the Government, and which had not been alluded to in that day's discussion. If the Bill passed in its present shape and on its present lines, he thought they would would be laying the foundations on which a future Bill for Local Government in Ireland would certainly be framed. He looked forward to that with very great fear—that was to say, he thought, if single-member districts were adhered to in England, they would have to be introduced in Ireland; and, with the present state of feeling in that latter country, he greatly feared that the Nationalist Party would collar the whole representation, and that the loyal minority would be nowhere. Therefore, he said that the Government ought to give their grave attention to the proposal of the hon. Baronet, whose arguments he did not hear. He would like to make one appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. The right hon. Gentleman had told the Committee that the Government would adhere to their views. That was quite right, but Governments were eminently squeezable; and what he asked was, were hon. Members on these Benches free to vote as their consciences dictated? [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite laughed at an appeal to conscience, but had they no consciences? As he had said, Governments were eminently squeezable, and he desired to know whether hon. Members were to vote upon the Amendment, on the understanding that, if it were carried, the Government would loyally embrace it, and frame their Bill accordingly?

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 372; Noes 94: Majority 278.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Acland, C. T. D.
Addison, J. E. W.
Aird, J.
Allison, R. A.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anderson, C. H.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Asher, A.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Asquith, H. H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, J.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Balfour, Sir G.
Ballantine, W. H. W.
Barbour, W. B.
Barnes, A.
Barran, J.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Bazley-White, J.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biggar, J. G.
Bigwood, J.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bolton, J. C.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bright, Jacob
Bright, W. L.
Bristowe, T. L.
Broadhurst, H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brooks, Sir W. C.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, Lord H.
Brunner, J. T.
Burt, T.
Byrne, G. M.
Caine, W. S.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, Sir A.
Carew, J. L.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Causton, R. K.
Cavan, Earl of
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chamberlain, R.
Channing, F. A.
Charrington, S.
Childers, rt. hon. H. C. E.
Clancy, J. J.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cobb, H. P.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coghill, D. H.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Colman, J. J.
Compton, F.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cox, J. R.
Craig, J.
Cranborne, Viscount
Craven, J.
Crawford, D.
Crawford, W.
Crilly, D.
Cross, H. S.
Crossley, E.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Currie, Sir D.
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Darling, C. J.
Davenport, H. T.
Deasy, J.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dillon, J.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Donkin, R. S.
Dugdale, J. S.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Egerton, hon. A. J. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elliot, Sir G.
Elliot, G. W.
Ellis, J. E.
Elton, C. I.
Esmonde, Sir T. H. G.
Esslemont, P.
Evans, F. H.
Evershed, S.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fenwick, C.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Finch, G. H.
Finucane, J.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forster, Sir C.
Forwood, A. B.

Foster, Sir B. W.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Fulton, J. F.
Gardner, H.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Giles, A.
Gill, T. P.
Gilliat, J. S.
Gladstone, H. J.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, right hon. G. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Greenall, Sir G.
Greene, E.
Grotrian, F. B.
Gully, W. C.
Hall, A. W.
Hall, C.
Hambro, Col. C. J. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.
Heath, A. R.
Heaton, J. H.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hoare, E. B.
Hoare, S.
Hooper, J.
Hubbard, hon. E.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Hunter, W. A.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Jennings, L. J.
Joicey, J.
Jordan, J.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kenrick, W.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kerans, F. H.
Kilbride, D.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, L.
Kynoch, G.
Labouchere, H.
Lalor, R.
Lambert, C.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leahy, J.
Leake, R.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Legh, T. W.
Lennox, Lord W. C. Gordon-
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewis, T. P.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, hon. W.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Macdonald, W. A.
MacInnes, M.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
M‘Arthur, A.
M‘Carthy, J.
M‘Donald, P.
M‘Ewan, W.
M‘Kenna, Sir J. N.
M‘Lagan, P.
M‘Laren, W. S. B.
Madden, D. H.
Maitland, W. F.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Marum, E. M.
Matthews, right hon. H.
Mattinson, M. W.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C
Mayne, T.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
Molloy, B. C.
More, R. J.
Morgan, hon. F.
Morgan, right hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Morley, A.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, right hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mundella, right hon. A. J.
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T,
Murphy, W. M.
Newark, Viscount
Newnes, G.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Hea, P.
O'Keeffe, F. A.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, C. S.
Parker, hon. F.
Parnell, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pease, A. E.
Pease, H. F.
Pelly, Sir L.
Pickard, B.
Pinkerton, J.
Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Plunkett, hon. J. W.
Pomfret, W. P.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, F. S.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, P. J.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Pugh, D.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Pyne, J. D.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reid, R. T.
Rendel, S.
Richard, H.
Richardson, T.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, right hon. C. T.
Roberts, J.
Robertson, E.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, T.
Roe, T.
Rollit, Sir A. K.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Ross, A. H.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Russell, Sir G.
Samuelson, Sir B.
Samuelson, G. B.
Sandys, Lt.-Col. T. M.
Schwann, C. E.
Seton-Karr, H.
Sexton, T.
Shaw, T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sheehy, D.
Sheil, E.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Simon, Sir J.
Slagg, J.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Spencer, J. E.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stephens, H. C.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stevenson, J. C.
Storey, S.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Sykes, C.
Tanner, C. K.
Tapling, T. K.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Thomas, A.
Thomas, D. A.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Trotter, Col. H. J.
Tuite, J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vincent, Col. C. E. H.
Waddy, S. D.
Wallace, R.
Wardle, H.
Warmington, C. M.
Watson, J.
Wayman, T.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Weymouth, Viscount
Wharton, J. L.
Whitbread, S.
Whitley, E.
Williams, A. J.
Wilson, I.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodhead, J.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, C.
Yerburgh, R. A.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Baird, J. G. A.
Baring, T. C.
Barry, A. H. S.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Beach, W. W. B.
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bolitho, T. B.
Bond, G. H.

Bradlaugh, C.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Buxton, S. C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, J. A.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Colomb, Sir J. C. R.
Corbett, A. C.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Cremer, W. R.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Ebrington, Viscount
Ellis, J.
Ellis, T. E.
Field, Admiral E.
Firth, J. F. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fry, L.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gedge, S.
Gray, C. W.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Halsey, T. F.
Hanbury-Tracy, hon. F. S. A.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Hervey, Lord F.
Hobhouse, H.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Howell, G.
Howorth, H. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Kelly, J. R.
Kenny, C. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Lafone, A.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lees, E.
Leighton, S.
Lewis, Sir C. E.
Lowther, J. W.
Lyell, L.
M'Arthur, W. A.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Mallock, R.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Morrison, W.
Noble, W.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Power, R.
Price, Captain G. E.
Rankin, J.
Rathbone, W.
Reed, H. B.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Round, J.
Royden, T. B.
Russell, T. W.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, A.
Stewart, M. J.
Stokes, G. G.
Sutherland, T.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Talbot, J. G.
Townsend, F.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Webster, R. G.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wiggin, H.
Wolmer, Viscount

TELLERS.
Grimston Viscount
Lubbock, Sir J.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 1, leave out "elective."—(*Sir Roper Lethbridge.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. CHANNING said, that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had intimated, on the discussion the night before as to casual vacancies in the County Council, that the Amendment he had placed on the Paper would be accepted by the Government. He did not, therefore, intend to detain the Committee or enter into a fuller explanation. He had only to express his great satisfaction that the Government had seen their way, last night, to give up what seemed to him to be one of the most reactionary portions of the Bill.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 2, leave out from the word "and" to the word "councillor," in line 5.—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. RITCHIE said, it was quite true that he had undertaken to accept an Amendment by which casual vacancies would be filled up by election. But there was one kind of vacancy which he thought the Committee would consider better filled up by the Councillors themselves. He, therefore, proposed to insert words in the Sub-section which would make it read thus—

> "The casual vacancies among the elective councillors, which occur otherwise than by the election of the vacating councillor to be an alderman, or which arise within twelve months before the ordinary date for the triennial election of councillors, shall be filled by the election by the Council of a person qualified to be a councillor."

He thought that would meet the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act if the Committee would agree to it. He, therefore, hoped that the hon. Member would be prepared to accept what he suggested.

SIR WALTER FOSTER said, he hoped the Committee would not accept the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman. He did not think they ought in any way to tamper with the principle of having the members of the County Councils elected by the people. It would be possible under the proposal for any member of a County Council, who made up his mind to retire 12 months before his period of office terminated, to select one of his friends, get him elected by the County Council, and so secure for him an advantage when the popular election came on. That would be a great disadvantage to the elected element of the County Council, and it would, moreover, lead to the jobbery which it ought to be the desire of every Member of the House to do all that lay in his power to prevent.

MR. CHANNING said, he should like to have one point explained with reference to the proposed Amendment. When an Alderman retired from the County Council, was that vacancy thereby created to be filled up by election from the members? If that were so, he should not accept the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that, so far as the Aldermen were concerned, the election would take place under the terms of the Municipal Elections Act; that was to say, the vacancy would be filled up by the electors, and the only case in which vacancies would be filled up by the Council was that in which it occurred other than by the retirement of an Alderman within 12 months of a fresh election.

Viscount WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield) said, he would suggest that this Amendment depended greatly upon the terms upon which a member of the Council was to be elected. If a Councillor was only to be elected for three years, to take 12 months out of the term of election seemed to him rather too much. He did not think the Committee would do right to agree to any term of co-optation in the interval of the triennial election. If the term were six years, the rule might be of advantage; but if the period was to remain at three years, he, for one, could not assent to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. STANSFELD (Halifax) said, as far as he could see, the feeling on that side of the House was not in favour of the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment.

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton) said, he wished to point out that by Sub-section (b) it was provided that the elective Councillors should be elected for the term of three years. It was now proposed that there should be a selection for casual vacancies within 12 months of the general election by the Council, and consequently a councillor, created by the Council, would continue in office for three years, if the clause were to stand as suggested by the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, it appeared that these councillors would number about 100, and the Government having given way on the question of filling up vacancies, he wished to point out that, as it might be supposed, most of the men elected to the Councils would be men of some age, the mortality among them might be expected to be at least two or three in the course of a year. That would imply that in every county there would be an election every four or six months. He thought that vacancies had better be filled up by the County Council itself to avoid these incessant elections in each county; and he expressed his regret that the Government had again changed their mind without so much as giving the Committee notice of their intention to do so.

Mr. HOBHOUSE said, for himself, he thought that as regarded the mere question of county elections, it would be well to leave it to stand as it did in the Municipal Corporations Act, and to omit the sub-section altogether. But they had to consider the opinion of the constituencies, and he thought that no constituency would thank the House for obliging them to have an election within three months of a General Election. As his right hon. Friend had said, they were left in the dark as to the term for which the Councils were to be elected, and it was therefore very difficult to determine the best course to take. But he suggested to the right hon. Gentleman that if he would embody such words as he (Mr. Hobhouse) had placed on the Paper, it would probably meet the views of the constituencies, and he thought no Member of the House would then raise any serious objection.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER asked the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, whether there was to be any departure from the distinct pledge of last night with regard to filling up vacancies; and, secondly, whether there was to be any departure from the custom, not only in Parliamentary, but in Municipal elections? If, for instance, a General Election were to take place in three months from the retirement of a member, what would the constituencies say, if they were told that they must remain unrepresented because the General Election was to be held in a few months? He said that they could not lay down any lines with regard to time, because it would involve them in difficulty whether that line was of 12 months, three months, or six months. A man might time his resignation so that he could secure his election by the majority of his friends on the Council. He disputed the element of cost altogether. The cost of a Municipal election was not much; and all that would fall on the rates was simply the cost of the returning officer and other small expenses which would not be large. It would be the fault of the new County Councils themselves if they did not reduce the costs to a very small sum indeed. He said that the principle of co-optation should find no place in the Bill at all.

MR. HANBURY said, he was most anxious that there should not be too many elections, and he thought that the danger which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board foresaw would not in practice be as great as he anticipated. He wanted to provide against the possibility of two elections taking place. Suppose a vacancy occurred six months before an election in the ordinary course of things; the right hon. Gentleman feared that there would be an election followed by another at the ordinary period. But as a matter of fact he (Mr. Hanbury) did not think that would occur. He thought they would see that, if a casual vacancy occurred near the time of a General Election, the member returned would be likely to be returned again at the General Election without opposition.

MR. RITCHIE said, he was quite sure the Committee would not think that he was at all departing from the undertaking given last night. They were then discussing how a vacancy would be filled up in the case of Aldermen, and he had pointed out that such a vacancy would be filled up by the remaining members of the Council, and he had undertaken that the Government would accept an Amendment which would prevent co-optation. That was the concession of last night, and he thought after that explanation his hon. Friend would not think that, by proposing that this modification for dealing with vacancies shortly before a general election, he was departing from the undertaking which he had given. He certainly thought that it would be very hard, if, within three or four months from the time when the elections must necessarily take place, another election should be rendered necessary by a vacancy occurring; and that it would be wise to adopt some such suggestion as he had made, which he hoped the hon. Member opposite would accept.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he was quite sure that no one would bring any charge against the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board of having departed from his undertaking or of showing anything but respect and consideration to the Committee. But with regard to the present proposal, he thought the right hon. Gentleman had failed to show the object aimed at. For what purpose was this proposal made; and for whose benefit? It was not for the benefit of the county at large, because it was not the least object to the county at large to have 100 men doing its business instead of 98 or 99 as the case might be. There would be plenty of people to do the business even if these vacancies were not filled up. And still less was it to the advantage of the constituencies, for the interest of the constituency would be to have a representative, but the co-opted member would be no representative of the constituency at all. Therefore, if it were considered so great an object to have the election before what he might call the general election, he thought it would be better to leave the vacancy a vacancy still. That he must own would, in his opinion, be better than the importation of an exceedingly faulty principle into a Bill the machinery of which was in many respects so much liked.

MR. RITCHIE said, he understood the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet to be, that if no vacancy occurred within six months of the general election, it should not be filled up at all. If that was the proposal the Government were ready to accept it.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. A. H. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham), in rising to move, as an Amendment, to insert after paragraph (c)—

> "Every Councillor shall be entitled to claim a sum in payment of the expenses, if any, actually and reasonably incurred by him in travelling to and from the place of meeting of the Council,"

said, they had been told that the object of the Bill was to place County Councils in exactly the same position with regard to members as Town Councils. He did not know how they could be placed in the same position, unless some means were provided by which those persons whose means were narrow, such as working men and small tradesmen and others, were enabled to become members of the Councils. They must bear in mind that if they offered this supposed great advantage of municipal government, they must make the conditions equal. The question he had to ask was, were the working men to be placed in a position to become members of the Council? Many men of small means were members of Local Boards and school boards, and he pointed out that in the North of England there was a considerable number of working men who, by this means, were enabled to obtain very valuable lessons in Local Government. He did not think that any Member of the House would wish to lessen the numbers of the members of the working classes who commanded the confidence of their fellows, and who were sent free of travelling expenses to learn these valuable lessons in Local Government.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he rose to Order. There was a little misconception in the House as to where they were. Was the hon. Member moving an Amendment to Sub-section (d), or had it been struck out?

The CHAIRMAN: The sub-section has been struck out altogether.

Mr. A. H. DYKE ACLAND said, he believed that one of the most important arguments that would be used against his proposal would be, that no small men would be able to go to the County Councils. Now, he ventured to deny the correctness of that statement. There were many members of working class organizations, and many small tradesmen who would be able to attend the Councils for a day or two, provided that some way were devised of paying their travelling expenses. He simply asked that in order to enable the County Councils to have upon them members whose means were small, and who, in some cases, might represent special working men's districts, that some provision of the kind should be made in this Bill. He admitted the difficulty of the question, and he did not assume that the wording he had suggested was the best possible to carry out the object in view; but he might point out that he had carefully guarded his proposal. In the first place, he said that members should be "entitled to claim," and, again, he had confined the payment to "actual and reasonable expenses," meaning by that, to leave no door open for payment at a higher rate than was absolutely necessary, or for the money not to be spent for the purpose for which it was intended. If, however, the Government could suggest better words, for securing the object in view than had occurred to his mind, he should be only too glad to accept them. But he felt sure that as Local Government became more and more developed in this country, so it became more and more desirable that they should bring in members of the working classes or lower middle class who were specially entrusted with responsibility of this kind by their fellow-men, and if the Government could see their way to devise any means of meeting the difficulty and putting the County Councillors on an equality in respect of expenses with the members of Town Councils and school boards, he sincerely hoped they would do so. They had gained enormously by the admission to that House of working men to assist in their deliberations in matters concerning the working classes, but it was only owing to the special circumstances connected with unions extending over large tracts of country that they had been able to obtain the assistance of such representatives. The presence of representatives of the working classes was most desirable, then, upon the Councils about to be created by this Bill. Let the Committee for a moment consider the question with reference to emigration. Emigration was an alternative very unpopular amongst the working classes, yet he ventured to say that if any industry in a particular part of the country were suffering, the question of emigration would become one of very great importance. Now, emigration would be regarded in a very different light than was generally the case if it were recommended by working men on the County Councils who were acquainted with the needs of the working classes, and if any means could be devised of having even a small porportion of men of this class on the County Council, he was certain it would command more confidence from the masses of the working classes, who they hoped would be benefited by this large and new measure of reform. The classes in this country were too much divided, and their desire was to train the representatives of working men to understand problems of Government. The working classes had many ideas which were utterly unreliable in matters of Government, they talked for instance a good deal of nonsense about land; but the desire of hon. Gentlemen ought to be to teach them to send some working men to the Councils to thresh out all these questions, who might return from the Councils and tell the men who had trusted them that some of their ideas on such matters were impossible of fulfilment. The Government had refused to set up the parish assembly for the discussion of these matters; they said there was this admirable municipal administration, and that anybody who was chosen could be sent to the County Council; but the working men would reply—"How can we send our men to the County Council unless provision is made for the expenses which they cannot afford to pay?" As he had said, the only way to give equality of representation was to give equality of conditions, and he pressed his proposal with no other object than to make real equality as between the County Councils and those bodies which now existed, to which men of small means had been already sent.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 2, after paragraph (c), insert —"Every councillor shall be entitled to claim a sum in payment of the expenses, if any, actually and reasonably incurred by him in travelling to and from the place of meeting of the Council.—(*Mr. A. H. Dyke Acland.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said, he rose to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Rotherham. If this reform was to be valuable to the working men, he considered it absolutely necessary that some such provision as the hon. Member proposed should be inserted in the Bill. He could point to several institutions in the North of England, where already a number of the Councillors were working men, including the school boards. He understood that the Government were favourable to the principle that the County Councils should, at no distant date, have the management and control of education, and he submitted to the right hon. Gentleman that unless some such provision was inserted in the Bill as was proposed by the hon. Member it would, so far as the working classes were concerned, prove a retrograde measure, because their representatives would be deterred by the expense of travelling and other matters from attending the Councils. He suggested that his hon. Friend should make it imperative that the County Councillor should receive his expenses, because he did not like it to be thought that some were willing to bear the expenses and others were not; and unless a man were obliged to claim them, the poverty of those who did would be accentuated, and that, in his opinion, was most undesirable.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he hoped the Committee would consent to report Progress on that point. The Government had the fullest sense of the importance of the question before the Committee; but they thought it would be more convenient considering the hour (6.40) that they should report Progress.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

WAYS AND MEANS.

CUSTOMS (WINE DUTY) BILL.

Resolutions [June 11] *reported,* and *agreed to:*—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. Bill [293.]

It being a quarter of an hour before Seven of the clock, the House suspended its Sitting.

The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.

MOTIONS.

——o——

RE-ORGANIZATIONS IN PUBLIC OFFICES.—RESOLUTION.

MR. JENNINGS (Stockport) said, he rose to call attention to the abuses connected with frequent and costly re-organizations in various Public Offices; and to move—

"That the re-organizations in the Accountant General's and Secretary's Departments of the Admiralty have been injurious to the public interests by resulting in increased charges for those Departments, and by needlessly adding to extravagant pensions and bonuses; and that in any future re-organizations, officials who are still able and willing to render service for the public money should be provided with employment in other Departments, instead of being forced to become useless burdens upon the country."

The question raised in the Resolution that he submitted was one of great importance to the public, because it involved the expenditure of large sums of money and the abolition of a system which was fraught with great evils to the country. He hoped the House would not be deterred from expressing an opinion upon the matter by the argument that his Resolution related to what had happened in the past. New schemes of this kind were being continually projected, and nothing would put an end to them but the condemnation of that House and the country. He did not suppose there would be any dispute as to the facts upon which his statements were based, as he had drawn them all from official sources. In the Estimates for the last 20 years, which he had carefully compared and examined; in the Parliamentary Paper which was known as the "Appendix to Class VI.;" in the Return moved for by the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt); and in the Return produced on his (Mr. Jennings') own Motion in February last, were to be found the materials he proposed to lay before the House. Nor did he propose to seek to attach any special blame to any Ministry or any Party. If the Party opposite had been concerned in more re-organizations than the Tory Party, there was good reason to believe that it was because they had been longer in power than had the Tory Party. Now, the game of re-organization was so planned that everybody who took part in it was sure to win, except the British taxpayer. The Head of a Department came into Office, and for one reason or another he thought it desirable to change many of the officials under him. When these officials retired they were all entitled to large bonuses, and to still larger pensions. As they were, as a rule, removed expressly on the ground that their room was worth more than their company, it seemed to follow that they must have been bad bargains for the nation from the first. Well, these officials went out with their pensions, and, after an interval, a new set of officials made their appearance, generally at somewhat lower salaries than their predecessors had received. The Minister who accomplished this operation came down to the House, he was able to show a small saving, he talked very loudly about economy, and the country, ever credulous, congratulated itself upon at last having put the right man in the right place. A few years elapsed and another Head of the Department came in. He, too, saw strong reasons for changing some of the officials under him, and repeated the operation of re-organization. The officials themselves, as a rule, were quite willing to disappear upon abolition terms, which were equivalent to a man coming into a very handsome legacy. Out they went; in came another set; the process was repeated, and after an interval of a few years each Department was found to cost about as much as it did in the first instance, while a very large addition was made to the Pension List. That was the general plan of re-organization, and he would, with the permission of the House, proceed to show in what way it worked. It would be seen that his Resolution laid down the principle that an effort should be made to provide employment for persons who were re-organized, rather than saddle the country with heavy pensions payable to them for the rest of their lives. As this principle was likely to meet with some opposition, he would endeavour as briefly as he could to prove the absolute necessity for adopting it. In 1870, there was a reconstruction of the Court of Bankruptcy, and enormous sums were paid to persons who did not appear to have been in office for more than a few months, or a few years, and who were not entitled upon public grounds to any special recognition by the State. He found that Mr. Holroyd, a Commissioner, received £2,000 a-year for life, and six other Commissioners received £1,800 a-year each, although no entry was made in the column which recorded the length of the service. It must be concluded that these persons had not been long in the service, otherwise the period they had been employed would be given, as there was a special column set aside for that purpose. Whenever a man had been in office for a few years, the period was entered against his name, and where there was a blank it must be assumed and taken for granted that there was no length of service to record. In one case, that of a Registrar, the period of service was mentioned. It was five years, during which the holder of the office had received £1,000 a-year. He was accorded a pension of £666 a-year for the remainder of his life. Another Registrar of two and a-half years' service received the same favourite sum—for everyone who looked over the Returns would be surprised to find how often this sum of £666, with the addition of 13*s.* 4*d.* only, appeared against the names of various individuals. One of the persons who received a pension of £1,800 in 1870 was Mr. M. D. Hill. Two years afterwards there was another reconstruction of the Court, and Mr. A. Hill appeared for a pension of £666. This was only one of the numerous cases which might be cited to show the curious tendency of pensions to run in families. It would be frequently observed by anyone who looked over these pensions, that when once a family got hold of a pension it spread out its arms like an octopus. Well, there was another Commissioner who received a pension—and no doubt these officials were deserving officials; he imagined, in fact, that they deserved better treatment than to be placed on the Pension List, and that they ought to have been kept on the active list. Mr. Commissioner Winslow, in 1872, at the age of 49, received £2,000 a-year for life, and there was absolutely no evidence in the Returns to show that he had been even six months in Public Service. If anyone could explain how long Mr. Commissioner Winslow was in the Service in order to qualify him to receive this £2,000 a-year for life, he would make a very valuable addition to the "Appendix to Class VI." and the Estimates bearing upon these subjects. Then, in 1884-85, the Bankruptcy Department was again re-organized, and the British taxpayer was made to smart for it in the usual way. One gentleman received £1,200 a-year, new officials were called in at high salaries, and large pensions accrued—for it must be understood that the cost of a civil servant was not to be measured by the amount of his salary alone, the amount of deferred pay must also be taken into account. What he asked was, why should not all these persons, who retired under this re-organization scheme, have been engaged in the administration of the new Bankruptcy Act? It must not be assumed that they were incompetent to discharge duties which must have been of a very similar character to those they had formerly been in the habit of discharging. These highly paid gentlemen must have been fully competent to administer the new Bankruptcy Act—just as competent as they were to administer the Act in operation up to that period. Most of them retired in the prime of life, and there was no object whatever in getting rid of them, except to comply with that powerful force in public life in England, family and official influence. But even allowing that the Commissioners—these highly paid officials—were incompetent to administer the new Bankruptcy Act, surely the same could not be said of the messengers. Some use might have been made of them under the new arrangement. A man who was capable of delivering a letter or carrying a message under one Bankruptcy Act was surely competent to deliver a message or carry a letter under another Act. But that did not seem to be the official view of the matter. All the messengers had to go, together with the higher officials. He found that in 1870 a man got a pension of over £200 a-year for life, though he did not appear to have been long in office. A Lord Chancellor's messenger, who was, of course, a very superior kind of messenger, received a pension of £200 a-year for life at the age of 27, and he appeared to still enjoy that pension; for an annuity from the British Government will keep a man alive any length of time. The Board of Trade had undergone several re-organizations. Between 1863 and 1868 a large number of clerks were abolished, some of them not older than 38 or 44. They received pensions of from £291 to £1,200 a-year. He saw that a joint secretary appeared to have had £1,200 a-year, and then in 1869-70 a relation of his received £146 a-year at the age of 34. Nothing would be more touching to the diligent student of these Papers than the numerous instances they afforded of family affection when it could be indulged in at the expense of the British taxpayer. So far as he (Mr. Jennings) could judge, the people who got these pensions, and who got abolished and re-organized, married and intermarried, and formed quite an independent clan by themselves. They were only to be tracked by one who took the Estimates and concurrently studied the history of what were called the "upper classes." It seemed to him that after a time these people set up a sort of claim to a vested interest in the Public Service. They seemed to think they had a kind of title to receive all the good things, because they or their friends had always been taken care of. That principle alone could account for the fact that the country had so many incompetent persons in the Public Offices at the present moment. It was only fair, however, to say that the privileged classes did not always get everything, for under the Board of Trade re-organization, in 1869-70, even a dustman came in for a pension of £7 16*s*. a-year for life, being thus put on a level with those families who could boast that they had scarcely ever been without a pension or a sinecure. Let him quote one other instance of what he might call the curiosities of re-organization. He found that in 1851 a senior clerk in the Mint received £150 a-year, as a note in the Estimates said, "as compensation for loss of prospect to succeed Mr. Matheson as melter." So that under this beautiful system a man might not only be compensated for the loss of his own office, but also for losing the prospect of getting somebody else's. The Foreign Office had been a mine of gold to the reconstructor and the reconstructed, but he would only give one or two instances from these Papers with regard to that Department. In 1861-2 a clerk was re-organized to the tune of £601 5*s*. per annum at the age of 47, an assistant clerk received £390, and another got £400 a-year at the age of 45, and a translator at the age of 38 got £108 a-year. In a reconstruction in 1878 at the War Office 70 clerks, whose average age was 40, got an average pension of £235. In this reconstruction £40,546 a-year was added to the Pension List and £109,980 was paid in bonuses, and since then 20 new clerks had been added to the office, although it was then, as now, disgracefully overmanned. An immense number of persons were at this moment paid liberally for doing nothing, because at some time or other they had held office in Ireland. Opinions differed widely as to whether the British connection was profitable or not to Ireland itself, but there could be no question that it was a mighty good thing for those who got office under it. They had all seen how rapidly Irish officials had passed from obscurity into the peerage, or on to the Judicial Bench, or had received handsome pensions, but anyone who examined the last 11 pages of the "Appendix to Class VI." would find numerous instances of a minor kind of the same description of good luck. There were persons connected with institutions of which many people in England had never even heard receiving handsome pensions—persons, for instance, connected with model farms and so on. Numbers of prison officials were re-organized for what reason no one was able to discover, unless it was that the administration of successive Crimes Acts had imposed too great a strain upon their energies. In the pages of these Papers, from which he was quoting, would be found a nice little assortment of Resident Magistrates who received handsome compensation allowances, amounting in some cases to £675, and in one case a large compensation allowance was received for only two years' service. Altogether, under this heading, £5,165 a-year was paid, and, he must say, whatever might be his opinion of the political aspect of the question, that on the whole the British connection paid some people remarkably well. But if they wanted to see re-organization in all its glory they must look to the Admiralty. Elsewhere it might be an exotic, but at the Admiralty it was a hardy annual, and consequently they were able to study it in all its perfection. The story was somewhat intricate, and it involved the quotation of a few figures. He would make every effort to compress those figures into the shortest space that he could. To deal first with the Accountant General's Office. The Department of the Accountant General was the happy hunting ground of the reconstructor. It had been reduced and reconstructed and re-organized over and over and over again, and yet at this moment it was more expensive than ever it was. There were more persons employed there in the work of superintendence, and the pension list was larger. [LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No, no!] If the noble Lord would allow him to make his own statement he (Lord George Hamilton) would have an opportunity—as he was sure he possessed the ability—to give that statement an answer. He would ask to be allowed to give the facts which were to be found in these official documents. The sort of manipulation that went on in this office was illustrated by the post of Deputy Accountant General. In 1854 that office was abolished, and innocent persons thought that there was an end of it, and that they would hear nothing more about it; but in 1861 it was revived with the addition of another official—an Inspector of Yard Accounts—at a salary of £850 a-year; and then in 1868 there was an Assistant Accountant General sent to help those gentlemen at a salary of £1,000, and even that was nothing to what was to follow. The success of those operations soon brought together a hungry crowd of persons who expected offices, and another hungry crowd who expected pensions, and, on the whole, looking at these crowds, it was deemed a most desirable thing to have a new deal all round. The particular class, for there was such a class, which regarded the Admiralty as an institution which was mainly kept up for their benefit and the benefit of their families, and only in a minor degree for looking after the naval defences of this country, found that everything was arranged according to their desire. Twenty-five clerks were sent into retirement, some of them at the ages of 25, 28, 32, 34, and so on. Nearly half of the whole number were under the age of 50. The Department was able to boast that it had saved £14,590 in salaries; but it took care not to say a word about the fact that it had added £8,406 to the Pension List, nor was there any public mention made of the circumstance that three new offices were created, a Deputy Controller of Navy Pay at £1,000 a-year, a Chief Clerk at £850, and an Assistant Inspector of Accounts at £500 a-year. From this point the story rolls on like the tale of the house that Jack built. Some touches of re-organization were tried year after year, but the grand coup was played in 1878-9. Those years will ever be among the most precious recollections of the Admiralty. Pensions and bonuses were distributed as a fairy sister's gifts in a pantomime. The Deputy Accountant General, aged 52, went away smiling with £489 in his pocket by way of bonus, and a pension of £666 a-year. A Chief Clerk of 49 got £566 a-year, and £495 bonus. A book-keeper, whose salary had been £800 a-year, received a pension of £480 a-year and a bonus of £475 6*s.* 10*d.* Senior clerks who were only 42 or 43 years of age received pensions of £328 a-year each and bonuses of £600 or £700. Some of the clerks thus quartered on the country were only 31 or 32; 46 out of 65 persons on the list were under the age of 50; 15 were under 40. Three only were above the age of 60. Altogether, this stroke of business cost the country over £20,000 a-year in pensions, and £52,199 in bonuses. Nor was this all. A new set of officials was created at higher salaries — the Accountant General received £1,500 a-year, a Deputy Accountant General £1,200, six Chief Clerks from £700 to £900, and so on. The Deputy Controller of Navy Pay, receiving £1,000 a-year, had his office abolished; but this same gentleman reappeared under this sweeping re-organization scheme as Deputy Accountant General, only that, instead of getting £1,000 a-year, he got a salary of £1,200 a-year, so that he gained £200 per annum by abolition. He (Mr. Jennings) remembered hearing it said in America that a certain man must be doing pretty well because he had been bankrupt four or five times in as many years, and the test to apply to a Government clerk to find out whether he was prosperous or not was to ask "how many times has he been abolished?" He had traced various individuals who had been abolished and who re-appeared in a marvellous manner, having been benefited by the change and having had their salaries largely increased. Individuals throve under this system, but the nation suffered. It was alleged that the saving in salaries by this re-organization of 1878-80 amounted to £15,500; but not a word was ever said, nor would it be said that night, about the addition to the Pension List of over £20,000 a-year or of the £52,000 paid for bonuses. And how long did even this pretended saving last? It lasted for about four or five years, and then, in 1885-6, there was another re-organization, with the result, the truly brilliant result, that two Assistant Accountants General made their appearance on the scene at a salary of

£1,000 a-year each, and an Acting Assistant Accountant General at £1,000, and nine Superintending Clerks at salaries from £700 to £800 a-year, the increase being, as usual, most marked in the higher paid offices. Sometimes a poor devil of a copyist was swept away; but he was always replaced by a Superintendent Clerk—say, at £800 a-year, or by an Acting Assistant Deputy Accountant General at £1,000 a-year. The final result of re-organization in the Accountant General's Department was sufficient in itself to prove his case. For many years, and down to 1861, there was only one Accountant General of the Navy at the head of this Office with a salary of £1,300 a-year, who was able to perform all the work of superintendence. This work was now done by the following persons, a list of whom he had copied from the present year's Estimates. There was one Accountant General at £1,500 a-year; there was a Deputy Accountant General at £1,200 a-year; there were two Assistant Accountants General, each at £1,000 a-year; there was one Assistant Accountant General, acting, at £1,000 a-year; there were nine Superintending Clerks, costing £7,019; and there were 16 Assistant Superintending Clerks, costing £9,679, together with one Inspector of Yard Accounts at £700 a-year, and one Assistant Inspector of Yard Accounts at £450, making a total of £22,548 a-year, now being paid by the nation chiefly for the work of superintendence which used to be performed for under £2,000. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, that was his statement, gathered from the official documents which he had been able to obtain. If there were any other official documents in existence which disproved these facts, he should be glad to hear of them. He repeated that all these persons had been added to the Service since the year when the Accountant General of the Navy was the only person who did the real work of superintendence—that was to say, the year 1861. There was then no Deputy Accountant General; no Acting Assistant Accountant General; no superintendent clerks at these high salaries; no Inspector of Yard Accounts; and no Assistant Inspector of Yard Accounts. He did not see what use it was for any one to dispute these facts, because anyone who would look at the Return produced, on the Motion of the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), would find all of them set out there beyond the possibility of contradiction. That £22,000 should be spent in the Accountants General's Office at the Admiralty for the mere work of superintendence was, of course, a great abuse. That was the way the money went; and it helped to explain how it was that we were said to have no Navy adequate to our needs, and why we had no guns. The reason was that the money was muddled and jobbed away in this extraordinary and reckless fashion, so that even the offices in which it was spent were really ignored. Here they had Accountants General, and Deputy Accountants General, and Assistant Accountants General, all tumbling over each other, doing no real work, drawing enormous salaries, running up very high pensions, and generally demoralising the Public Service. That was the only result which was produced by their existence. To-night he had not heard from the Admiralty Officials anything but a few exclamations of astonishment. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty had testified before the Royal Commission now sitting that the money spent upon these persons was an "altogether unnecessary expenditure." Those were his words—and no wonder the hon. Gentleman sat in silence and allowed the First Lord to do all the contradicting. The hon. Gentleman had said more than that even. He had said many things which would appear in the evidence which were quite as strong or stronger than that, and the Assistant Secretary (Mr. Awdry)—and no doubt he was a very competent person—had testified before the Commission that the Staff was out of all proportion to the character of the work they were called upon to do. Could anyone need more conclusive evidence in proof of the statement he (Mr. Jennings) had made than this. The Assistant Secretary, Mr. Awdry, was not there to say "No, no," like the noble Lord; but his words were in print and they could be consulted by Members of the House and the public. The truth was the very officials themselves began to cry out against this shameful extravagance and jobbery. They were like the Roman augurs, they could not meet each other without laughing. That the public had stood it quietly so long was simply owing to the fact that they had known nothing about what was going on. They had been told that the large sums of money voted for the Admiralty all went for ships and machinery and sailors, but the fact was that it did nothing of the kind. He had always maintained, and he maintained now, that if the money voted by this country were spent honestly on the Navy, and not muddled away upon unnecessary officials and jobbed away by useless changes and worse than useless changes, they would have a good Navy that day, and not be subjected to recurrent panics and sudden demands for additional sums of money to place us in a state of defence. To open their eyes to the truth was the first step towards reform. He ventured to hope that something would be accomplished in that direction that night. Now, let them for a moment turn to the Secretary's Department. The facts concerning the Secretary's Department of the Admiralty were shown in the Return produced on his (Mr. Jennings) Motion in February last. He found that the great re-organizations there took place in 1869-70 and in 1879-80. The avowed object he need not say was as usual to promote the great and sacred cause of economy. The result was to produce a temporary diminution in the working expenses of the Office and a very real addition to the pension list. He would cite only a few illustrations. A clerk, aged 50, received a pension of £702 a-year; another of 55 got £833 a-year, which was within £167 of his full salary, for life; another clerk of 35 got £129 16*s*. 8*d*. a-year. In 1872, another clerk was "re-organized" successfully for himself; but he (Mr. Jennings) was was not quite sure whether so successfully for the country. He was then turned 50 years of age and had a salary of £750 a-year. He retired with £500 a-year for life, and he (Mr. Jennings) never heard that he made any complaint about it. In 1876, a clerk of 37 retired with a pension of £289 6*s*. 8*d*. In 1877, the Office of Permanent Secretary to the Admiralty was abolished, the holder, aged 45, receiving £678 2*s*. 6*d*. a-year, until another good berth was provided for him as County Court Judge, when his annuity was reduced to £250 a-year.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Will the hon. Gentleman mention the name?

Mr. JENNINGS referred the First Lord to his own Return—he had merely copied all the facts out of that Return.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: The hon. Member says the Permanent Secretary retired with a pension, and was made a County Court Judge,—and I want to know his name.

Mr. JENNINGS said, he had not stated that that had happened recently—everything he said seemed to be misunderstood by the noble Lord—he was referring to what had happened in 1876-7. After this little interlude he might perhaps now be allowed to go on with his statement. In 1877, the Office of Permanent Secretary to the Admiralty was abolished; that holder of it, aged 45, received as he had said, £678 2*s*. 6*d*., and another good berth was provided for him as County Court Judge, when his annuity was reduced to £250 a-year. Was that a fact? ["Yes."] Well, if the noble Lord had allowed him to finish his statement he would have found nothing to contradict. These were the facts, the scandalous facts, of the case, and if half the eagerness displayed in trying to throw doubt upon their accuracy were exhibited in the attempt to avoid such scandals in future, there would be no necessity for anyone to get up and make statements similar to those he (Mr. Jennings) was obliged to make that night. The salary of the Permanent Secretary had been £1,500 a-year, so that with the full pension there was a saving of £822 a-year. But in 1882 another Permanent Secretary was born into the world with a salary of £2,000, instead of £1,500. ["No!"] Well, he said it was so, and he hoped the Return was in the hands of hon. Members, in order that they might refer to it, and see that the statement he made was perfectly correct. The office of Naval Secretary was abolished, but the total expenses of the office—chiefly for superintendence—had steadily and heavily increased. In 1869, before the re-organization, these expenses were £26,019. By 1877 they had gone up to £28,406, without reckoning the large increase in the Pension List, and he believed that the amount was now increasing as it had increased steadily during the last few years. In 1878-80 it was deemed high time to make another large number of persons easy in their circumstances by abolishing their offices.

Six clerks under 40 years of age received pensions of from £325 to £615 a-year, and bonuses in addition amounting to £4,206. One clerk of 36 received a pension of £210 a-year and a bonus of £871. The total sum paid for pensions was £7,378 a-year and for bonuses £10,897. In 1881, after this re-organization, the total cost of the office was £23,888. The operation had effected a saving in salaries of about £4,300, which was counterbalanced by an increase in the Pension List of £7,378 a-year. But even this entirely delusive saving soon began to disappear. In 1882 the expenses increased over £1,180, and gradually they went on growing until, in the Estimates of the present year, they reached the sum of about £26,000. If they took into consideration the increase in salaries, pensions, and bonuses which had to be recorded since 1871, when the Secretary's office cost £22,678 all told, they could not reckon that the re-organizations in the Department had cost the country less than £269,000—money he contended utterly thrown away. Upon the most moderate estimate over £500,000 had been recklessly squandered during the last few years in Departmental changes in the Admiralty which ought never to have been made, or ought never to have been made in that particular way. The Pension List connected with the Accountants General's Office now amounted to £32,324 a-year, and of the Secretary's Office to £16,908 a-year; and of course he need not explain to anyone who understood the system of the Office that these amounts must go on increasing. Of course, other re-organizations were being projected, and successive relays of pensioners would be foisted upon the country unless Parliament interfered. Many more facts might be quoted to show the necessity for the interference of Parliament, but he thought probably he had troubled the House with enough of them. What he wanted to show was that the whole system was wrong, and he must say that he came down to the House prepared to find that the Government would admit that it was wrong, and he did not now imagine that the Government would seriously undertake to defend all that had been done under this system in the past, or even seriously to justify the system itself. There could be no question that officers, clerks, and other persons, quite equal in capacity to the present holders of such offices as those to which he had referred, could be obtained for much smaller salaries than those now paid. The holders of such offices ought to be content with their salaries, and should not look for high pensions for a few years' service. They should be considered abundantly recompensed by having salaries 50 per cent. or so higher than those paid for corresponding work in any mercantile office. He would respectfully suggest that it was very little use for any of his hon. Friends or anyone sitting in that House to go round the country at election time raising a great dust about economy, unless they made some effort to give their professions a practical turn in that House. It seemed to him that any Government or any Party which declined to acknowledge that there was great room for reform in this matter would assuredly place itself in a false position. Of course it was not a very pleasant duty to expose these abuses. In the House, Ministers and ex-Ministers met anyone with obstinate denials of the facts, even when, as in this case, they were taken entirely from official documents. Out of the House one was called a Radical, but that epithet would not frighten him. If an anxiety to reform abuses of that kind could stamp a man as a Radical, he was quite willing to receive that stamp, and to avow that he would rather vote for the abolition of these abuses as a Radical than vote for their defence as a Tory. He maintained that the country was sick and tired of this system of providing for what they called good families, and of having offices shuffled round amongst the people who had always been in the habit of receiving them. The public were weary of having costly and useless officials put into their positions because their fathers or mothers or uncles had influence with high officers of State. He thought the mind of the country was bent upon having searching reform in these matters. He ventured to suggest that an opportunity for proving that they on the Ministerial side of the House were in earnest in demanding such a reform was afforded by the Motion he respectfully submitted to the House, and which he now asked the House to adopt.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E) said, his hon. Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) had so completely and exhaustively dealt with this subject that he left him (Major Rasch) very little necessity for taking up the time of the House. Every hon. Member who had heard the speech of the Mover of the Motion must have had forced upon him this fact, that re-organization was an extremely pleasant amusement for the re-organized Department, but that it was an extremely expensive one for the tax-payer. He could not help thinking that the result of these re-organizations was by no means commensurate with the expense that it entailed, because, as a matter of fact, these re-organized Departments were the Departments which carried out that system which made this country practically the laughing stock of Europe during the last four years. It was owing to these re-organized Departments that we had guns sent out to the Red Sea, and that we had, as was shown in the Commission asked for by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), flour sent out which was more like plaster of Paris than anything else; that we had tin bayonets, pewter swords, armour clads with their armour belts below the water, and ships without guns. And worst of all, we found that these Departments occupied themselves in composing reports in duplicate, triplicate, and quadruplicate—reports which were an eyesore to our soldiers and civil servants at home and abroad, and which it took them all their time to understand. With regard to the system of re-organization he could only take one Department which his hon. Friend had alluded to, and that was the Secretarial Department of the Admiralty. He would touch upon one or two points which his hon. Friend had not dealt with. This fortunate Department from a re-organization point of view had been re-organized twice. The first time was in 1869, and it cost the country £26,000 a-year. The number of clerks was reduced by 11, and the result of the reduction was a saving of £3,300 in salaries, but the amount spent in pensions was £5,500 a-year. In 1871 the Department had again crept up to £28,000 a-year, and, besides that, the whole of the pensions had to be paid into the bargain. That, he ventured to think, with all respect to the hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, was rather an Irish way of re-organizing. ["Oh, oh!"] Again, in 1879, the cost was £28,000, and in 1881, in this extremely fortunate Department, 17 clerks were shelved, and the cost was reduced to £24,000 a-year, but plus £7,000 a-year pensions and £10,000 for bonuses. The net result of this re-organization in one Department was an extra expenditure of something like £125,000 between the years 1869 and 1886, which sum was entirely spent on pensions, bonuses, and salaries, which were absolutely unnecessary, and need never have been incurred. He found that there were two sets of officials who benefited by these schemes of re-organization, one set being composed of men who were old and perfectly incompetent, and the other being composed of young, smart officials, who were able to obtain work outside their Department. He would venture to suggest that no Government Department should be allowed to re-organize itself, aided by wire-pullers. Every re-organization should be carried out by an independent Commission, altogether disconnected with the Department and acting outside. He also thought that no re-organization should be carried out—as he believed there was a general tendency on the part of several Government Departments to make hay while the sun shone—until the Report of the Commission now sitting was produced. He hoped the right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Front Bench on that (the Ministerial) side of the House would pay attention to the observations of his hon. Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings), because he (Major Rasch) knew perfectly well, from his own experience in connection with the electors of his Division, that the electorate of the country were getting tired of seeing these re-organizations carried out, as they were really and truly the merest shuffling about of highly-paid officials from one position to another. He begged to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the re-organizations in the Accountant General's and Secretary's Departments of the Admiralty have been injurious to the public interests, by resulting in increased charges for those Departments, and by needlessly adding to extravagant pensions and bonuses; and that in any further re-organizations, officials who are still able and willing to render service for the public money shall be provided with employment in other Departments, instead of being forced to become useless burdens upon the country."—(*Mr. Jennings.*)

Mr CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the House that I am not one of those who regret that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) has brought forward this Resolution, because I think that no one who has had the official experience that has fallen to my lot can do otherwise than rejoice that this most difficult matter of re-organization should be thoroughly well ventilated in the House of Commons. I may say more, that so far from re-organization being, as is supposed—and as I almost thought, from an expression which fell from him, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockport himself believed—a pleasure and satisfaction to the Head of a Department who has to undertake it, I, who have had one very serious re-organization to undertake, declare most solemnly that there is no duty which can be more odious, more distasteful. If you are re-organizing a large Department—and I am going to give the House some facts about a re-organization which I personally undertook—you will have to meet more heart-burnings, more discontent, more personal feeling than any Minister or Head of a Department can meet with in any other official duty he may have to perform; and I will undertake to say on the part of all those whom I see opposite, and on the part of some of my hon. and right hon. Friends who usually sit on this side of the House, that so far from their regarding re-organization as a source of satisfaction, the very opposite is the case, and though duty may require it to be undertaken, nothing is a greater source of dissatisfaction. I do not propose and it would be impossible for me to go through all the details offered to the House in the speech of the hon. Member. There were, however, some matters outside the particular Resolution he has moved, which, I think, I may refer to, and as to which those who have sat for some time in the House will agree with me in correcting the views of the hon. Gentleman. He not only went into the question of the re-organizations in the Department to which the Resolution referred, but he also spoke of the re-organization of certain Judicial Departments—for instance, the Court of Bankruptcy. Now, it will be in the recollection of hon. Gentlemen who were Members of the House when the former Bills were brought in re-organizing the bankruptcy and other legal departments of the country, that there was nothing on which there was greater controversy at that time than in the demands of those who were interested as members of the Legal Profession in some of the arrangements of the Court of Bankruptcy, to obtain for the officials by Statute, not by voluntary or Departmental arrangements, the largest amount of compensation or superannuation possible; and I, myself, in this House, had more than once to take part in the endeavour to keep down those charges, and I think I speak with the knowledge of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) when I say that, as far as some of these compensations in legal Departments are concerned, they were Acts of this House, carried, very often, despite the strenuous opposition of those who wished to see more economical arrangements. That is certainly the case as to the former Bankruptcy Act; and possibly the hon. Member for Stockport, who was not in Parliament when that Act was passed, is not aware that for the organization referred to, those who were responsible were not the officials of the Treasury, but Members of Parliament themselves, who stereotyped the old provisions as to compensation to legal officers, and left the Government no alternative whatever. I say that parenthetically, because I am glad the hon. Gentleman should have brought this subject before Parliament, though, I think, it is desirable some of his facts should be corrected. I said before that I have had some experience in this matter. I am responsible for one great scheme of re-organization to which the hon. Member has referred, and, with the leave of the House, I will now state what that re-organization was, and upon what principles we acted. I refer to the re-organization in 1869 of some departments of the Admiralty, for which I had the good—or bad—fortune to be responsible. When I took office as First Lord of the Admiralty, at the end of the year 1868 it was found that the old Naval Departments, Civil and Naval, were enormously in excess of the public requirements. I will give the House some figures showing how that was. Whether it was in respect of officers on the active list or officers on half-pay or in respect of the Civil Departments of the Admiralty itself, or Civil Departments in other branches of the Service subordinate to the Admiralty, we found, as was well known in Parliament after inquiries by Committees and Commissions during the preceding 10 years, that there was an enormous excess in the number of persons connected with the Admiralty, and we undertook —and communicated our decision at once to Parliament—the revision of those matters. I will now give the House, correctly, the facts, not from conjecture, not from information picked out here and there, but from a complete Return laid before Parliament in the years 1872 and 1874, and I will quote in each case what it was we had to do and how we did it. The House will then see whether, in respect of that re-organization, the description the hon. Gentleman gives of it is deserved. When we took Office at the Admiralty, we found that the total number of naval officers of all ranks on pay, or half-pay, was 5,143. We were of opinion that there were at least 1,500 too many. It was necessary to re-organize with a view to the necessary reduction, and in four years from that time the number had been reduced by 1,200 officers on full pay, and 336 on half-pay, or a total of 1,536 officers. It will be said that that does not include the retired list, and that we put a large number of officers on the retired list, and in that way made up for the economy in the active Service. I find that the total number of officers, including Warrant Officers on pay, half-pay, retired pay, and reserved pay, in 1868 was 10,607, and that step by step they were reduced, including those on the retired and reserve lists, to 9,514, or ,in all, a reduction of 1,093 officers. I take these figures from Paper No. 256, of 1872. It may, however, be asked—But did you economize expenditure? It will be said—"When you made this reduction, you probably so increased the non-effective expenditure as to raise the total charge." I refer hon. Members to Paper 321, of 1872, and they will see that in the short space of four years the total number of officers on the ordinary fighting active list was reduced in such a manner as to produce, including retired and reserve pay, an economy of £29,000 a-year, and of all ranks above Warrant Officers an economy of £13,000 a-year.

MR. LALOR (Queen's Co., Leix): I desire to ask, Mr. Speaker, whether the right hon. Gentleman is speaking to the Question before the House?

MR. CHILDERS: Well, I think it is very hard ——

MR. GENT-DAVIS (Lambeth, Kennington): The Question submitted to you, Sir, has not been decided.

MR. SPEAKER: I decided it by silence.

MR. CHILDERS: I think it is rather hard, seeing that we were in Office during the period which has been referred to by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jennings) that I should not be allowed to tell the whole story. As a matter of fact, then, I have shown that the charge for pay and retired pay was greatly reduced in respect of what are called naval officers by the amount of no less than £29,000 a-year. But now let me go to the particular Departments to which the hon. Member specially alluded. Let me remind him that those are only two out of a considerable number of Civil Departments of the Admiralty. In the Returns to which he has referred, he has very naturally fallen into an error—not a grievous one in itself, but one which a little more knowledge of the Departments of the Admiralty at that time would have saved him from. I mean he has not taken into account, in bringing before the House the circumstances of the Accountant General's Department, that when the reduction took place, and as an important set-off in his calculations of the small amount of this reduction, a large number of clerks were transferred from other Departments when their business was transferred to the Accountant General's Department. In 1868-9 we found there was an enormous excess in the aggregate number of persons employed in the Civil Departments of the Admiralty. We found that the town departments of the Admiralty—that is to say, the Secretary's Department, the Departments of the Accountant General, the Storekeeper General, the Controller of Victualling, and the other departments in London had 473 salaried officers. These figures are taken from Return 256, of 1872. I do not think the hon. Member for Stockport, in his inquiry, has gone back to these Returns, although he has gone back to the period they represent. They were Returns called for by Parliament at the time when this very subject was discussed—because this question of the re-organization of the Admiralty Departments is not a new one. It was fully discussed in 1870-1-2, and more particularly in 1874, and though the discussions in Committee do not appear very fully in *Hansard*, the hon. Gentleman will find a good deal on the subject in those debates. If he looks through the Parliamentary Papers he will find the precise information in which his speech was wanting, and which I now take the liberty of bringing before him. In 1868-69, as I have said, we found an enormous excess in the number of persons employed in the Civil Departments of the Admiralty—I am not now speaking of the Naval officers. We found an enormous surplusage in the number of civil officers employed under the Admiralty, and I will give the House these facts—what number we found, what reduction we made, what economy there was in salaries, and what economy there was in pensions; and then I think the hon. Member—who, I am sure, is anxious to know the facts of the case—will admit that I have put before him a statement not entirely in accordance with all the conclusions he has drawn from the Papers to which he referred, and in fact on many points in diametrical opposition to them. We found, I say, that the town Departments of the Admiralty had 473 salaried officers. These were strenuously reduced, and there were a good many transfers made from one Department to another, and the result was that in 1872 the 473 had been reduced to 390—that is to say, 83 Civil servants at work in the Admiralty were employed less than were employed in 1868. At the same time, the number of writers was increased by one-third, and in the result the whole number of official persons, of whatever rank, employed in the Civil Departments of the Admiralty in London, were reduced by 47, producing an economy of £18,000 a-year. But, it will be asked, what was the effect on the Pension List, and what was the net result to the country? I have taken some pains to obtain information from the Returns I have quoted as to the total number of persons employed in the Civil Department of the Admiralty, whether clerks or writers, comparing 1868 and 1872, and also to the total charge for salaries and pensions paid to those clerks. Here, again, I must include the effect of large transfers from one Department to another. In 1868 there were 1,344 civilians, including writers, employed in the Civil Department of the Admiralty in London and elsewhere. In 1872 there were 1,047—that is to say, we reduced the number of civil servants employed under the Admiralty by 297. The salaries were reduced by £74,000 a-year. The pensions, which, of course, diminish year after year, were, at first in the maximum, increased by £26,000 a-year; but in respect of the Civil Department of the Admiralty, as between 1868, when the re-organization began, and 1872, when it was over, there was already a net economy, in salaries and pensions together, to the extent of £48,000 a-year. That, however, would not be a perfectly fair statement, and I wish to correct it in this respect—that a certain number of those servants had commuted their pensions. That commutation was equivalent to £5,000 a-year, so that the net economy in respect of civilians in the Admiralty, as between 1868 and 1872, was 297 persons, costing in salaries and pensions less by £43,000 a-year. I think those facts, which are taken from the Return No. 256 of 1872, ought to be carefully weighed by the House in considering the merit or demerit of the re-organization undertaken in 1869. The hon. Member for Stockport is apparently under the impression that after this re-organization took place patronage went on and that fresh appointments were made. Now, I have taken great pains to get also at these facts from Returns which are at the disposal of all hon. Members, and the number and dates of which I have given. I will take the Departments the hon. Member refers to. In the Secretary's Department of the Admiralty, as between 1869 and 1873, the total net reduction was 13 persons, and the economy in the salaries, after deducting pensions, was £3,000 a-year. In the Accountant General's Department the net reduction was 55 persons. That is to say, that we found the Department redundant by so large a number that we were able in that first re-organization to reduce it by 55 persons. The salaries were reduced by £18,500 a-year and the pensions increased by £9,000, so that the net economy was

£9,500 a-year. But it would not be fair to leave it in that way. I must remind the House that at that time, as was well known in Parliament, it was absolutely necessary to re-arrange the salaries of these offices. It fell to our lot to make that re-arrangement, but I cannot find how much ought to be allowed for the re-arrangement of salaries. In the re-organization, however, there was a saving of no less than 68 persons in the Civil employment of the Admiralty, resulting in a gross saving of £12,000 a-year, minus the money allowed for on account of the re-arrangement of salaries. And now as to fresh appointments being made after re-organization takes place. Let me tell the hon. Member what I think he will be glad to hear. He is under the impression that after that great re-organization was effected fresh appointments were made, and patronage was again in vogue—went on "merrily," I think was the expression he used. He seems to think that having got rid of a certain number of officers we derived satisfaction from appointing our friends to the vacant places. Now, I will give the House the facts on that point—and they are taken also from the Return, where they are set out in full. In 1867—before the re-organization—22 Civil appointments had been made in the Admiralty; in 1868 the number was 25; in 1869, after and during the re-organization, no clerk was appointed, although at that time those appointments did not take place under the system of competitive examination, but were simply the patronage of the Department. In 1870, 1871, 1872, and 1873 no appointments whatever were made—that is to say, during the whole of these five years the appointment of Civil officers to the Admiralty had ceased altogether. I think it will be seen that we were honest in the reduction we had determined to make, forfeiting for five years the whole of our patronage, which our Predecessors had enjoyed to the tune of above 20 appointments a year. But the great reduction in the number of appointments was not seen in the Civil Department only. In the Naval Department, in 1867, 282 officers of all ranks were appointed; in 1868 the number was 239; in 1869 that number was reduced to 164; in 1870 the number was 135; in 1871 the number was 173; in 1872 it was 163, and in 1873 the number had been reduced to 115 officers of all ranks. We were of opinion that there was an enormous redundancy in the ranks of the Naval Department, whether of naval or Civil officers, and Mr. Baxter and myself having undertaken the most obnoxious and disagreeable operation of vigorous cutting down establishments, we went straight through with the work, and during those five years, under my own administration and that of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), that policy of steadily reducing the number of officers as well as the charge, and of absolutely giving up the whole of our Civil patronage, all the naval patronage which it was possible to give up—of course we could not altogether stop the entry of cadets—the work was diligently prosecuted, with the effect I have described. I have not, unfortunately, been able to lay my hands on a Return prepared for me by the Admiralty about 10 or 15 years after that great re-organization, but I remember the figures well, and they show that when the Pension List had been depleted by deaths and other causes, the whole economy we had effected amounted to between £150,000 and £200,000 a-year. There may have been individual mistakes as to this officer or that officer, and as to this Civil servant or that Civil servant, but if the House will trust me that I am stating the facts correctly, I think they will allow, at any rate, that the great re-organization which we undertook at that time, and carried through in those years, was a thoroughly honest re-organization in the interests of the public and the taxpayer. No one can be charged with having carried it out from any selfish or personal motive, for our own object was the public good, and we set ourselves to perform the task. We did it honestly, we abandoned the whole of our patronage, we determined that this enormous redundancy of officers should be attacked as vigourously as it could be, and we did so attack it with success. Although we had done so much, I was of opinion when I left Office that we had not gone far enough, but that it ought to rest with those who followed us to carry that reduction still further. I am not sure whether I left it as an official Memorandum, but I certainly left for those who came after me, in an unofficial document, a statement in which I pointed out that, while the Naval Department had been successfully dealt with, there had not been time to attack the number of the Civil Department sufficiently, and we left to our successors certain information to guide them if they should think fit to under take the work. The Government which followed did undertake the operation, and the right hon. Gentleman the present First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) particularly took up the question vigorously, doing me the honour to communicate to me at the time the heads of the re-organization he proposed to take further in hand. He took the matter up where we had left off. The details of this work do not appear in these papers, but the right hon. Gentleman opposite will be able, perhaps, to state them from memory. At any rate the general results can be seen in later Parliamentary returns. While we had reduced the numbers of the Civil Departments of the Admiralty by—as I have shown to the House—83, 68 of them being in the offices of the Secretaries and Accountant General, the new First Lord of the Admiralty took up the matter again, commencing at the point where we had left off. If I am not mistaken—for I have only a partial official Return to refer to —he succeeded in making a further reduction in the number of civilian servants in the Admiralty connected with the different Departments of no less than 101 persons. I may be wrong by one or two, but that was about the reduction made. So far as I can tell from the Return, and it is not very easy to pick out the facts, the saving actually made by that re-arrangement was something between £22,000 and £23,000 a-year. The arrangement was subject, of course, as former re-arrangements had been, to certain increases of salaries, but, on the whole, a very handsome amount was actually saved by the right hon. Gentleman. I hope I have honestly and simply stated to the House what the story of my great re-organization was. Hon. Gentlemen who have not had the misfortune to be concerned in an operation of that kind may think it is very simple, but when you find a Department with 200 officials in it too many, when you find a Service with 1,500 officers in it too many, it is not an easy task to undertake, and undertake promptly, the bringing down of those too over-crowded lists to the amount requisite for the Public Service. Let me assure the House of this, that if on the one hand that operation is a very difficult one and requires great pains and patience, and indifference to abuse, and a determination to do one's duty, however disagreeable it may be, on the other hand the reward is all the greater. You cannot carry on a department efficiently for business if you have in that department people running over each other—if you have three men to do the work of two. It is absolutely necessary for the efficient conduct of a great business—and there is no business greater than that of the Admiralty—that you should bring the number of people employed down to a reasonable figure—to such an amount approximately as a private firm would. But you have to deal with persons who, whether the system is a good or bad one, and that I do not propose to discuss, are members of a permanent Civil Service, with rights given to them by Acts of Parliament, and by decisions of Parliament, with rights which have often been subjected to discussion in Parliament. I venture to say, however, that in nine out of every 10 discussions in Parliament the question has been, not whether these public servants are paid too much, but whether they are paid enough. Constant pressure is put on Ministers from all parts of the House—I do not name any one in particular—to grant these demands for larger remuneration, larger superannuation, larger compensation for Public Services, and it is only when such a debate as this takes place that those who are responsible for the Public Service can find breathing time, and can find support to meet the constant pressure which is put upon them in every direction. Now let me say one word as to the practical suggestion of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings). The hon. Gentleman suggests in his Resolution that it would be desirable that officials still able to render service should be provided with employment in other Departments. Now, what I think we ought rather to do is, to see that the Public Service has in each Department officers well suited for the work of the Department, and that too many are not employed. It is our primary duty, not to provide officers with employment, but to provide the Public Service with efficient officers, and, therefore, it strikes me that the hon. Member has, in his Resolution, rather put the cart before the horse. He asks us to provide persons with employment. What we ought to do is, to provide the Public Service with officers fitted to do the duty required of them. But if he asks me whether I agree with him as to the principle of his Resolution rather than as to its language, I am bound to say that, as far as his suggestion can be carried out, no one is more anxious, no one has, by official acts, shown greater anxiety that it should be carried out than myself. Every time we undertook—when I say we, I am speaking of the Governments to which I belonged, for, personally, I was concerned in only one re-organization—when we set about re-organization, we did our utmost to obtain employment elsewhere for persons who were redundant in a particular office. It is not an easy operation. If you have been trained all your life, say in a shipbuilder's office, you will not become, at 45 years of age, a good bank clerk by the simple operation of being transferred to a stool in a bank. Of course, it is the duty of the Treasury, and of all those concerned in these operations, to do their utmost to see that if persons superannuated as redundant can be employed elsewhere, they should be, but also that they should have work for which their training fitted them. I have known numerous cases in which men, preferring the full salary of office to the superannuation allowance, have gone to other offices, and have turned out utterly unfitted for the new duty assigned to them. Therefore, I do not think the hon. Member puts the case quite in the right way; for it is not so much our first object to find work for redunntant clerks, but to see that the offices contain none but men fit for their work, always, however, treating the redundant list as a principal source from whence capable men may be drawn. I do not think that in the words used in the Resolution this principle is fittingly expressed, and I cannot support it; but I think the hon. Member, in bringing his Resolution forward, intended to do, and has done, a good service; and while I have done my best to supplement or correct some of the statements he has made, I feel certain of this, that whoever may be in Office, they will not regret that the debate we have had this night has taken place.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said, he did not desire to travel over the ground occupied by previous speakers; but he did wish to say that he, as a humble Representative of the Service to which he was proud to belong, was deeply grateful to the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) for having made this Motion. He was grateful to the hon. Gentleman for the manner in which he handled the subject, for the light he had brought to bear upon it, and for the deep research he had exhibited in his statesmanlike speech. Whether he agreed with the hon. Member in all he had said was another matter. Now, a word or two in reply to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers). Although he was a political opponent of the right hon. Gentleman, and though, as a naval man, he disapproved of much of the work, or rather of the mischief, the right hon. Gentleman had done, he was always ready to believe that the right hon. Gentleman was actuated by one motive, and that was to do that which he believed to be best for the Public Service. He assented to all the right hon. Gentleman had said with regard to the reduction he found it necessary to make in the Executive branch of the Navy—a reduction of the Staff by 1,500—but that was not the point now before the House. The hon. Member for Stockport did not make that part of his statement, so that the right hon. Gentleman was dragging a red herring across the path, he was taking credit for that which no one disputed. The real point of the speech of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jennings) was the misuse of funds for many years past in the retiring of clerks and the increase of the Civil Establishment connected with the Admiralty and other Departments. Therefore, the getting rid of 1,500 naval officers was really beside the question under discussion. He admitted, as every naval man admitted, that when we passed from wooden to iron battle ships the number of men on the Establishment of the Navy was far in excess of the requirements of the Service, and he gave the right hon. Gentleman credit for the way in which he handled the question. Though from an economical point of view naval men agreed that the arrangement was not a good thing for the taxpayers, they considered it was a good thing for their brother officers, and he, having the highest opinion of his brother officers, and feeling that they were always underpaid, was much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for the vigorous retirement scheme which he introduced and succeeded in passing. But that was quite a different question to the one under discussion. What was the moral to be drawn from this discussion. Why, that it was a monstrous abuse to retire civilian clerks—he cared not what their standing might be in the Admiralty—at the age of 45 or 50 with salaries varying from £678 to £700 a-year. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers), in his brilliant retirement scheme, never proposed to give more than £600 to post-captains with good service pensions at the age of 55. A post-captain had great experience in the command of ships; he had had to take the flag of England everywhere and see that it was honoured. He (Admiral Field) valued such a man at a higher rate than any chief clerk in the Admiralty. The right hon. Gentleman would have done well to see that the retiring allowances of the Civil branch were never in excess of those of the able and distinguished men who retired at the age of 55 with £600, including good service pensions. He thought the House would agree with him that the services of those gentlemen who lived in comfort at home could not be compared with those of naval men who followed the sea from their boyhood to their retirement. An Admiral's half-pay was £450 a-year; he had occasional employment—perhaps once in seven years—when he received full pay. It seemed to him (Admiral Field) that the retiring allowances of the Civil clerks ought to bear some relation to the pay awarded to the officers on active service. As a matter of fact, half of the Civil clerks in the Admiralty and other branches of the Public Service were not wanted, and if the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers), who prided himself on the retirement of 1,500 naval officers, had seen his way to replace some of the civilian element by able and gallant officers who would have been content to serve for their half-pay, plus the extra allowance for extra duty, he would have effected great economy and have obviated a good deal of heart-burning in the Naval Service. It was a monstrous scandal that when they came to deal with the greatest Public Service in the country, for the Navy was the greatest Public Service—the Admiralty were yearly entrusted with over £12,000,000 sterling to expend on the Navy of the greatest maritime power in the would—they should find there were only four naval men who had any voice in the expenditure of the money granted by Parliament. Naval men were powerless, because they were in the hands of the Civil branch; and if this discussion led the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) to consider the question of organizing his Board on such a basis that naval men should have a greater voice in the administration of naval affairs, it would be most valuable. There were only three Naval Lords who exercised any executive functions, the fourth being controller; the rest of the administration was in the hands of civilians, who knew nothing about the Naval Service. He knew nothing about the men who had been retired, and he did not care to inquire. He believed what had been said, that many of the men received salaries far beyond their deserts. He hoped more light would be let in upon the question, for the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) was no answer to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings). As usual, the ex-officials on the Opposition Benches supported the officials on the Treasury Bench; it was only they, poor, humble, naval men, who suffered. All that he and his hon. Friends wanted was efficiency in the Naval Service, and they maintained that the only way to administer the Navy efficiently was to get rid of a great many civilians, and replace them by gentlemen of naval experience. It would be much more economical for them all. Naval men desired to serve them for the honour of serving them, and not for the dirty pay they received. [*Ironical cheers.*] Hon. Members might jeer that sentiment; but he felt warmly upon this point. Inquiry into the system of administration in both the Naval and Military Services would do a great deal of good, if it tended to draw more attention to the doings of the two great spending Departments. He hoped the First Lord would himself look into this question. He knew the noble Lord desired to do his best for the Service, and he honoured him for the manner in which he had brought his intellect to bear on naval matters. He knew no man who had done more for the good of the Service, and who had shown a greater zeal for its efficiency, than the noble Lord. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) dwelt upon the Civil administration of the Navy in his time. But it was since his time that a great abuse had been carried out. The right hon. Gentleman was the man to introduce the system under which there was a permanent Naval Secretary. That office was abolished, however, by Lord Northbrook in 1882. A civilian was appointed to take the place of the Naval Secretary. He (Admiral Field) did not want to make any reflections on the hon. Gentleman who now occupied the position of Permanent Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. McGregor); but he invited hon. Gentlemen to see that official in the witness box upstairs, and then say whether they did not think that a naval man would fill the office better than the present occupant. He was confident that the more attention was drawn to the administration of the Admiralty the sooner impartial men would arrive at the conclusion that more naval men were required. Every Naval Lord should have a post-captain as his private secretary, for when a Naval Lord went out of office there should be some men in the Department who understood what had been done. It was quite clear that while there were only three naval men on the Board of Admiralty and all the rest were civilians, the Navy would never be administered from a naval point of view.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): I thank my hon. Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) for the very able speech in which he has brought this subject before the House. The great objection which I had to his speech, which caused me to interrupt him, was that he was calling attention to a state of things which existed 100 years ago, but does not exist now. He made the House to understand that these re-organizations were made for the purpose of jobbery. He plainly stated that there were certain families which were especially benefited, and he made use of one expression, that some poor devil of a writer was displaced by a gentleman with £800 a-year. Now, what are the facts? Let me remind the House of the conditions under which gentlemen enter the Civil Service. I have no power to alter them. The conditions are established by Act of Parliament, and are enforced by public opinion. If a vacancy occurs, notice has to be given to the Civil Service Commission, and it will be filled by the gentleman who passes the best competitive examination, and the individual who passes that examination enters into a sort of contract with the Government by which he becomes a higher division clerk, and entitled to permanent employment at a certain salary, with a pension after a certain number of years. The same rule regulates the lower division clerks. The pension is regulated by length of service, and the amount of salary which he receives on his retirement. The longer he serves the greater his pension, until he attains the maximum amount of pension at the age of 60. The Heads of Departments have to deal with a stereotyped system, and have no more power to depart from it than the Chancellor of the Exchequer has to depart from the contracts he enters into with the public creditors. Now, what is the object of these re-organizations? There seems to be an impression that the only object is to retire officials at high pensions in order to fill their places with other officials shortly to be entitled to similar pensions. But the object of every re-organization has been to substitute cheaper clerical labour for dearer. I am absolutely certain that if no re-organization scheme had been carried out during the last 20 years the amount payable in salaries and pensions would be far in excess of that which is now paid, and the Office would be absolutely unworkable. I will go through the various re-organizations, beginning with 1857. Thirteen clerks were then pensioned in the Accountant General's Department, and three in the Secretary's Department. In 1869—for this the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) was responsible, the details of which he has clearly put before the House—39 clerks in the Accountant's Department and 11 in the Secretary's were pensioned. I admit that some of these were young men, six were from 31 to 37. Then my right hon. Friend the present First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) carried out a re-organization in 1878, by which 65 clerks were pensioned in the Accountant's Department and 17 from the Secretary's Department. There seems to be an impression that these schemes are carried out at the mere will of the officials of the Department. I doubt if ever there was a Committee composed of more competent men than that which sat over the re-organization of 1878. The Members of that Committee were, first, Sir Massey Lopes, who was, as all who knew him will admit, an admirable man of business; and next, Lord Lingen, formerly Secretary to the Treasury. Associated with him was Sir Robert Hamilton, Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trade, and with these three gentlemen was the then Assistant Secretary to the Admiralty. That re-organization was very large. The only other re-organization to which my hon. Friend alluded was one for which I was responsible in 1885, under which 83 clerks were pensioned. Now, what has been the tendency of these re-organizations? The tendency has been greatly to decrease and not to increase the number of higher division clerks, and to substitute in their places either lower division clerks or copyists who are not entitled to pensions. I will quote figures which will show how great the decrease has been. I may, however, first state to the House that if re-organization at the Admiralty seems somewhat chronic, it is due to the fact that during the last 25 years there has been a concentration of scattered Departments at the Admiralty, the result of which has been that the reserve of working power which every Department has, when concentrated, becomes in proportion greater, and those who have the concentrated Departments under them say that they have an excess of working power which they do not wish to retain, especially if its retention will ultimately add a large increase to the non-effective vote. I will first take the Accountant General's Department. The number of higher division clerks in that Department in 1858 was 123 out of a total establishment of 141. This proportion held good up to the year 1868, when the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) came in with his scheme of re-organization. The number immediately decreased, and has gone on steadily decreasing, though the total numbers of the Department have not largely diminished. In 1869 the number of higher division clerks was 154 out of 195, and then a number of departments were added to the Accountant General's Department until in the year 1875, out of a total number of 265 on the establishment, 135 only were higher division clerks entitled to pensions. Then my right hon. Friend brought in his re-organization scheme, and there was immediately a heavy fall in the number of higher division clerks, who had been reduced from 135 in 1875 to 48 in 1887. My hon. Friend said that the cost of supervision now is greater than before; but that is not so, because the officers were supervised by the higher division clerks, and their number has decreased and is decreasing, and in place of higher division clerks have been brought in lower division clerks and Admiralty writers. A considerable quantity of writers are not entitled to pensions, and the result of these changes has been not only to diminish the total cost of the establishment, but the claims of those who are entitled to pensions. In the Secretary's Department the change has been more remarkable. In 1854 the Department was composed of 54 higher division clerks. In 1877 my right hon. Friend's re-organization scheme applied to that Department, and there was an immediate reduction in the number of higher division clerks, and they are now 28, as against 54 34 years ago. As vacancies occur in the Department they are filled either by lower division clerks or by Admiralty writers. Therefore it does not admit of argument, but is incontrovertible, that these re-organizations are a benefit to the public; and that they do diminish the expenditure of the Departments and the claim which the officers of the Departments have to pensions. We are now in a transitional period. Much the same change is taking place in the Civil Service that has taken place in the Army. We have to deal with the relics of an old system by which the great majority, if not all those who entered under it, were entitled to pensions; we are gradually wiping off these pensions, and in proportion as the men retire who are entitled to pensions we endeavour to bring in a cheaper class of labour which is not entitled to pension. My hon. Friend alluded to the fact that there was a re-organization scheme of the Admiralty in embryo which he was anxious to stop. Like hon. Gentlemen opposite I have undergone all the agonies of re-organizing, and if there is anything more hateful than another it is for anyone to attempt to re-organize a Department under him. No one who has not done it has any idea of the amount of trouble, anxiety, and annoyance such re-organization causes; and no one—unless he thought it absolutely necessary for the efficiency of his Department, or was prompted by a sense of public duty in the desire to diminish the cost of his Department—would ever embark in such a troublesome operation. I will now indicate to the House the nature of the operation which I hope I may be able, if the House assents, to carry out, and by which the annual expenditure on the Admiralty will be very largely reduced. When it was proposed to establish the Intelligence Department in accordance with the wishes of my noble and gallant Friend the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) I went to the heads of the several Departments, and they one and all told me that they could carry on their work with less men than were under them. I appointed a Committee subsequently, who have carefully gone through the re-organization of each Department. As a result we find we can save something like £40,000 a-year in salaries, which will amount to a reduction of something like £50,000 a-year when the scheme comes into thorough operation. But to do that we must pension those we retire, and that means a temporary increase in the pension list. Hon. Members, when they object to pensions being given in cases of the re-organization of Public Departments forget that those who receive those pensions have already earned them in the Public Service.

Mr. JENNINGS: Does the noble Lord contend that the men of 32 who are pensioned off have earned heavy pensions?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: All the officials who retired on pensions had earned them. In every single instance it was a mere forestalment of a liability which the State must meet. If a number of officials are retained in a Department when there is little work for them, and when their salaries are increasing every three years, the operation is not only costly, but will not conduce to the efficiency of the Department. Every year that men remain in office increases the amount of pension they are entitled to claim; and therefore, when they are compulsorily retired, they merely receive in the form of pensions what they are entitled to from their length of service. The Royal Commission which sat to consider this subject—of which the hon. Baronet the Member for the Blackpool Division of North Lancashire (Sir Matthew White Ridley) was Chairman—reported that the only security against abuses of re-organization with respect to the granting of excessive bonuses and pensions was to associate a Treasury official with each re-organization scheme.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, that the Commission had reported that in two cases of re-organization abuses had occurred.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes; and yet in those very cases high Treasury officials were associated with the re-organization. The fact is that the work of the Admiralty has enormously increased during the last 20 years; and if it can be shown that, notwithstanding that increase in the amount of work, the cost of the Department has not materially increased during that period, the deduction is that the work must be done at a cheaper rate. The cost of the Secretary's Department in 1866, 22 years ago, was £27,200 a-year, and in 1886 the cost was £26,000, showing an actual decrease in the period. Then, again, the cost of the Accountant General's Department, which was £62,100 in 1871, was only £62,000 last year. Therefore the House will see that instead of there having been an increase of cost in those two Departments during recent years, their cost has actually diminished. The figures I have quoted will, I think, entirely dispose of the allegation that there has been any undue extravagance with regard to those Departments. In dealing with this question, the hon. Member has looked at it simply from the pounds, shillings, and pence point of view, without taking into consideration the amount of work which the Departments perform. It is constantly objected against the Government Departments that they do their work in an old-fashioned kind of way, and that they decline to carry out new ideas. But if it be desired to adopt modern ideas the men of the old-fashioned ideas must be compulsorily retired. Those who are responsible for the efficient administration of a Department have, however, to look not merely at the cost of establishments, but also at the work that has to be done. If a man has to carry out great schemes of reform in accordance with modern ideas, he must be allowed some choice of the instruments for carrying out such reforms. Under the scheme of Dockyard re-organization for which I was responsible in 1885, four officials were compulsorily retired; but the result has been that hundreds of thousands of pounds have been saved every year since, whilst the saving in the first year covered three or four times over the capitalized value of the salaries of the new appointments made under the scheme. The hon. Member has referred to-night to the question of pensions. Her Majesty's Government have given their most careful attention to the question of pensions, upon which the Royal Commission was about to report. If we complain now of the large Pension Vote, on the other hand, it is satisfactory to know that the last Superannuation Act diminished the pensions to which officials are entitled. It is admitted on every hand that the present pension system does not work altogether satisfactorily; and I doubt whether it is wise to entitle a man to a triennial increase of his income independent of the work to be performed. But until the system is altered we must make the best of it. My hon. Friend objects to the pensions which have been paid in cases of premature retirement under certain re-organization schemes at the Admiralty. To that I have to reply that if the entry be properly regulated the retirement will take care of itself. In 1885 I was first responsible for the Admiralty, and I found that there was a considerable excess of clerical labour in that Department. I accordingly stopped all entry. Since then there have been 12 vacancies among the clerks of the higher division, three among the lower division, and six among the writers, none of which have been filled up, and the only increase has been in the employment of a few men and boy copyists. I shall continue to stop the entry of the higher division clerks. With regard to the transfer of officers to another Department, Her Majesty's Government have given great attention to this side of the question, and I may inform the House that we have already transferred no less than eight clerks from one Department where they were not required to another Department. That number may not seem very great; but to anyone who understands the difficulty of making these changes this fact will show that we are working with sincerity and with a certain amount of success. I hope that the House will not accept the Resolution of my hon. Friend. We certainly cannot agree to it. The Resolution censures previous re-organizations at the Admiralty, and I have endeavoured to show the House that such re-organizations were, on the whole, for the public interest. But a more vital objection which I have to the Resolution is that it speaks of officials being "provided with employment." I altogether object to those words. If there is work to be done it must be done, and persons must be employed to do it; but the money under our control is not given to us for charitable purposes, and it is a most dangerous doctrine that because a man is once on the establishment he is to be provided for life with employment. I accept, however, to a great extent the principle for which my hon. Friend contends, and I hope he may see his way to withdraw his Resolution and accept the Resolution which I will now propose instead.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. Member for Stockport prepared to withdraw his Resolution in favour of that of the noble Lord?

Mr. JENNINGS said, he was not prepared to reply to the statement of the noble Lord at that moment, because other members wished to address the House; but he was certainly not prepared to withdraw his Resolution.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, whilst of opinion that when the re-organization of a Department becomes necessary, full inquiry should be made into the wants of other Departments with a view to the continued public employment of redundant officers, is not prepared, pending the inquiry of the Royal Commission upon Civil Service Establishments, to anticipate its report by laying down any absolute rule as to the provision of employment for persons not required in the Department to which they have been originally appointed."—(*Lord George Hamilton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.) said, he thought the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) deserved the thanks of the country for bringing forward this Motion. His noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) had asked the House to look at this question from a common-sense point of view. He agreed to that proposal. They had had re-organization after re-organization, the same thing had been done over and over again, and what had been the result? At that moment they had ships without guns, and no one was responsible. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty stated that the Navy was not strong enough; but he did not say by what amount it was not strong enough. They had a system at the Admiralty under which no one was responsible, and they might go on re-organizing as long as they liked under that system, and the result would be always the same—they would still have the same unsatisfactory condition of affairs. He gave his noble Friend great credit for his reforms in the Dockyards; he had undertaken those reforms in a business-like spirit; he had saved the country large sums of money; and, if he continued the same course, he had no doubt that the country would get greater value for its money than it did at present. But he wanted to point out that, although the reforms were good, they had nothing whatever to do with the efficiency of the Fleet, and as long as the present system lasted he might re-organize again, as he believed his noble Friend intended to do very shortly; but, the same unsatisfactory state of affairs would continue, and they would have naval officers getting up in their places in that House to make statements, which could not be contradicted, to show that the Fleet was not as efficient as it ought to be for the national defence in time of war. Therefore, he objected to any Departmental re-organizations. They had had them, as he had said, repeatedly, and with the usual result of increasing the salaries of some of the people whom they were re-organizing. His hon. Friend the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had just presided over a Committee which was mainly composed of Departmental officials; and although he had not seen the Report, he would lay a large wager that it proposed to increase the salary of some Member of the Committee.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: There is not a word of truth in that suggestion.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD said, he was glad to hear it; but, in that case, it would be a most unusual Departmental Committee Report. They must deal fairly in the matter of pensions. He pointed out that the system of pensions had been arranged by their ancestors. It was a contract entered into with the Service that certain offices should be taken, and that certain pensions should be received, although it seemed an extravagant thing that a man should retire at between the ages of 30 and 40. But he objected altogether to bonuses being given in addition to pensions. Why a man should get a pension, and, when there was re-organization, get a bonus into the bargain, he did not see at all. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) and his noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty had spoken of re-organization as being a distasteful duty. He could not understand why the right hon. Gentleman and his noble Friend should describe it in that way. They were paid to do that work, and if they were all to begin making a song about what was distasteful to them in the discharge of their duty they would leave a large part of their duty unperformed. Therefore, he most strongly objected to either the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh or his noble Friend taking any credit to themselves for doing what was simply their duty in the way of making reforms. There had been a good deal said on the question of clerks at the Admiralty. He had said before, and he repeated it then, that there was a large number of very highly-paid clerks in the Admiralty who received, besides, large pensions. He had not a word to say about them personally, but he wished to point out that they knew very little of the duty they were called upon to perform; their responsibility was very small, and he said that naval officers could be got to do the work far better and cheaper, by which means they would be able to fill up a very large gap that existed at the present time between the Admiralty and the Service. It was that gap which had a great deal to do with the mismanagement and maladministration of the Admiralty, and which, as long as it continued, would prevent the country from obtaining the necessary efficiency in the Navy. He had always observed that few Members of Governments wanted Departmental reform either at the Admiralty or the War Office, or at any great spending Department; and it was curious to notice that whenever reforms were demanded in the Services the occupants of the two Front Benches got up and expressed approval of what had been done; they supported each other, and that he conceived to be the great difficulty which men who desired reform had to contend with. That was a constant occurrence in the House, and there was no doubt that lately that method of controversy had been employed more than was usually the case. But he hoped his noble Friend would help, to the very best of his ability, the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) when he came to the examination of witnesses before the Commission on the system of Admiralty administration. He was convinced that if his noble Friend did that the system would be altered; but until that was done they might go on re-organizing and spending money until they were blue in the face. For those reasons he hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Stockport would not accept the Amendment of his noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he desired to give the reason why he should vote against the Amendment of the noble Lord and in favour of the original Motion of the hon. Member for Stockport. He understood the position of the noble Lord to be that, as the Royal Commission was now dealing with the matter in question, it would not be consistent with decorum to anticipate the decision at which the Committee might arrive. But he pointed out to the noble Lord that the Royal Commission had already reported upon the subject covered by the Motion of the hon. Member for Stockport, that it had already admitted the fact that men had been forced to become useless burdens on the State, and expressed their opinion against the practice. They were, therefore, in no sense anticipating the labours of this very useful Commission; on the contrary, the Chairman in that House had said that they would be strengthening the hands of the Commission by showing that, as far as possible, the House would support them in their decision. He did not intend to go into details which had been carefully avoided by the noble Lord. Every one of the statements made by the noble Lord was perfectly true no doubt, but they did not touch the point; the general statements which had been made left the matters of fact entirely untouched before the House. He thought, therefore, they would do well to strengthen the hands of the Royal Commission and the hands of the Government, who had declared, in acceding to a Resolution on the same lines as that now before the House, that they desired to carry out reforms in the Public Departments. What the House was asked to do by the Motion of the hon. Member for Stockport was to declare that men between the ages of 30 and 40 years should not be put on the Pension List, at sums nearly equivalent to the salaries which they are receiving, in consequence of the enforced abolition of their offices. The desire was that these persons should not continue to live without work at the expense of the State while they were still able to do good service; and, if their offices were abolished, their pensions should be abolished also.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Sir, the desire of Her Majesty's Government is exactly in accordance with the view which has been expressed by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bradlaugh). The hon. Gentleman desires that, if it is necessary to reduce the establishment of a Department, the services of those clerks who may be retired should be availed of in other Departments instead of being lost to the Public Service. That is the course which Her Majesty's Government have followed during the time they have been in Office. There have been no fresh examinations for first-class clerkships in either the higher or lower divisions of the Service in the past two years; these have been entirely stopped, and the redundant officers are really on lower salaries since the re-organization took place. I wish to point out to my hon. Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings)—who, I know, is actuated by a sincere desire to effect economy in the Public Service—that if the Resolution he has moved were accepted by the Government, the immediate effect would be that a number of redundant officers must be retained and paid for their services; that changes, which might be for the good of the Public Service, must be stopped, and, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) has expressed it, there would be in some Offices clerks and other officials absolutely "over-running each other;" because the voice of Parliament had declared that there should be no re-organization in the matter of pensions on retirement, and that officers who are still able and willing to render service for the public money shall be provided with employment in other Departments, instead of being forced to become useless burdens upon the country. I can only say, with very considerable experience of other than Public Business, that if the director of any great establishment were told that he is not to part with an officer unless he is able to find employment for him in some other branch, such a state of things would be absolutely fatal to efficiency of administration. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh has spoken of the difficulty of re-organization. There is in that work enormous difficulty, and I can speak for myself with reference to the re-organization which took place when I was at the Admiralty in 1878, and say that nothing but the actual necessity of substituting younger and more efficient men—in other words, much cheaper labour—justified me in proposing the changes which took place. A great many of those changes were approved by Sir Massey Lopes, and by Sir Robert Hamilton, who, I believe, is recognized as one of the most competent public servants—they were absolutely satisfied with the changes brought about. But that is not the ground on which alone a scheme of re-organization can be defended. Re-organizations can only be defended when they conduce to the efficiency of the Public Service, and it is on the ground of efficiency that I, for my part, have always recognized the necessity for change in Public Departments. I entertain all the objections which can be urged against putting men on the pension list who are young, and from whom further service may be expected in the public interest; but, Sir, some of these men are incapable of performing that service, and the conditions upon which they entered the Service are such that it is not in the power of the Head of any Public Department to deprive them of the right to continue employment unless they are pensioned, or to reduce or stop the increment of their salary. It was supposed by some that right hon. Gentlemen who hold Office have authority or power by which they can say to a clerk in a Public Office—"We no longer require your services; you can go," or, "You are no longer entitled to an increment of salary, and we discontinue it." But they have no power to do that. The clerk in a Public Office has obtained his appointment under the Public Service Acts on conditions which entitle him to remain there so long as he performs his duty without fault. My noble Friend has spoken of the maladministration of the Admiralty; but by the terms of the Resolution of the hon. Member for Stockport he condemns us to go on with precisely the same staff, the same material, and precisely the same machinery as we have now—we are not to change or retire a single man; we are not to change a single civilian, because if we were to do so the civilian would have to be pensioned, and no alteration is possible, although we desire to make every possible improvement in the Public Service. As I have said, we have not had any examinations for first-class clerkships during the last two years. I have myself been responsible for the transfer of several first-class clerks to the Treasury, and for the cessation of several offices, because it was not, in my opinion, necessary that they should be filled up. We are prepared to continue in the course we have taken; we are prepared to make the greatest economies we can in using every redundant officer in the Service by appointing him to such work as he may be fit for; and we shall continue to abstain from making fresh appointments to certain divisions in the Public Service by withholding from the Commissioners instructions to hold the examinations. More than that we think it would be contrary to the interests of the Public Service that we should do, and, therefore, I hope my hon. Friend will not ask the House to come to a Division on his Motion, which, I say, would most injuriously tie our hands and prevent reform in any Public Department for some time to come; whilst, on the other hand, if he accepts the Amendment which my noble Friend has proposed, he will greatly strengthen our hands in employing redundant officers in any Department for which they are fitted, and where they may be useful, and will also contribute to the efficiency of the Public Service.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.), rising in his place, said: Mr. Speaker, I claim to move, "That the Question be now put."

Mr. SPEAKER: I would point out that the hon. Member for Stockport has the right of reply.

Mr. JENNINGS said, he was asked not to press the Motion he had moved, but he failed to see that any reason had been assigned for its withdrawal. He had with great care and considerable industry examined this subject, and had brought together a mass of facts which fully justified the Resolution, and he was now asked to say before the country that those facts did not justify the Resolution, and that he had been trifling with the time of the House and with the great subject he had in hand. It appeared to him that that would be a ridiculous position for him to take up. He was not at all surprised at the fact that an ex-Minister should have come to the aid of Ministers—it was a game of Parliamentary *Box and Cox*, with which they were familiar. He called the attention of the House to the way in which he had been treated, when, quoting from a Paper every statement and every word of which was official, he was met with cries of dissent from the Treasury Bench by an official who had not read his own Return. He had cited the case of a permanent official whose office had been created for him, and he was challenged to give the name of that official. But why had not the Department given the name?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I rise simply to correct a misapprehension under which I am sure my hon. Friend has unwittingly fallen. He refers to the case of a Permanent Secretary at the Admiralty. The officer in question was Mr. Vernon Lushington. There were at the time two Permanent Secretaries at the Admiralty; and as, in my judgment, two Permanent Secretaries were not required, I requested Mr. Vernon Lushington to retire, and he was retired, a County Court Judgeship being found for him, but on the condition that he would not draw his pension, except to the extent necessary to make up his emoluments to the amount which he previously received. Lord Northbrook, on the death of the Naval Secretary, having appointed the Permanent Secretary to take his place, there has been effected a saving to the country of £1,500 a-year.

Mr. JENNINGS said, the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman did not affect his original statement, that an officer having been abolished, after a few years another officer was appointed to fill his place; and there were many other similar cases. The way in which his statements had been met was not a sufficient inducement to him to withdraw his Motion. The Resolution simply stated that certain re-organizations had increased the Pension List, and recommended that, in any further re-organizations, officials who were still able to render service for the public money should be provided with employment. But that was the very thing which the First Lord of the Admiralty was willing should be done—he had said he was quite willing, if he could, to find employment for officials who were retired. That being so, he asked the House to adopt the Resolution—altered by a few words if necessary, to cover the point of the First Lord. "Wherever practicable," or "as few as possible," added after the word employment, would meet the case. He called attention to the fact that they had been told that the Royal Commission then sitting was all important, and that its opinion was to be treated with the greatest deference. He wished to do that, and this was the opinion of the Commissioners upon the very subject to which he called attention. They said, in paragraph 110 of the first Report, that it had often been the case that places rendered vacant had been filled up, that men had been allowed to retire who should not have been retired, and that others had been retained whose services should have been dispensed with. Finally, he called attention to the fact that the First Lord, in his statement, entirely omitted to state the heavy charges placed on the Pension List for bonuses. Looking at the facts as he had stated them, he could not consent to say that he was wrong in moving this Resolution, or that any part of the Resolution was erroneous. He believed the course recommended was advantageous to the Public Service, and to the strict accuracy of the statements in support of it he was ready to bind himself.

MR. JAMES STUART rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and *agreed to.*

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 113; Noes 94: Majority 19.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Asquith, H. H.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Baumann, A. A.
Beckett, E. W.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Biggar, J. G.
Bolton, T. D.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, Jacob
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Burt, T.
Byrne, G. M.
Carew, J. L.
Channing, F. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cox, J. R.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Crilly, D.
Cross, H. S.
Deasy, J.
Dillon, J.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Evershed, S.
Fenwick, C.
Finucane, J.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J. W.
Flynn, J. C.
Foster, Sir W. B.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Gent-Davis, R.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Graham, R. C.
Haldane, R. B.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Heaton, J. H.
Hingley, B.
Hooper, J.
Hughes-Hallett, Col F. C.
Hunter, W. A.
Joicey, J.
Jordan, J.
Lalor, R.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leahy, J.
M'Donald, P.
M'Lagan, P.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Mattinson, M. W.
Mayne, T.
Molloy, B. C.
Morley, A.
Morrison, W.
Murphy, W. M.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
Norris, E. S.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Hea, P.
O'Keeffe, F. A.
Parnell, C. S.
Pease, A. E.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Pinkerton, J.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, P. J.
Priestley, B.
Quinn, T.
Randell, D.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reid, H. B.
Roberts, J.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Rowntree, J.
Royden, T. B.
Russell, T. W.
Sexton, T.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Stack, J.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Tanner, C. K.
Thomas, D. A.
Tuite, J.
Waddy, S. D.
Wayman, T.
Williams, A. J.
Wilson, H. J.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodhead, J.

TELLERS.

Jennings, L. J.
Rasch, Major F. C.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, Sir G. S.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beckett, W.
Bigwood, J.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Campbell, Sir A.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Chamberlain, R.
Childers, right hon. H. C. E.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Colomb, Sir J. C. R.
Darling, C. J.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Farquharson, H. R.
Field, Admiral E.
Finch, G. H.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. H. W.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Grimston, Viscount
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
Kelly, J. R.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lennox, Lord W. C. G.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Madden, D. H.
Matthews, rt. hn. H.

Maxwell, Sir H. E.
More, R. J.
Morgan, hon. F.
Moss, R.
Mount, W. G.
Murdoch, C. T.
Noble, W.
Northcote, hon. Sir H. S.
Norton, R.
Parker, hon. F.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Powell, F. S.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, Sir W. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Sandys, Lieut-Col. T. M.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stewart, M. J.
Talbot, J. G.
Tapling, T. K.
Temple, Sir R.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Townsend, F.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Wilson, Sir S.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That the re-organizations in the Accountant General's and Secretary's Departments of the Admiralty have been injurious to the public interests, by resulting in increased charges for those Departments, and by needlessly adding to extravagant pensions and bonuses; and that in any further re-organizations, officials who are still able and willing to render service for the public money shall be provided with employment in other Departments, instead of being forced to become useless burdens upon the Country.

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY BILL.

(*Mr. Bryce, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Jacob Bright, Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr Whitley, Sir Lyon Playfair, Mr. Francis Powell.*)

[BILL 198.] CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

On the Motion of Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.), the following Amendment made:—In Clause II., page 1, line 24, leave out all after "that," and insert—

"A degree of any particular University shall be a qualification for any office, profession, or occupation, or shall confer any privilege or exemption in respect of the admission to any office, profession, or occupation, a corresponding degree of the Victoria University shall be a like qualification, or shall confer a like privilege or exemption."

Further Amendments made.

Bill to be read the third time upon *Monday* next.

OATHS BILL.—[BILL 7.]

(*Mr. Bradlaugh, Sir John Simon, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Courtney Kenny, Mr. Burt, Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Richard, Colonel Eyre, Mr. Jesse Collings.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause (Affirmation may be made instead of oath).

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Motion made and Question, "That the Chairman do leave the Chair, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Committee to report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

ACCUMULATIONS BILL—[BILL 55.]

(*Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Elton, Mr. Haldane.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. COZENS-HARDY (Norfolk, N.) said, that was the renewal of a Bill to which the House assented last Session, but which met with a less fortunate fate in "another place." In now asking the House to assent to the second reading, he did so in the belief that the Bill would effect a substantial improvement in the law, and that it would not be attended by any serious drawback. In support of the measure, there was a large mass of judicial opinion, and it had been carefully considered by a body whose opinion on matters of that kind deserved great weight, the body of solicitors represented by the Incorporated Law Society. That Society appointed a Committee to consider it, and the Committee had come to a resolution, that the Bill would remove much hardship, and that the proposed alteration of the law deserved support. Judge after Judge had declared that the present state of the law was attended with great inconvenience to families without corresponding advantage. He trusted the House would affirm the principle, and he would be content to leave all matters of detail to be dealt with by the Grand Committee on Law, or in any way the House might think right.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Cozens-Hardy.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, he trusted the House would not agree to the second reading. The Bill proposed to interfere in a very remarkable manner with the power of disposal over settled property, and to introduce a system that went far beyond anything that had been suggested or justified on substantial grounds in relation to settled property. It would have been just as well if the hon. Member had informed the House what his Bill had proposed to do. It was all very well to say that the Bill dealt with some abuse of the law that had been pointed out by the Court of Chancery; but, with all deference to his hon. Friend's experience and knowledge, he did not think the hon. Member could find a single Judge expressing an opinion which would justify the proposition in the Bill. Whether or not there should be some alteration in the Law of Settlement was quite another thing. Did the House know what the 1st clause enacted? It proposed that after the 1st of January next—

> "No person shall settle or dispose of any property in such manner that the rents, issues, profits, or income thereof shall be wholly or partially accumulated for any longer or other term than during the minority or respective minorities only of any person or persons who under the uses or trusts of the instrument directing such accumulation would for the time being, if of full age, be entitled to receive the rents, etc., so directed to be accumulated."

In other words, suppose property left by anybody, or settled by one person in favour of another, who might be 18 or 19 years of age, and although it might be most desirable that the income from such property should be allowed to accumulate for 8, 10, or 20 years, yet that which was done under the existing law should no longer be legal, and as soon as the person in whose favour the settlement was made came to the age of 21, he should have absolute control over that property. The hon. Gentleman had told the House that he had behind him the opinion of some body representing solicitors.

Mr. COZENS-HARDY: The Incorporated Law Society.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: But was the Incorporated Law Society prepared to recommend that there should be no power to settle property for 5, 6, or 10 years, assuming that the person in whose favour the settlement was made came of age within the time? This question was but a part of a very much larger question; it concerned the whole law in relation to real property. If it was desirable that there should be an amendment of the law, then the matter should be dealt with in its entirety, not by picking out one particular point of the law, and saying henceforth any person was prohibited from settling property for a term of years. If the hon. Member would tell the House the grounds upon which he suggested the alteration proposed, then the House would be able to judge his reasons; but it was to be hoped that anybody who took an interest in the matter would realize for himself the scope of the Bill before he gave his vote for it. It was not a measure to prevent unnecessary accumulations: it prohibited, without exception, any tying up of property beyond the coming of age of the testatee. Many Members must have known, within their experience, most useful settlements made until a person was 25 or 26 years of age, or even for longer periods; and cases would occur to many showing how desirable it was that the income from property should not be spent, having regard to the interests of young children. He would like to see any statement of the Incorporated Law Society proposing such a change as that in the Bill. They might have enunciated some proposition as to an alteration of the law, and that the law stood in need of amendment he would not for a moment deny; but it would be strange indeed if any Judge suggested that a Bill of this kind should pass.

Mr. HALDANE (Haddington) said, he must be allowed to express surprise at the attitude taken up by the Government in the person of the hon. and learned Attorney General. He was under the impression that last Session, at all events, this was very much a law-reforming Government; and he was also under the impression, though his memory might be deceiving him, that when this Bill came before the House last Session, it was read a second time with the assent of the Government, the Attorney General himself speaking in support of it——

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: I beg pardon. I did not speak in support of the Bill.

Mr. HALDANE said, then he must be under some misapprehension. But, in any event, the Government did not offer any opposition to the Bill last year. He remembered distinctly its passing through the House, and it was only in the House of Lords that it was stopped.

The hon. and learned Gentleman said this was a very odd Bill, and he objected to piecemeal amendment of the law. But, with all deference to the great weight of the authority of the Attorney General, this was not an objection that might fairly be urged against the Bill. The very point the Bill dealt with was dealt with in the existing law by a single Statute which was known as the "Thellusson Act," which was passed to prevent accumulations by testators tying up property to any extent. It gave two classes of periods, beyond which accumulation was prohibited—the minority of individuals, or an absolute period of 21 years. All that the present Bill tried to do was to get rid of the absolute period of 21 years, and to keep testators to the minority. The Attorney General said he should like to hear it supported by any legal opinion of eminence, and he could supply the hon. and learned Gentleman with the opinions of two of the most distinguished conveyancing Judges who had sat on the Bench during the last half-century. Mr. Justice Pearson, speaking in reference to the case "Collins *v.* Collins," not long before he died, said—

> "To my mind, and with all the experience I have had of the effect of accumulations, I think they are mischievous."

In another case, the same learned Judge said—

> "I am steadily opposed to all these practices of accumulations of incomes; they are always more or less mischievous, but, at the same time, they are legal. According to my mind, such trusts for accumulations are always unjust, but I have no jurisdiction to set them aside."

Again, the late Vice Chancellor Malins, in reference to the case "Havelock *v.* Havelock," expressed a similar opinion against tying up incomes beyond the period of minority, an opinion which he said he shared in common with all Judges and, he believed, all counsel of experience; he would always discourage such accumulations, and cut them down as much as possible. That was all the Bill proposed to do, to take away the absolute period of 21 years; there was no rational reason for taking that period independently of any period of minority. He could give, not merely the recommendations of Judges, but of many others who, on the question of real property law reform, had made

recommendations to the same effect. This was a very simple Bill; it passed the House last year, and he saw no reason why it should not again. An hon. Friend having referred him to the passage in *Hansard*, he now found that, after his hon. Friend the Member for North Norfolk last Session moved the second reading, the Attorney General was reported to have said—

> "I trust the House will allow this Bill to be read a second time——"

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: Will the hon. Member read on?

Mr. HALDANE said, he was about to do so. The hon. and learned Gentleman continued—

> "Before the question is decided, however, I just wish to say that I am not quite sure that the measure does not go too far in reference to the matter of time. If the hon. Member will put off the Committee stage to some period which will give time for the consideration of clauses, and enable us to propose Amendments, if necessary, there will be no opposition to the second reading."—(3 *Hansard*, [312] 1449.)

The Bill was put off as suggested; but no Amendments were moved. The Bill went to the House of Lords, and there, for some inexplicable reason, it was stopped. He trusted the House would assent to the second reading now, as it did before.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, that this Bill was one of those which, during last Session, used to come on very late, or in the small hours of the morning, and did not excite much attention. Certainly it was undesirable that undue periods of accumulation should be allowed; but it was an open question whether the Bill did not go too far. If his recollection was correct, the case cited in which Vice Chancellor Malins made the observations alluded to had reference to the point of making allowance for maintenance pending the minority of an infant. Of course, that was an everyday matter for the Court of Chancery to determine. The allusion of the Vice Chancellor was to that he thought, and could not be cited as an authority for cutting out the alternative periods now allowed. The hon. and learned Member opposite had spoken of the period of 21 years as irrational; but it was the period in which children just born would come of age. It might be irrational to treat children as coming of age at 21 years, but that was the only thing irrational he could see in the period. He did not think any real reason had been shown why the period of accumulation should be cut down as proposed, or that any great inconvenience had resulted from carrying out the Thellusson Act. He felt some hesitation in agreeing to the proposed alteration, and if the Government divided against the Bill he should support them.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday* 20th June.

TRAWLING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

[BILL 155.]

(*Mr. Hunter, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Esslemont.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [8th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, the object of the Bill was to prohibit trawling within the three-mile limit of the coast of Scotland as a general rule and principle, in accordance with the Report of the Royal Commission on Trawling. If there were, as there might be, cases in which it would be desirable that some exception or qualification should be introduced, Amendments to that effect might be conveniently made in Committee.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, the proposal in the Bill was absolutely to prohibit all trawling within the three-mile limit on the Scotch Coasts, and outside a line drawn across estuaries, putting an end, in fact, to all trawling within territorial limits. It was not the time of night to properly discuss what all must admit was a question of great importance. As the law stood, the Scotch Fishery Board had the power to do what the Bill proposed to do, if satisfied that at any place within territorial limits beam-trawling was injurious to the fishing industry generally. Such he took to be the power of the Board under the Act in reference to trawling, or they could shut up any place for the purpose of making experiments to satisfy themselves whether any mode of fishing was injurious to the fishing interest. In point of fact, under that clause, the Fishery Board had been engaged in numerous experiments; they had shut up fisheries in certain parts of territorial waters, and from time to time they had re-opened them. Nothing could be clearer than that the Act of 1885 contemplated such experiments for the purpose of arriving at satisfactory conclusions, and nothing also could be more clear than that in such a matter it was not possible to come to any clear decision without full and complete experiments, extending over a considerable period of time. The Fishery Board, at the present time, had responsibility under the Act of 1885, and they had not yet seen fit to come to any conclusion that this mode of fishing was generally injurious or otherwise. Under the Act of 1885 they could have proceeded to take steps for doing exactly the same thing as the Bill proposed to do—shutting up beam-trawl fishing throughout all the territorial waters of Scotland. They had not yet done so, nor had they yet laid before Parliament the results of their experiments in any form to enable Parliament to judge what the effect of such a step would be, and the expediency of taking it. Many people had expressed a most decided opinion that no further experiments were necessary; and, relying on their personal knowledge or information they had derived from various sources, they believed a Bill of this kind should be passed. But then there were also a great number of people who entertained an entirely different opinion; and, undoubtedly, up to the present time it had not been ascertained by experiment, that it was quite clear that the powers of the Fishery Board to stop trawling ought to be exercised. He thought, therefore, the Bill was, in the first place, premature; but his main principle of objection was not whether or not ultimately beam-trawling ought to be stopped in territorial waters—he put his objection to the Bill on the ground that a large sum of money had been invested in the beam-trawling industry, and that industry ought not to be destroyed until by complete experiments it had been ascertained that, in the interest of Scotch fishing generally, it ought to be abolished. That was only common sense and reason. He would not deny that it was possible it might turn out that beam-trawling was injurious to fishing within territorial waters; but if that should appear to be the case, then, with the consent of everybody in the House, beam-trawling would be abolished. But the Legislature, in the Act of 1885, had given the Fishery Board power to make experiments, and stop any mode of fishing proved objectionable, and there was, therefore, no need for the Bill. Time must be occupied to arrive at any definite and fair result. He was sure his hon. Friend (Mr. Hunter) did not wish to put an end to an industry before it could be shown that it was detrimental to other industries. It would be premature to decide in the present state of matters that that was so, and to ask Parliament to step in and by direct Act prohibit this mode of fishing for all time. He did not think his hon. Friend should press the Bill, and meantime the Fishery Board would proceed with their experiments.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire) said, he desired to support the second reading. He was a Member of the Trawling Commission, and could say that the recommendation the Commission came to, that power should be given to the Fishery Board to stop trawling in territorial waters, was a recommendation arrived at in the manner usual on Commissions, by way of compromise. Members who had served on Committees and Commissions would know that a great deal had to be done in the way of compromise. No doubt, many Members of the Commission held the view strongly that trawling ought to be stopped within territorial waters altogether; but, at the same time, they gave way to the views of other Members of the Commission on the point. But he was certain that it was proved before the Commission that trawling within territorial waters was attended with the greatest possible amount of harm to fishing generally, and the least possible amount of good. The Lord Advocate had alluded to the loss to the trawl-fishing industry if trawl-fishing within territorial waters were prohibited; but the amount of trawling carried on within the territorial waters of Scotland was very small, and he believed that trawlers themselves in England and Scotland would object very little to trawling being stopped in territorial waters. But it was there that the greatest amount of interference was caused by the action of the trawls with other classes of fishermen. What should be looked at in these fishing matters was to secure that one class of fishermen exercised their industry with the least interference to others. Within the territorial waters the amount of trawl-fishing was very small indeed; whereas the amount of fishing carried on by long line and by drift nets was very much greater, so by the prohibition of trawling there would be but little interference with one branch of the industry, and a great benefit conferred on fishing by net and line. As to the opinions of scientific men, he believed that the scientific representative of the Board, Professor Cossar Ewart, held a strong opinion in favour of the prohibition, and so he was quite sure did Professors Macintosh and Ray Lankester. He challenged the Lord Advocate to cite professional opinions in regard to this matter. The question should not be decided by the amount of damage done by trawling to food fishes; but he was certain that if trawling did do damage to food fishes, it was greatest in the shallow waters, where the young fish came in their earliest stages. He was certain that a large number of immature fish were destroyed by trawling. But he did not want to go into this at length, for he hoped there would be time to take a Division. The principle of the Bill he thought the majority would admit, and he urged the Government to accept the second reading, leaving minor questions for Committee.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) said, he thought the question raised required more consideration than it could receive at that time. The amount of good or harm done by trawling was an open question. Personally, he disliked the beam-trawlers; but in Solway Firth, with which he was best acquainted, there was a wide area of shallow water, and there was a considerable amount of trawling. Southern fishermen had found out that fish were plentiful in this shallow water, and numbers of small craft came from far south to fish there. From their point of view, trawlers did a good deal of harm. But, on the other hand, it was said that the trawls did good by turning up the bottom and providing food for young fish. With a wide area of shallow water, some miles in extent, there should be some distinction made from other seas, and he gathered that his hon. Friend (Mr. Hunter) would be disposed to consider such points in Committee, should the Bill get so far. However, he should prefer a longer discussion, if he could see his way to support the Bill. He hoped if a Division was taken it would not be upon the merits of the Bill, but rather upon whether time should be given to consider it more fully. He would therefore move that the debate be now adjourned.

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) seconded the Motion. He should have expected that when such tremendous restrictions were sought to be imposed upon beam-trawling much more would have been stated against it. When he saw the Bill, he was perfectly astonished at the utter recklessness with which the rights of this class of fishermen were sought to be interfered with.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now proceeding to discuss the Bill. The Motion before the House is the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Mark Stewart*).

The House *divided:*—Ayes 87; Noes 53: Majority 34.—(Div. List, No. 145.)

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

——o——

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT (1855) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Herbert Gardner, Bill to amend "The Public Libraries Act, 1855," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Arthur Acland, and Sir Lewis Pelly.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 292.]

CORN AVERAGES.

Select Committee *appointed,* "to inquire into the present system of ascertaining the official average price of Corn in the United Kingdom, and to report what alterations, if any, are expedient."—(*Mr. Jasper More.*)

It being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

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COCHRANE-BAILLIE, Hon. C. W. A. N., *St. Pancras, N.*
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COGHILL, Mr. D. H., *Newcastle-under-Lyme*
Libel Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1269

COLERIDGE, Lord (Lord Chief Justice of England)
Clergy Discipline, Committee (on Re-commitment), Amendt. 10; 3R. 1815
Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—Sentence on Mr. Condon, M.P. 1501

COLERIDGE, Hon. B., *Sheffield, Attercliffe*
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COLLINGS, Mr. J., *Birmingham, Bordesley*
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COLMAN, Mr. J. J., *Norwich*
Public Health—Spread of Small-Pox in Sheffield, 940

COLOMB, Sir J. C. R., *Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.*
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COLONIES—Under Secretary of State (*see* DE WORMS, Baron H.)

COMMINS, Mr. A., *Roscommon, S.*
Ballina and Killala Railway and Harbour, 2R. 1350
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Reconciliation to the See of Rome—13 Eliz. c. 2—Peter's Pence—25 Henry VIII. c. 21, 1407

COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION—Vice President (*see* DYKE, Right Hon. Sir W. H.)

Companies Clauses Consolidation Act (1845) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Arthur Acland, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Frederick Mappin, Mr. Robert Reid*)
c. Read 2° * *June* 6 [Bill 230]

Companies &c. Act, 1862—*Liquidation of Companies*
Question, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *May* 17, 530

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—The Pleuro-Pneumonia Slaughter Order
Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, Viscount Lewisham *June* 7, 1389

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Pleuro-Pneumonia in Cattle
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *May* 11, to leave out from "That," add "no Committee of Inquiry into Pleuro-pneumonia in Cattle will be satisfactory which is not specially empowered to conduct practical experiments, with the view of ascertaining the value of inoculation, and the characteristics of the disease" (*Mr. Hozier*), 71; Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after debate, [House counted out]

CONWAY, Mr. M., *Leitrim, N.*
Ireland—Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Conviction of James M'Keon for Re-entry, 546, 547

CONYBEARE, Mr. C. A. V., *Cornwall, Camborne*
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Supply—Education Estimates, 1695
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Secretary of State for the Colonies, &c. 974, 975, 977, 979
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COOKE, Mr. C. W. R., *Newington, W.*
Libel Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1262; *cl.* 4, 1293, 1295; *cl.* 5, 1308

Copyright (Musical Compositions) Bill
(*The Earl of Onslow*)
l. Report * *May* 14 (No. 92)
Read 3ᵃ * *May* 15

CORBET, Mr. W. J., *Wicklow, E.*
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Cork and Bandon Railway Bill
c. As amended, deferred *May* 14, 121

Corn Averages
Select Committee appointed, "to inquire into the present system of ascertaining the official average price of Corn in the United Kingdom, and to report what alterations, if any, are expedient" (*Mr. Jasper More*) *June* 12

Coroners Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Read 2ᵃ, after short debate *May* 15, 287 (No. 36)

COSSHAM, Mr. H., *Bristol, E.*
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Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. *cl.* 2, 1760, 1765, 1770
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COTTON, Capt. E. T. D., *Cheshire, Wirral*
Defences of the Empire—Armament of the Spithead Forts, 1683
Imperial Defence [Expenses], Comm. 1113
War Office—Sale of Whitworth's Steel Ingots to France, 1682

County Courts Consolidation and Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*Mr. Attorney General*)
c. Report of Standing Committee on Law, &c. *May* 14 [No. 172]
As amended, deferred *June* 4, 1147
As amended, deferred *June* 7, 1495

County Courts Consolidation and Amendment [Salary]
Considered in Committee *June* 7, 1496
Moved, "That it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a salary to any Registrar of a County Court, who may be required to give his whole time to the public service, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to consolidate and amend the County Court Acts;" Question put, and agreed to; Resolution reported *June* 8

Courtney, Mr. L. H. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Cornwall, Bodmin*
Ballina and Killala Railway and Harbour, 2R. 1356, 1361
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Conviction of Mr. Dillon, M.P. 139
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Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Comm. *cl.* 1, 209, 210, 236, 253, 254, 259, 260, 264
Small Holdings, 2R. 466, 474
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 594, 601, 626, 627
Privy Council and Subordinate Departments, 1000
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Secretary of State for the Colonies, &c. 975, 977, 981, 983, 989
Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation, 2R, 129, 131, 139; Select Committee, 293, 297, 300
Uncovenanted Civil Service of India, Res. 1641

Court of Session and Bill Chamber (Scotland) (Clerks) Bill
(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 17 [Bill 269]

Cozens-Hardy, Mr. H. H., *Norfolk, N.*
Accumulations, 2R. 1948, 1949

Cranborne, Viscount, *Lancashire, N.E., Darwen*
Elementary Education Acts—Report of the Royal Commission, 1538
Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. *cl.* 2, 1598

Cranbrook, Viscount (Lord President of the Council)
Clergy Discipline, Comm. (on Re commitment), *cl.* 2, 25
Public Health—Suppression of Rabies in Dogs, 111

Crawford, Mr. D., *Lanark, N.E.*
Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen, 2R. 724
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Crawford, Mr. W., *Durham, Mid*
Colliery Explosions—St. Helen's Colliery—The Inquest, 1017

Cremer, Mr. W. R., *Shoreditch, Haggerston*
Imperial Defence [Expenses], Comm. 404, 409, 1102
Parliament—Business of the House (Notices of Motion), Res. 354
Parliament—Sittings and Adjournment of the House—Whitsuntide Recess, 675

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment (No. 3) Bill
(*Dr. Clark, Mr. Angus Sutherland, Dr. Macdonald, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 11 [Bill 261]

Cross, Viscount (Secretary of State for India)
Glebe Lands, Comm. *cl.* 1, 285; *cl.* 6, 287; *cl.* 8, Amendt. *ib.*; *cl.* 9, Amendt. *ib*
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Crossman, Major General Sir W., *Portsmouth*
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Crown Rents and Royalties—Gold and Silver Mines
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Curzon, Hon. G. N., *Lancashire, Southport*
Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. *cl.* 2, 1846

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Customs Department—Civil Service Writers, Question, Mr. Provand; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *May* 17, 541
Custom House Officers—Hours of Attendance, Question, Mr. Forrest Fulton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *May* 11, 39
Examination of Passengers' Luggage at Liverpool, &c. Question, Mr. Woodall; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *June* 7, 1378
Importation of Unwholesome Tea — Coffein, Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 11, 36

Customs and Inland Revenue Bill
(*The Marquess of Salisbury*)
l. Read 3^a* *May* 11 (No. 95)
Royal Assent *May* 16 [51 *Vict.* c. 8]

Customs, Isle of Man, Bill
(*The Marquess of Salisbury*)
l. Royal Assent *May* 16 [51 *Vict.* c. 7]

Customs (Wine Duty) Bill
(*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Resolutions in Committee *June* 11
Resolutions reported, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1^o * *June* 12 [Bill 293]

Dangerous Performances—Female Aëronaut at the Crystal Palace
Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *June* 7, 1387

DARLING, Mr. C. J., *Deptford*
Libel Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, 1255; *cl.* 4, Amendt. 1285, 1299
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DE LISLE, Mr. E. J. L. M. P., *Leicestershire, Mid*
North American Fisheries—Rights of Fishing on the Coast of Labrador, 1524

DENMAN, Lord
Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—Sentence on Mr. Condon, M.P. 1508
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Depression of Trade—The Nailmakers of Worcester and Staffordshire
Question, Mr. Brooke Robinson; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) *June* 4, 1014

DERBY, Earl of
Australian Colonies—Admission of Chinese Immigrants, Motion for an Address, 1517

DE WORMS, Baron H. (Under Secretary of State for the Colonies), *Liverpool, East Toxteth*
Africa (Cape Coast)—Municipal Institutions, &c. 1710
Africa (South)—Reported Disturbances in Zululand, 1182

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America—North American Fisheries—Rights of Fishing on the Coast of Labrador, 1524
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Cape Colony—Offices of High Commissioner and Governor, 1016
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DILLON, Mr. J., *Mayo, E.*
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DILLWYN, Mr. L. L., *Swansea, Town*
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DIMSDALE, Baron R., *Herts, Hitchin*
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Consular Official at Massowah, Question, Mr. King; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *May* 11, 31
The Hospitals at Constantinople and Smyrna—Fees, Question, Colonel Hill; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *May* 15, 307

Distress for Rent (Dublin) Bill
(*Mr. Murphy, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Captain M'Calmont, Mr. T. Harrington*)
c. Committee—R.P. *June* 5 [Bill 159]
Committee *—R.P. *June* 6

DIXON, Mr. G., *Birmingham, Edgbaston*
Working Classes—"Self-Contained Industrial Dwellings," 1685

Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill
(*Mr. Jackson, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*)
c. Ordered; read 1^o * *June* 4 [Bill 277]

DUFF, Mr. R. W., *Banffshire*
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Dugdale, Mr. J. S., *Warwickshire, Nuneaton*
Army (Small Arms)—Removal of Manufactory from Sparkbrook, Birmingham, to Enfield, 881
Reformatory Schools Act (1866) Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 873, 1311

Duncan, Colonel F., *Finsbury, Holborn*
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Dunraven, Earl of
Australian Colonies—Admission of Chinese Immigrants, Motion for an Address, Amendt. 1512

Dyke, Right Hon. Sir W. H. (Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education), *Kent, Dartford*
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Ebrington, Viscount, *Devon, Tavistock*
Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. *cl.* 1, 1578 ; *cl.* 2, 1800
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Regina *v.* Harkins and Callan, Res. 1223, 1228, 1232

Education Department (England and Wales) (*Questions*)
Elementary Education Acts—Report of the Royal Commission, Question, Viscount Cranborne ; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) *June* 8, 1538
Inspected Schools—Average Attendance, &c.—Returns, Question, Mr. Hoyle ; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *June* 4, 1031
Secondary Schools—Registration of Teachers, Question, Sir Richard Temple ; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) *May* 14, 164
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(Sir William Hart Dyke) *May* 15, 306 ; *May* 18, 686 ; Question, Sir Guyer Hunter ; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) *June* 11, 1697

Egerton, Hon. A. de T., *Cheshire, Knutsford*
Hospital Sunday (Metropolis)—Collections in Parks and Open Spaces, 1823
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  Access to Hyde Park, 1691
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Egypt (*Questions*)
Expenditure—Civil and Military, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *June* 4, 1015
The Ministry—Retirement of Nubar Pasha, Question, Mr. John Morley ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *June* 12, 1830
The Suez Canal—Register and Tonnage of Steam Vessels, Question, Captain Colomb ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms) *May* 11, 34

Electric Lighting Act 1882) Amendment Bill [H.L.] (*Mr. Mundella*)
c. Committee—R.P. *May* 31, 873 [Bill 233]
Committee ; Report *June* 11, 1806

Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Birmingham) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord President*)
l. Presented ; read 1ª* *May* 18 (No. 101)
Read 2ª * *June* 8

Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord President*)
l. Presented ; read 1ª* *May* 11 (No. 102)
Read 2ª* *June* 8

Elliot, Hon. H. F. H., *Ayrshire, N.*
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Ellis, Mr. J., *Leicestershire, Bosworth*
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Ellis, Mr. J. E., *Nottingham, Rushcliffe*
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ELLIS, Mr. T. E., *Merionethshire*
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ELPHINSTONE, Lord
Imperial Defences—Defences at Vancouver's Island, 1673

Emigration—Assisted Emigration from Scotland
Question, Mr. Esslemont; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *May* 17, 540

Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen Bill
(*Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Forwood*)
c. 2R. deferred *May* 14, 264 [Bill 145]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *May* 17, 635; after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Fenwick*); after further short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *May* 18, 702; after debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°
Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 31, 750
Committee deferred *June* 7, 1494

Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen [Remuneration]
c. Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) *June* 4, 1148
Res. considered in Committee, and agreed to *June* 7, 1498

Enniskillen, Bundoran, and Sligo Railway Bill (by Order)
c. Read 2° *June* 6, 1237

ESSLEMONT, Mr. P., *Aberdeenshire, E.*
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EWART, Sir W., *Belfast, N.*
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Excise Duties (Local Purposes) Bill
Cart and Wheel Taxes — Farmers' Locomotives — Market Gardeners, Questions, Major Rasch, The Marquess of Carmarthen; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 11, 32
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EYRE, Colonel H., *Lincolnshire, Gainsborough*
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Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment (Scotland) Bill
(*V. Gordon, E. Aberdeen*)
l. Read 2ª, after short debate *May* 15, 277
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FARQUHARSON, Dr. R., *Aberdeenshire, W.*
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FENWICK, Mr. C., *Northumberland, Wansbeck*
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- Africa (South)—Transvaal Republic and the New Republic—Treaty of Union, 144
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- Australia—New South Wales—Chinese Immigrants, 751
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- British Guiana—Construction of a Railway from Guacipati to the Orinoco, 878
  - Detention of Mr. M'Turk, 879
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  - Hospitals at Constantinople and Smyrna—Fees, 307
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Moved, "That it is expedient to ratify an Agreement for Naval Defence made between Her Majesty's Government and the Governments of Her Majesty's Australasian Colonies" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *May* 15, 359; after debate, Question put; A. 85, N. 37; M. 48 (D. L. 111)
Moved, "That it is expedient to authorise the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of such sums, not exceeding £850,000, as may be required for building, arming, and completing the vessels mentioned in the Agreement" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 399; after debate, Question put; A. 92, N. 48; M. 44 (D. L. 112)
Moved, "That the sums so issued shall be repaid to the Consolidated Fund, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for Naval Services, by an annuity of such amount as will repay the same, with interest at three per cent per annum, within twelve years" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*); after short debate, Question put, and agreed to
(4.) Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to raise such sums by means of terminable annuities charged on the Consolidated Fund
Moved, "That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums not exceeding £2,600,000 as may be required for the defence of certain Ports and Coaling Stations, and making further provisions for Imperial Defence" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*); after debate, Committee—R.P.
Matter considered in Committee *June* 4, 1033
Moved, "That it is expedient to authorize the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums, not exceeding £2,600,000, as may be required for the defence of certain Ports and Coaling Stations, and making further provisions for Imperial Defence" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*); after debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. Waddy*); Question put, and agreed to; Question put accordingly; A. 206, N. 85; M. 121
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Moved, "That interest at the rate of three per centum per annum on such or so much of the said sum as may be borrowed shall be paid out of the moneys to be provided by Parliament for Army Services" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1124; after short debate, Question put; A. 216, N. 136; M. 80 (D. L. 126)
Moved, "That, after 1894, all dividends received by the Treasury in respect of Suez Canal Shares, after deduction of the sum required for paying off the bonds issued for the purchase of such shares, be applied in paying the principal of the amount borrowed" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 1131; after short debate, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House [See title *National Defence*]

India—Secretary of State (*see* Cross, Viscount)

India—Under Secretary of State (*see* Gorst, Sir J. E.)

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Legislative Council—The Calcutta Municipality Bill, Question, Mr. Arthur Williams; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *May* 14, 157
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Mr. Tayler, late Commissioner of Patna, Questions, Sir Roper Lethbridge; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *June* 5, 1171
Nagpur—The Gond Raja, Question, Sir Roper Lethbridge; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *June* 7, 1371
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Public Works Department—Officials in Service of Private Companies, Question, Mr. Mallock; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *May* 14, 156
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Thibet—The "Forward" Policy, Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *June* 11, 1711

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India—East India (*Contagious Diseases Acts*)

Question, Mr. Stansfeld; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *May* 14, 207; Observations, Sir John Kennaway *May* 15, 444; Question, The Marquess of Ripon; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Viscount Cross) *May* 15, 266; Questions, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Stansfeld; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *May* 17, 542; Question, Mr. M'Laren; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *June* 1, 880; Questions, Sir Richard Temple; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst), Mr. Speaker *June* 5, 1185

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, any mere suspension of measures for the compulsory examination of women, and for licensing and regulating prostitution in India, is insufficient, and the legislation which enjoins, authorises, or permits such measures ought to be repealed" (*Mr. Walter M'Laren*) *June* 5, 1187; after debate, Resolution agreed to

India—East India (*Hyderabad Deccan Mining Company*)—*The Committee*

Question, Sir Roper Lethbridge; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *May* 11, 43

First Report:—Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed [No. 177]

Moved, "That the Select Committee on East India (Hyderabad Deccan Mining Company) have leave to hear Counsel (to such extent as they shall think fit) upon the matters referred to them" (*Sir Henry James*) *May* 17, 1517; Question put, and agreed to

India—The Uncovenanted Civil Service

Amendt. on Committee of Ways and Means *June* 8, to leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, it is inequitable and anomalous that privileges as regards leave and retirement should be refused to some classes of Officers in the Uncovenanted Civil Service of India which are enjoyed by others in similar circumstances; and that, in view of the heavy fall in the value of the rupee, the payment of pensions of retired European Uncovenanted Officers in England at the official rate of exchange is no longer equitable" (*Mr. King*) *v.*, 1601; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 166; N. 55; M. 111 (D. L. 135)

Intermediate Education (Wales) Bill

(*Mr. Mundella, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Richard, Sir Hussey Vivian, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Stuart Rendel, Mr. William Abraham*)

c. 2R. deferred *June* 11, 1806 [Bill 61]

IRELAND (*Questions*)

Arms (*Ireland*) *Act*, 1881—*Gun Licences*, Questions, Mr. Gilhooly; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *June* 7, 1376

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Army (*Ireland*)—*Refusing to Billet Soldiers*, Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Chief Secretary *June* 11, 1707

Dispensaries—Local Dispensaries Committee, Clones Union—Joseph Graydon, Questions, Mr. H. Campbell, Mr. Edward Harrington, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Chief Secretary *May* 14, 160

Excise—Licence of a Marquee, Hollymount, Co. Mayo, Questions, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, Colonel Nolan; Answers, The Chief Secretary *June* 7, 1367

Executive—The Lord Lieutenant—The Lords Justices, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary *June* 8, 1527

Franchise Act (*Ireland*), 1884—*Preparation and Service of Requisition Forms*, Question, Mr. D. Sullivan; Answer, The Chief Secretary *May* 17, 536;—*Duties of the Poor's Rate Collectors*, Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, The Chief Secretary *June* 11, 1704

Horsebreeding, &c.—The Grant of £5,000, Question, Mr. Johnston; Answer, The Chief Secretary *June* 11, 1685

Irish Industries—Lectures on Lacemaking, Question, Mr. R. Power; Answer, The Chief Secretary *May* 14, 149

Irish Railways, Committee on, Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *June* 7, 1409

Licensing Act (*Ireland*)—*Convictions at Macroom Petty Sessions*, Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Chief Secretary *June* 12, 1824

Newtownards Farmers' Association—Interrupted Meeting, Questions, Mr. M'Cartan; Answers, The Chief Secretary *June* 5, 1175; *June* 7, 1396

Public Meetings—Alleged Refusal of a Public Hall at Newtownards to Mr. John Dillon, Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Chief Secretary *May* 31, 746

Rumoured Establishment of a Catholic College, Question, Mr. Waddy; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 11, 49

Towns Improvement (*Ireland*) *Act—Tullamore*, Question, Dr. Fox; Answer, The Chief Secretary *June* 11, 1705

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887

Conviction of Mr. Condon; Letter received by Mr. Deputy Speaker *May* 14, 139

Imprisonment of Mr. Condon; Letter received by Mr. Speaker *May* 31, 746

Sentence on Mr. Condon, Question, Observations, Lord Coleridge; Reply, The Lord Chancellor of Ireland (Lord Ashbourne); short debate thereon *June* 8, 1501

Conviction of Mr. Dillon; Letter received by Mr. Deputy Speaker *May* 14, 139

Trial and Sentence on Mr. Dillon, M.P., Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *May* 15, 325

Conviction of James M'Keon for Re-entry, Questions, Mr. Conway; Answers, The Chief Secretary *May* 17, 546

Convictions for Conspiracy—The Evidence, Questions, Mr. W. E. Gladstone, Mr. Clancy; Answers, The Chief Secretary *June* 11, 1708

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IRELAND—*Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act*, 1887—cont.
  Imprisonment of Mr. James Kilmartin, Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Chief Secretary *June* 7, 1390;—*Eviction of James Kilmartin, Ballinasloe*, Questions, Mr. Harris; Answers, The Chief Secretary *June* 7, 1393; *June* 11, 1694
  Persons Proceeded Against, &c.—Return, Question, Mr. John Morley; Answer, The Chief Secretary *May* 15, 333
  Refusal to give Evidence, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Clancy, Mr. M'Cartan; Answers, The Chief Secretary *June* 7, 1382; Question, Mr. Shaw Lefevre; Answer, The Chief Secretary *June* 11, 1709

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  Supersession of the Ballinasloe Board of Guardians, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chief Secretary *May* 31, 750

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  Labourers' Cottages—The Killarney Board of Guardians, Question, Mr. Sheehan; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *June* 12, 1824

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  Clause 24—The Waterford Estate, Co. Derry, Question, Mr. Mulholland; Answer, The Chief Secretary *June* 5, 1160; Question, Mr. Mulholland; Answer, Viscount Lewisham *June* 7, 1386

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Law and Justice—Regina v. *Harkins and Callan*
Moved, "That there be laid before this House Copies of a Statement made to Mr. Cuffe, Assistant Solicitor to the Treasury, by Mr. Joseph Nolan, M.P., on the 11th day of January, 1888, with reference to the case of Regina *v.* Harkins and Callan:
And, of a Transcript of the Shorthand Writer's Notes of the Evidence given by Mr. Joseph Nolan, M.P., at the trial of the case of Regina *v.* Harkins and Callan at the Central Criminal Court" (*Mr. Stuart-Wortley*) *June* 5, 1216; after debate, Debate adjourned

LAW AND POLICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) (*Questions*)
Bow Street and Marlborough Street Police Courts, Question, Mr. Lawson; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) *May* 11, 35
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c. Read 1° * *June* 5 [Bill 283]

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Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *June* 4, 1030

LEIGHTON, Mr. S., *Shropshire, Oswestry*
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(*The Lord Herschell*)
l. Report of Select Committee *May* 14 [No. 110]
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Report * *May* 14

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Libel Law Amendment Bill
(*Sir Algernon Borthwick, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Jennings, Dr. Cameron, Mr. John Morley*)
c. Committee—R.P. *June* 6, 1237 [Bill 7]

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Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. 1474; *cl.* 2, 1774
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Lloyd's Signal Stations Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Onslow*)
l. Read 2ª *May* 15, 277 (No. 84)

Local Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Ashbourne*)
l. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª" *May* 15, 279
Moved, "That the further debate be adjourned" (*The Lord Fitzgerald*); after short debate, on Question? Resolved in the negative; Original Motion agreed to; Bill read 2ª (No. 93)

Local Government Board—President (*see* Ritchie, Right Hon. C. T.)

Local Government Board—Secretary to (*see* Long, Mr. W. H.)

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill
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Central Criminal Court—Officers, &c., Question, Mr. Firth; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 14, 158
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Section 15 — Main Roads and Footpaths, Question, Mr. F. Parker; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *June* 7, 1369
Section 46—Highways in South Wales, Question, Mr. Arthur Williams; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *June* 5, 1162
The Solicitor General at Southampton, Questions, Mr. Anderson; Answers, The Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) *June* 5, 1171

The County Councils
Borrowing Powers of County Councils, Questions, Mr. Stephens, Mr. Firth; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *June* 4, 1011
Clause 3 — Town Councils, Question, Mr. Hulse; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *May* 14, 155
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The Licensing Clauses
Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *June* 4, 1011
Estimate of Value of Public-House Property, Questions, Mr. Summers, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), Mr. Speaker *June* 8, 1537
Legal Right to Renewal, Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) [Further Questions thereon] *May* 17, 558
Licence Duties, Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *June* 5, 1173; Question, Mr. Summers; Answer, The Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) *June* 7, 1406

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Local Government (England and Wales) Bill—The Licensing Clauses—cont.
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Withdrawal of the Licensing Clauses, Statement, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie); Observations, Mr. J. C. Stevenson, Mr. Stansfeld *June* 12, 1832

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill
(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Long*)
c. Order for Committee read *June* 7, 1440
Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert provisions for the reform of parish vestries" (*Mr. Francis Stevenson*), 1457; after long debate, Question put; A. 183, N. 229; M. 46
Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1490
Committee [First Night]—R.P. [Bill 182]
Committee [Second Night]—R.P. *June* 8, 1547
Committee [Third Night]—R.P. *June* 11, 1718
Committee [Fourth Night]—R.P. *June* 12, 1834

Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill (*Lord Balfour*)
l. Read 1^{a} *May* 11, 7 (No. 103)
Read 2^{a}, after short debate *May* 14, 118
Committee: Report; read 3^{a}, after short debate *May* 15, 267
Royal Assent *May* 16 [51 *Vict.* c. 10]

Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill—Rating of Occupiers
Question, Mr. Handel Cossham; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *May* 14, 171

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Ballymoney, &c.) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Privy Seal*)
l. Read 2^{a} * *June* 8 (No. 97)

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Bangor and Warrenpoint) Bill [H.L.]
c. Report * *June* 7 [Bill 225]
Read 3° * *June* 8

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Coleraine, &c.) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord President, for The Lord Privy Seal*)
l. Committee; Report *May* 14 (No. 63)
Read 3^{a} * *May* 15

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Dublin Markets) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Privy Seal*)
l. Read 2^{a} * *May* 15 (No. 85)
Committee *; Report *June* 7
Read 3^{a} * *June* 8
c. Read 1° * *June* 11 [Bill 291]

Local Government Provisional Orders Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Report * *May* 11 [Bill 213]
Read 3° * *May* 14
l. Read 1^{a} * (*E. Brownlow*) *May* 15 (No. 113)
Read 2^{a} * *June* 8
Committee *; Report *June* 11

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Report * *May* 11 [Bill 214]
Read 3° * *May* 14
l. Read 1^{a} * (*E. Brownlow*) *May* 15 (No. 114)
Read 2^{a} * *June* 8
Committee *; Report *June* 11

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 15 [Bill 249]
Report * *June* 7
Read 3° * *June* 8
l. Read 1^{a} * (*L. Balfour*) *June* 11 (No. 139)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 16 [Bill 250]
Report * *June* 7
Read 3° * *June* 8
l. Read 1^{a} * (*L. Balfour*) *June* 11 (No. 140)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 16 [Bill 265]
Read 2° * *June* 1

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 16 [Bill 266]
Read 2° * *June* 1

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 16 [Bill 267]
Read 2° * *June* 1
Report * *June* 12

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 18 [Bill 271]
Read 2° * *June* 5

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *June* 1 [Bill 274]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *June* 1 [Bill 275]
Read 2° * *June* 12

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *June* 1 [Bill 276]
Read 2° * *June* 12

Local Government Provisional Order (No. 12) Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *June* 6 [Bill 283]

Local Government Provisional Order (No. 13) Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *June* 8 [Bill 287]

Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 15 [Bill 252]
Report * *June* 7
Read 3° * *June* 8
l. Read 1ª * (*L. Balfour*) *June* 11 (No. 142)

Local Government Provisional Orders (Highways) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 11 [Bill 258]
Read 2° * *June* 1
Report * *June* 12

Local Government Provisional Order (Port) Bill (*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 11 [Bill 259]
Read 2° * *June* 1
Report * *June* 12

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Report * *May* 11 [Bill 215]
Read 3° * *May* 14
l. Read 1ª * (*E. Brownlow*) *May* 15 (No. 115)
Read 2ª * *June* 8
Committee * ; Report *June* 11

Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bil
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Report * *May* 11 [Bill 216]
Read 3° * *May* 14
l. Read 1ª * (*E. Brownlow*) *May* 15 (No. 116)
Read 2ª * *June* 8
Committee * ; Report *June* 11

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 3) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Report * *May* 11 [Bill 217]
Read 3° * *May* 14
l. Read 1ª * (*E. Brownlow*) *May* 15 (No. 117)
Read 2ª * *June* 8
Committee * ; Report *June* 11

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 4) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Report * *May* 11 [Bill 218]
Considered * *May* 14
Read 3° * *May* 15
l. Read 1ª * (*L. Balfour*) *June* 4 (No. 120)
Read 2ª * *June* 12

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 5) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Report * *May* 11 [Bill 219]
Considered * *May* 14
Read 3° * *May* 15
l. Read 1ª * (*L. Balfour*) *June* 4 (No. 121)
Read 2ª * *June* 12

Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 6) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 15 [Bill 251]
Report * *June* 7
Read 3° * *June* 8
l. Read 1ª * (*L. Balfour*) *June* 11 (No. 141)

Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 7) Bill
(*Mr. Long, Mr. Ritchie*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *May* 18 [Bill 272]
Read 2° * *June* 5

Lockwood, Mr. F., *York*
Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen, 2R. 661
Parliament—Privilege, Res. 189

London, Bishop of
Church Discipline—The Rev. Mr. Dale, of Chiswick, 1819
Clergy Discipline, Comm. (on Re-commitment), *cl.* 2, 25 ; *cl.* 3, *ib.* ; Report, 26 ; 3R. 1810, 1812
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Long, Mr. W. H. (Secretary to the Local Government Board), *Wilts, Devizes*
Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. 1464, 1465, 1472 ; *cl.* 2, 1769
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Lord Advocate, The (*see* Macdonald, Right Hon. J. H. A.)

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland — Chief Secretary to the (*see* Balfour, Right Hon. A. J.)

Lord President of the Council (*see* Cranbrook, Viscount)

Lord Privy Seal (*see* Cadogan, Earl)

LOTHIAN, Marquess of (Secretary for Scotland)
  Universities (Scotland), Comm. 1156; *cl.* 3, 1329; Amendt. 1330; *cl.* 5, 1332, 1333, 1334, 1335; *cl.* 6, 1337, 1338, 1339; *cl.* 10, 1340; *cl.* 14, *ib.* 1341, 1342; *add. cl. ib.* 1343, 1344; *cl.* 21, *ib.*; *cl.* 31, 1345
  Universities (Scotland), Statement, 1006, 1158

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(*Earl Brownlow*)

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Blackwall Tunnel, Question, Sir John Colomb; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton *June* 12, 1827

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Widening of Bond Street, Question, Mr. Cochrane-Baillie; Answer, Mr. Tatton Egerton *June* 11, 1690

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St. Giles-in-the-Fields—Vestry Meeting, Questions, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *June* 1, 880;—*Vestry Elections*, Questions, Mr. M'Cartan; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews), The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *June* 5, 1174

Metropolitan Commons (Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray) Provisional Order Bill

(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Secretary Matthews*)

c. Report * *May* 15 [Bill 193]
Considered * *May* 16
Read 3º * *May* 17
l. Read 1ª * (*E. Brownlow*) *June* 4 (No. 122)
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Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough) Provisional Order Bill

(*Earl Brownlow*)

l. Read 1ª * *May* 11 (No. 104)
Read 2ª * *June* 7
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Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill
(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Secretary Matthews*)
c. Report * *June* 4 [Bill 212]
Read 3° * *June* 5
l. Read 1ª * (*E. Brownlow*) *June* 7 (No. 134)

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MORGAN, Right Hon. G. Osborne, *Denbighshire, E.*
Local Government (England and Wales)—Section 8—Transfer of Powers to Burial Boards, 1388
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(*Mr. Attorney General*)
c. Report of Standing Committee on Law, &c. *June* 7, 1361 [No. 207]

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MUNDELLA, Right Hon. A. J., *Sheffield, Brightside*
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Municipal Boundaries (Dublin) Bill
(*Mr. Murphy, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Chance*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 16 [Bill 268]

Municipal Franchise Extension (Ireland) Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Denman*)
l. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª" *June* 5, 1157
Amendt. to leave out ("now,") add ("this day three months") (*The Lord Privy Seal*); on Question, Whether ("now,") &c.; resolved in the negative (No. 80)

MUNTZ, Mr. P. A., *Warwickshire, Tamworth*
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MURPHY, Mr. W. M., *Dublin, St. Patrick's*
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National Debt (Supplemental) Bill
(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. W. H. Smith, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *May* 14 [Bill 264]
2R., Debate adjourned *May* 17, 672
Debate resumed; Bill read 2° *June* 17, 1496
Committee; Report *June* 11, 1804

National Defence Bill
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Embodiment of Volunteers for Garrison Duty—Embodiment of Militia Regiments, Question, Sir Henry Havelock-Allan; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) *June* 7, 1403
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National Defence Bill [Bill 235]
(*Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Mr. Brodrick*)
c. Moved, "That the Committee be deferred till Monday 4th June" (*Mr. Jackson*) *May* 17, 763; Motion agreed to

National Defence [*Remuneration, &c.*]
Considered in Committee *June* 4, 1143
Moved, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by [*cont.*

National Defence [*Remuneration, &c.*]
Parliament, of remuneration to Railway Companies for receiving and forwarding traffic under the authority of a Secretary of State or the Admiralty, and of compensation to any person suffering loss for anything done under such authority, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to make better provision respecting National Defence" (*Mr. Secretary Stanhope*)
Committee—R.P.
Committee deferred *June* 8, 1652
Considered in Committee *June* 7, 1497; Objection being taken to further proceeding, Committee—R.P.
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"*A Danger in the Pacific*," Question, Mr. Seton-Karr; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 11, 41
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Shipbuilding—The "Barracouta," Question, Lord Charles Beresford; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *June* 4, 1017
The Docks at Haulbowline, Questions, Dr. Fox, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 17, 556
The Russian Squadron in the Pacific, Question, Captain Colomb; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *May* 17, 530

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Naval and Military Departments — The Royal Commission
Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *June* 7, 1413

NEVILLE, Mr. R., *Liverpool, Exchange*
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French Encroachments, Question, Mr. Samuelson; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *May* 14, 142
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New Guinea—Cost of Telegraphic Messages
Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms) *June* 5, 1178

NOLAN, Colonel J. P., *Galway, N.*
Ballina and Killala Railway and Harbour, 2R. 1352, 1361
Ireland—Criminal Law—Imprisonment of Mr. Kilmartin, 1390
Excise—Licence of a Marquee, Hollymount, Co. Mayo, 1367
Supply—Privy Council and Subordinate Departments, 996, 999

NOLAN, Mr. J., *Louth, N.*
Post Office (Ireland)—Belfast Post Office Staff, 1362

NORRIS, Mr. E. S., *Tower Hamlets, Limehouse*
Parks (Metropolis)—Outrage in the Regent's Park, 1405
Sweating System—Factory Acts, 315

North American Fisheries
Behring's Straits, Questions, Mr. Gourley; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *June* 4, 1013
Rights of Fishing on the Coasts of Labrador, Question, Mr. De Lisle; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron Henry de Worms) *June* 8, 1524

NORTHCOTE, Hon. Sir H. S., *Exeter*
Local Government (England and Wales) Comm. *cl.* 1, 1569

North Sea Fisheries Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Baron Henry de Worms*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *June* 4 [Bill 278]
Read 2° *June* 7, 1494

North Sea Fisheries—Sale of Tobacco
Question, Sir Edward Birkbeck; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *June* 8, 1525

NORTON, Lord
Metropolis—New Buildings, 116
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, 1664

Oaths Bill
(*Mr. Bradlaugh, Sir John Simon, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Courtney Kenny, Mr. Burt, Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Richard, Colonel Eyre, Mr. Jesse Collings*)
c. Committee—R.P. *June* 12, 1947 [Bill 7]

O'BRIEN, Mr. J. F. X., *Mayo, S.*
Ireland—Excise—Licence of a Marquee, Hollymount, Co. Mayo, 1367
Poor Law—Swinford Board of Guardians, 1692

O'BRIEN, Mr. W., *Cork Co., N.E.*
Ireland—Crime and Outrage—Affray at Mitchelstown—Official Shorthand Writer's Notes, 1539

O'CONNOR, Mr. A., *Donegal, E.*
Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Act, 1887—Examinations for Competency, 315
Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen, 2R. 655
Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland) (No. 2), 2R. 1000
Ireland—Questions
Board of Works—Advances to the Macgillycuddy of the Reekes, 526, 527
Dispensaries—Local Dispensaries Committee, Clones Union—Joseph Graydon, 161
Local Government Board—Supersession of the Ballinasloe Board of Guardians, 750,
National Defence [Remuneration, &c.], Comm. 1144
Parliament—Sittings and Adjournment of the House—Whitsuntide Recess, 674
Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Comm. *cl.* 1, Amendt. 244
Re-organizations in Public Offices, Res. 1943
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 570, 578, 582
Report, 753, 754
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 863, 871; Amendt. 872
Secretary of State for the Colonies, &c. 981, 983, 992, 993
Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation, 2R. 132

O'CONNOR, Mr. J., *Tipperary, S.*
Ireland—Irish Land Commission—Sub-Commission at Carlow, 537
Post Office—Service of Mails, Newport, Co. Tipperary, 537
Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Comm. *cl.* 1, 225
Supply—Report, 757
Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation, 2R. 132

O'CONNOR, Mr. T. P., *Liverpool, Scotland*
Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. *cl.* 2, 1785
Metropolis—Open Spaces—Vacant Ground adjoining the Royal Courts of Justice, 326
Parliament—House of Commons—Admission of Dynamitards to this House, 1412

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O'Connor, Mr. T. P.—*cont.*
Parliament—Business of the House (Notices of Motion), Res. 351
Parliament—Privilege, Res. 178, 203, 204
Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Comm. *cl.* 1, 211

Official Secrets Bill [Bill 562]
(*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Lord George Hamilton*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{o}" (*Mr Attorney General*) *June* 7, 1495
2R., after short debate, Debate adjourned

Official Trustee Bill—Legislation
Question, Mr. Hobhouse; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *May* 15, 327

O'Hanlon, Mr. T., *Cavan, E.*
Ireland—Prison Rules—Refusal of "The Nation" and "United Ireland" at Derry Gaol, 309, 310
Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation, Select Committee, 297

Onslow, Earl of (Secretary to the Board of Trade)
Lloyds' Signal Stations, 2R. 277

Oranmore and Browne, Lord
National Rifle Association, 1314
Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens—The Roehampton Gate of Richmond Park, 1500

Oyster and Mussel Fisheries (West Loch Tarbert) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Ker, M. Lothian*)
l. Presented; read 1^{a}* *June* 4 (No. 126)
Bill withdrawn * *June* 7

Oyster and Mussel Fisheries (West Loch Tarbert) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]
(*The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos,* for *The Lord Ker* [*M. Lothian*])
l. Moved that the Sessional Order of the 6th of March last, "That no Bill originating in this House confirming any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate shall be read a first time after Friday the 11th day of May next," be dispensed with in respect of the said Bill, and that the Bill be now read 1^{a}; agreed to; Bill read 1^{a}, and referred to the Examiners *June* 11, 1681 (No. 145)

Paget, Sir R. H., *Somerset, Wells*
Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. *cl.* 1, 1581; *cl.* 2, 1797, 1842
Parliament—Business of the House—Whitsuntide Recess, 329
Pleuro-Pneumonia in Cattle, Res. 79
United States—The Inter-State Commerce Commissioners, 1682

Palmer, Sir C. M., *Durham, Jarrow*
Imperial Defence [Expenses], Comm. 1055

Parker, Hon. F., *Oxfordshire, Henley*
Local Government (England and Wales)—Section 15—Main Roads and Footpaths, 1369

Parliament
LORDS—
Chairman of Committees
Moved, "That the Earl of Selborne do take the Chair in all Committees upon Private Bills this day, in the absence of the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos from illness, unless where it shall have been otherwise directed by this House" (*The Lord Chancellor*); Motion agreed to
Moved, "That the Lord Knutsford be appointed to take the Chair in the Committees of the Whole House, in the absence of the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos from illness" (*The Marquess of Salisbury*) *May* 15; Motion agreed to
Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills
Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Whitsuntide, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess *May* 15
Return (*The Lord Monk-Bretton*) *June* 12, 1820
Rules of Debate in this House—Precedence of Speakers, Question, Observations, Earl Granville; Reply, The Lord Chancellor (Lord Halsbury) *June* 11, 1680
Sittings and Adjournment of the House
The Whitsun Recess, Observation, The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) *May* 15, 290
[The House adjourned on Wednesday, 16th May, till Monday, 4th June]
Public Business—Standing Orders, Postponement of Motion, The Lord Privy Seal (Earl Cadogan) *June* 4, 1001

Parliament—Elections (Intervention of Peers, &c.)
Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed 'To consider the Sessional Order with reference to the intervention of Peers and Prelates in Parliamentary Elections' which has been communicated to this House" (*The Earl of Miltown*) *June* 11, 1654; after short debate, Motion agreed to

Parliament—The House of Lords—Inquiry into the Standing Orders
Moved, "That the first and third paragraphs of Standing Order No. XX. be suspended, and that the Lord Privy Seal's Motion have precedence of the Orders of the Day and Notice which stand before it" (*The Marquess of Salisbury*) *June* 7, 1315; Motion agreed to

[*cont.*

Paliament—The House of Lords—Inquiry into Standing Orders—cont.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to examine and report upon those Standing Orders of the House which relate to the conduct of public business" (*The Lord Privy Seal*), 1315; after short debate, Motion agreed to

COMMONS—

Indisposition of Mr. Speaker

Mr. Courtney, the Chairman of Ways and Means, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker *May* 11, *May* 14, *May* 15, *May* 16, *May* 17, *May* 18

Private Bills

Ordered, "That Standing Orders 39 and 129 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday, 31st May" (*The Chairman of Ways and Means*) *May* 17

Committee of Selection (*Standing Committees*) (*Special Reports*)—*May* 15, 445; *May* 17, 676; *June* 8, 1653

Standing Committees (*Chairmen's Panel*)—Report *June* 4, 1149

Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures have leave to sit and proceed with the Railway and Canal Companies Charges Bill, and the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill [*Lords*], on Monday 11th June, at Twelve of the clock (*Sir Matthew White Ridley*) *June* 4

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures have leave to print and circulate with the Votes the Minutes of their Proceedings from day to day (*Sir Matthew White Ridley*)

Ordered, That the Standing Committee on Trade, Shipping, and Manufactures have leave to print and circulate with the Votes any amended Clauses of Bills committed to them from time to time (*Sir Matthew White Ridley*) *June* 11

Rules of Debate

Questions, Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 17, 566

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

The Whitsun Recess, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 14, 207; Questions, Mr. J. E. Ellis, Mr. T. M. Healy, Sir Richard Paget; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 15, 328; Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Illingworth; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 17, 563

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—LORDS—*Sittings and Adjournment of the House*—cont.

Moved, "That this House, at its rising To-morrow, do adjourn till Thursday 31st May" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *May* 17, 673; [Question not put]

Moved, "That this House, at its rising this day, do adjourn till Thursday 31st May" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *May* 18, 687; after debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Dr. Tanner*); Question put, and agreed to

Question, "That this House, &c." put accordingly, and agreed to

[The House adjourned on Friday, May 18, till Thursday, May 31]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS

Questions, Mr. John Morley, Mr. H. Gardner, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 11, 49; Observations, Question, Mr. John Morley; Reply, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 14, 176; Questions, Mr. Baumann, Mr. H. Gardner, Mr. Biggar; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 31, 752; Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *June* 7, 1414;—*The Bann, Barrow, and Shannon Drainage Bills*, Observations, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), Mr. T. M. Healy *June* 4, 1144; Questions, Mr. W. A. Macdonald; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *June* 8, 1545; Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *June* 12, 1834;—*Tithe Rentcharge Bills*, Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *June* 8, 1545;—*Local Government* (*England and Wales*) *Bill—Suspension of the Standing Orders*, Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Summers, Mr. Caine; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *June* 11, 1716

Notices of Motion and Orders of the Day

Moved, "That the Order of the Day for the Committee on Imperial Defence [Expenses] have precedence this day of the Notices of Motion and other Orders of the Day" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *May* 15, 334

Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "this House is not prepared to surrender this day to the Government, in view of the fact that the Government has already pledged itself to arrange to enable the Member for the West Division of Nottingham to bring on this evening the Motion that stands in his name, and Her Majesty's Ministers yesterday devoted the time at their disposal to a stage of the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland Salary Bill, which time would otherwise have been at their disposal for the purposes for which they are now asking for the time of private Members" (*Mr. Labouchere*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. Labouchere*);

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*Notices of Motion and Orders of the Day*—cont.
Question put, and agreed to; Question put accordingly, "That the words, &c.;" A. 290, N. 187; M. 103
Division List, Ayes and Noes, 356
Main Question put, and agreed to

Morning Sittings
Moved, "That whenever the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill shall be appointed for Tuesday or Friday the House shall meet at Two of the clock" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) *June* 7, 1438; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER
St. Stephen's Chapel—Visitation by Members of the House and Friends, Questions, Mr. Conybeare; Answers, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *May* 15, 326; *May* 31, 749
The Subway to the Embankment, Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *June* 7, 1406

HOUSE OF COMMONS
Admission of Strangers, Question, Mr. Marjoribanks; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 11, 48
Admission of Dynamitards to this House, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Parnell; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *June* 7, 1410;—*Mr. Lafone, M.P.*, Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, Viscount Ebrington *June* 8, 1529;—*Evidence of Mr. Monro, Assistant Commissioner of Police*, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *June* 8, 1536

Questions
The Earl of Carnarvon and Mr. Parnell—Private Correspondence, Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 14, 174
Public Petitions—Signatures, Question, Sir John Goldsmid; Answer, Sir Charles Forster *June* 11, 1693

Parliament—New Member taking his Seat
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *May* 11, to leave out from "That," add "on a new Member presenting himself with his introducers below the Bar, at the time and under the conditions specified in the Standing Order 86, Mr. Speaker, unless the House otherwise resolve, shall forthwith call such Member to the Table for the purpose of taking his seat" (*Mr. Bradlaugh*) v. 52; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 147, N. 152; M. 5 (D. L. 103); Question proposed, "That 'on a new Member, &c.,' be there added"
Amendt. to proposed Amendt. to leave out "unless the House otherwise resolve" (*Sir Henry James*); Question proposed, "That

[*cont.*

Parliament—New Member taking his Seat—cont.
the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived; Question proposed, "That the words 'on a new Member, &c.,' be there added;" after short debate, Question put; A. 152, N. 180; M. 28
Division List, Ayes and Noes, 69
Amendt. after "That," in the Original Question, add "this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply;" Amendt. agreed to
Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 14, 175

Parliament — New Rules of Procedure (1882)
Rule 2 (Adjournment of the House)
Matter, Tithe Disturbances in North Wales—Action of Police and Emergency Men
Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Thomas Ellis*) *June* 7, 1415; after debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*); Question put, and agreed to; Question put accordingly, "That this House do now adjourn;" A. 146, N. 217; M. 71 (D. L. 129)

Parliament—Privilege
Moved, "That the letter of Mr. Thomas Hamilton, Resident Magistrate, dated the 12th May, addressed to Mr. Speaker, is a Breach of the Privilege of this House, as containing an untruthful statement regarding the arrest and conviction of a Member of this House" (*Mr. T. M. Healy*) *May* 14, 176; after debate, Question put; A. 189, N. 250; M. 61 (D. L. 106)

Parliament — Privilege — Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887
Arrest of Members
Conviction of Mr. Condon; Letter received by Mr. Deputy Speaker *May* 14, 139
Imprisonment of Mr. Condon; Letter received by Mr. Speaker *May* 31, 746
Sentence on Mr. Condon, Question, Observations, Lord Coleridge; Reply, The Lord Chancellor of Ireland (Lord Ashbourne); short debate thereon *June* 8, 1501
Conviction of Mr. Dillon; Letter received by Mr. Deputy Speaker *May* 14, 139
Trial and Sentence on Mr. Dillon, M.P., Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) *May* 15, 325

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS
Sat First
June 5 — The Lord St. John of Bletso, after the death of his brother
June 7 — The Lord Berwick, after the death of his uncle
June 11—The Lord De Tabley, after the death of his father

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS
New Writs Issued
May 15—*For* Southampton Borough, *v.* Admiral Sir John Edmund Commerell, V.C., G.C.B., Chiltern Hundreds
June 4—*For* Ayr District of Burghs, *v.* Richard Frederick Fotheringham Campbell, esquire, deceased

New Members Sworn
June 4—Thomas Alexander Dickson, esquire, *Dublin City* (*St. Stephen's Green Division*)
Francis Henry Evans, esquire, *Southampton Borough*

Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers) Act (1875) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Chance, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Maurice Healy*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *June* 5 [Bill 282]

Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Bill
(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Committee—R.P. *May* 14, 208 [Bill 201]
Committee deferred, after short debate *June* 4, 1145
Committee deferred *June* 5, 1234
Question, Mr. John Morley; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *June* 12, 1834

Parliamentary Voters Lists (Ireland) Bill (*Mr. Chance, Mr. Maurice Healy*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *June* 5 [Bill 280]

PARNELL, Mr. C. S., *Cork*
Parliament—House of Commons—Admission of Dynamitards to this House, 1412
Parliament—Privilege, Res. 179, 187

PAULTON, Mr. J. M., *Durham, Bishop Auckland*
Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen, 2R. 641
Local Government (England and Wales)—Board of Guardians—Transfer of Powers, 555

PEASE, Mr. A. E., *York*
Supply — Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 829, 833

PEASE, Mr. H. F., *York, N.R., Cleveland*
Asiatic Turkey—British Hospital at Smyrna—Returns, 307

PEEL, Right Hon. A. W. (*see* SPEAKER, The)

PELLY, Sir L., *Hackney, N.*
Africa (East Coast)—Italian Acquisitions, 1381
Imperial Defence [Expenses], Comm. 1116

Perpetual Pensions—Action of the Executive
Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 15, 327

Pharmacy Act (Ireland), 1875, Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Milltown*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *May* 14 (No. 112)
Read 2ª, and referred to a Select Committee *June* 8, 1498
Select Committee nominated *June* 11; List of the Committee, 1681

PHILIPPS, Mr. J. W., *Lanark, Mid*
Scotland — Inspection of Mines — Appointments, 562

PICKARD, Mr. B., *York, W.R., Normanton*
Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Act, 1887—Examinations for Competency, 314
Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen, 2R. 638

PICKERSGILL, Mr. E. H., *Bethnal Green, S.W.*
Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen, 2R. 642
India Store Department—Prices of Warlike Stores, 1173
Salary of the Superintendent, 1172
Law and Justice—Sentences of Flogging at Liverpool Assizes, 540
Law and Police—Suicides from the Clifton Suspension Bridge, 1026
Libel Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1297
Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt, 1791, 1881
Parliament—Sittings and Adjournment of the House—Whitsuntide Recess, Res. 693
Uncovenanted Civil Service of India, Res. 1633, 1634
Workmen's Wages—Messrs. Lion Brothers, 1180

PICTON, Mr. J. A., *Leicester*
Africa (West Coast)—Opobo—King Ja Ja, 1827
Imperial Defence [Expenses], Comm. 403
Libel Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 4, 1284
Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 1589, 1596, 1854
National Defence [Remuneration], &c. Comm. 1498
Public Health—Insanitary State of the Regent's Canal, 1376, 1377
Spread of Small-Pox in Sheffield, 828, 846, 949
Sugar Bounties—International Convention, 331
Supply—Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 803

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Report * *June* 4 [Bill 221]
Considered * *June* 5
Read 3° * *June* 6
l. Read 1ª * (*E. Onslow*) *June* 7 (No. 135)

Pier and Harbour Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 15 [Bill 248]
Report * *June* 4

PINKERTON, Mr. J., *Galway*
Ireland—Inland Navigation and Drainage—Lough Corrib, 1691

PLOWDEN, Sir W. C., *Wolverhampton, W.*
Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. *cl.* 2, Amendt. 1595, 1596
War Office—Hypothetical Invasion of this Country, 1415
Ordnance Department—Service Guns—Supply of Ammunition, 1385

PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R. (First Commissioner of Works), *Dublin University*
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Metropolis — Metropolitan Street Traffic — Block at Hyde Park Corner, 530
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Metropolitan Building Act—New Building at Albert Gate—Excessive Height, 325, 326
Palace of Westminster—St. Stephen's Chapel, 327, 749
Parks (Metropolis)—Questions
Battersea Park—Discharged Workmen, 308
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Grant of Land in Richmond Park for Vicarage, 533, 1381
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Public Health—Insanitary State of the Regent's Canal, 1377
Regina *v.* Harkins and Callan, Res. 1229, 1230, 1231
Scotland—Ordnance Survey, 519
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POMFRET, Mr. W. P., *Kent, Ashford*
Harbours of Refuge—Dungeness, 1410

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)
(*Questions*)
Board of Guardians—Appointment of Registration Officers, Question, Mr. Hobhouse; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *June* 7, 1387
Guardians of Poplar Parish—Case of F. Burge, Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *June* 8, 1525

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Portugal—Bombardment of Minengani—Compensation
Questions, Mr. Buchanan; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *May* 11, 38

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)
(*Questions*)
Closed Postal Cards, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *May* 15, 317
Continental Mails—The Austrian Train Service, Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Postmaster General *June* 7, 1380
Contracts—The Down London Mail Train, Questions, Dr. Clark; Answers, The Postmaster General *June* 11, 1696
Country Postmen—Ticket Book for Postal Orders, Question, Sir Edward Birkbeck; Answer, The Postmaster General *June* 8, 1526
Detention of Printed Matter by Warrant of the Home Secretary, Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 15, 312
Express Letter Delivery in Belgium, Question, Mr. Kenyon; Answer, The Postmaster General *June* 7, 1383
Losses of Letters in the New Cross District Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Postmaster General *June* 1, 879
Political Speeches—Sir Arthur Blackwood, Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Postmaster General *June* 7, 1365
Postmaster General—Conveyance of Letters "Per Rail," Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas; Answer, The Postmaster General *May* 15, 308
Private Telephone, Question, Mr. Montagu; Answer, The Postmaster General *June* 11, 1688
Provincial Postmasterships, Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Postmaster General *May* 17, 538
Receiving House for Piccadilly, Question, Mr. W. Beckett; Answer, The Postmaster General *May* 14, 168

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First-Class Telegraphists, Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The Postmaster General *June* 4, 1018
International Telegraphic Convention, Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Postmaster General *June* 7, 1375

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Pay of Clerks, Question, Mr. Fenwick; Answer, The Postmaster General *May* 15, 318
Promotions, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Postmaster General *May* 14, 158

POWELL, Mr. F. S., *Wigan*
Local Government (England and Wales), Comm. *cl.* 1, 1563; *cl.* 2, 1585, 1589, 1778, 1782, 1798, 1849

POWER, Mr. R., *Waterford*
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POWIS, Earl of
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PRICE, Captain G. E., *Devonport*
Imperial Defence [Expenses], Comm. 388, 1034, 1039

PRIME MINISTER (*see* SALISBURY, Marquess of)

Prisons (England and Wales)
Chelmsford Gaol, Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 14, 165
Convict Labour at Dover—Mat-Making, Question, Mr. Quilter; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *May* 18, 681

PROVAND, Mr. A. D., *Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.*
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Public Health
Insanitary State of the Regent's Canal, Questions, Mr. Picton; Answers, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *June* 7, 1376
Spread of Small-Pox in Sheffield, Observations, Mr. Picton; Debate thereon, 928
Suppression of Rabies in Dogs, Question, Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon, Lord Mount Temple; Reply, The Lord President of the Council (Viscount Cranbrook); Observations, The Earl of Feversham *May* 14, 110

Public Health Acts Amendment (Buildings in Streets) Bill
(*Captain Cotton, Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Mowbray*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 15 [Bill 255]

Public Health (Scotland) Provisional Order (Denny and Dunipace Water) Bill (*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 8
Report * *June* 4 [Bill 229]
Read 3° * *June* 5
l. Read 1ª * (*L. Ker, M. Lothian*) *June* 7 (No. 136)

Public Libraries Act (1855) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Arthur Acland, Sir Lewis Pelly*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *June* 12 [Bill 292]

Public Meetings—Speech of the Chief Secretary at Battersea
Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Edward Harrington; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *June* 8, 1533; Questions, Mr. Flynn; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *June* 11, 1698

Public Offices, Re-organizations in
Moved, "That the Re-organizations in the Accountant General's and Secretary's Departments of the Admiralty have been injurious to the public interests, by resulting in increased charges for those Departments, and by needlessly adding to extravagant pensions and bonuses; and that in any further re-organizations, officials who are still able and willing to render service for the public money shall be provided with employment in other Departments, instead of being forced to become useless burdens upon the country" (*Mr. Jennings*) *June* 12, 1898
After debate, Amendt. to leave out from "That" add "this House, whilst of opinion that when the re-organization of a Department becomes necessary, full inquiry should be made into the wants of other Departments with a view to the continued public employment of redundant officers, is not prepared, pending the inquiry of the Royal Commission upon Civil Service Establishments, to anticipate its report by laying down any absolute rule as to the provision of employment for persons not required in the Department to which they have been originally appointed" (*Lord George Hamilton*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after further short debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. James Stuart*); Question put, and agreed to; Question put accordingly, "That the words, &c." A. 113, N. 94; M. 19
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Public Trustee and Executor—Legislation
Questions, Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Shaw Lefevre; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *June* 11, 1715

Quarter Sessions Bill [H.L]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Read 2ª *June* 12, 1818 (No. 37)

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Railway and Canal Companies' Charges Bill
(*Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Mr. A. H. Acland, Mr. Barran, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Hunter, Mr. J. Maclean, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Winterbotham, Mr. Woodall*)
c. Referred to Standing Committee on Trade, &c. *May* 14 [Bill 49]

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill
Question, Sir Roper Lethbridge; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *May* 18, 687

Railway and Canal Traffic [Salaries &c.]
c. Res. in Committee—R.P. *May* 31, 877
Res. in Committee *June* 4, 1033
Report deferred *June* 6, 1312

Randell, Mr. D., *Glamorgan, Gower*
Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen, 2R. 652

Rasch, Major F. C., *Essex, S.E.*
Employers' Liability for Injuries to Workmen, 2R. 724

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Question, Mr. Commins; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) *June* 7, 1407

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(*Mr. Dugdale, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Curzon, Mr. Dixon, Mr. Mark Stewart*)
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l. Read 2ª, after debate *June* 4, 1002 (No. 98)
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- Libel Law Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 3, 1277, 1283; *cl.* 4, 1300
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- Question, Mr. Cunninghame Graham ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 18, 684

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Royden, Mr. T. B., *Liverpool, W., Toxteth*
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- *Evictions — Caithness-shire*, Question, Dr. Clark ; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *June* 11, 1700
- *Gold Discoveries*, Questions, Mr. Watt, Sir George Campbell ; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *June* 4, 1031
- *Grants in Aid of Local Taxation*, Questions, Mr. Mark Stewart, Mr. Hunter ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *May* 18, 682

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SIMON, Sir J., *Dewsbury*

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(*Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Burt, Mr. Winterbotham, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Newnes, Mr. Flower, Mr. Pitt-Lewis*)

c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *May* 16, 447; after long debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Sir Walter Foster*); Question put; A. 135, N. 194; M. 59 (D. L. 113)

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c. Ordered; read 1° * *June* 4 [Bill 279]

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c. Report * *June* 4 [Bill 222]
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l. Read 1ª * (*E. Brownlow*) *June* 11 (No. 143)

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 31 [Bill 242]

Tramways Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill
(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson*)
c. Read 2° * *May* 15 [Bill 243]

Trawling (Scotland) Bill
(*Mr. Hunter, Mr. Macdonald Cameron, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Esslemont*)
c. Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [8th March], "That the Bill be now read 2°;" Question again proposed; Debate resumed *June* 12, 1953; after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Mark Stewart*); Question put; A. 87, N. 53; M. 34 (D. L. 145) [Bill 155]

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Trustee Savings Banks
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *June* 1, to leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, the relationship subsisting between Trustee Savings Banks and the State is unsatisfactory, and ought to be revised; that Trustees and Managers should be restrained from using the words 'Government Security,' 'Government Savings Bank,' or other words implying more than the Law rightfully authorizes, in connection with such Banks, the use of which is calculated to deceive depositors, create a false impression of security, and damage the cause of thrift; and that the Trustees and Managers of such Banks should, as formerly, be made responsible for the safe custody of the deposits committed to their care in connection with such Trustee Banks" (*Mr. Howell*) *v.*, 888; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put, and agreed to

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Original Question again proposed; after short debate, Original Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°, and committed
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Ordered, That Four Members of the Committee be nominated by the House
Ordered, That Three Members of the Committee be nominated by the Committee of Selection
Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records
Ordered, That three be the quorum
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Ordered, That the Parties appearing before the Select Committee on the Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill [*Lords*] have leave to print the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee, day by day, from the Committee Clerk's Copy, if they think fit (*Mr. Stansfeld*) *June* 7

United States—The Inter-State Commerce Commissioners
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Universities (Scotland) Bill
(*The Marquess of Lothian*)
l. Committee; Report; Bill re-committed *June* 5, 1151 (No. 128)
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c. Ordered; read 1°* *May* 11 [Bill 262]

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(*Mr. Bryce, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Jacob Bright, Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr. Whitley, Sir Lyon Playfair, Mr. Francis Powell*)
c. Committee; Report *June* 6, 1310 [Bill 198]
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(1) Resolved, That instead of the Duties on Wine imposed by "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1888," there shall on Wine imported in bottle be charged and paid, from and after the date of the passing of an Act embodying this Resolution, the Duty following, that is to say:—
Sparkling Wine, imported in bottle, the gallon .. .. *s.* 2 *d.* 6
This Duty is to be paid in addition to the Duty in respect of alcoholic strength under "The Customs Amendment Act, 1886"
(2) Resolved, That it is expedient to make provision for levying Customs Duties on Wine in bottle
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ERRATA.

Page 37, line 4, from top, *for* "Mr. J. E. Ellis (Nottingham, Rushcliffe)," *read* "Mr. J Ellis (Leicestershire, Bosworth)."
Page 750, line 20, from top, *for* "supervision," *read* "supersession."

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